

Technically SPEAKING

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Make Your Laptop New Again

by Becky Rainford

Many steps can be taken to improve laptop performance if the laptop is not functioning the way it used to. Below are some options for cleaning out your computer and improving its performance.

Run a Spyware Scan. This simple 10 minute process will fix many issues with slow computers or pop-ups. Spybot is installed on all university laptops for deleting these unwanted problem creators. For the best results, run Spybot weekly.

Is your laptop screen floppy? Go get the screen tightened today. The screws attaching the screen to the base of the

laptop loosen a little every time it is opened or closed. Take your laptop to the Support Center for a tightening. If the screen becomes too loose, falls off and breaks, you are responsible for the damages.

The 10 minute fix. If you do not want to spend hours running virus scans and anti-spyware tools, then consider taking the notebook to the Support Center to have it wiped clean and reloaded to return it to the same state as it was the first day you picked it up.

Warning, save your files, pictures and music onto separate media (i.e. not the hard drive of the computer) before you have it reloaded.

Defrag your hard drive. Defragment-

ing reorganizes the storage space on a hard drive. Fragments happen while saving a file and not enough room is available for the whole file to fit in one place on the disk so the file is broken into smaller pieces and stored in many places on the hard drive. Fragmentation causes the notebook to slow down by having to retrieve the contents of a file from many different places on the hard drive.

Dirty on the outside. Did you spill something on your laptop and now the keys are all sticky? Take the laptop back to the Support Center to get the keyboard replaced, which only costs \$50 at most. The alternative is the sticky goo could seep into the computer and ruin the insides, which costs \$1000 to replace the laptop.

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Get Connected!

Association for Computer Machinery (ACM) is a well-established, national organization, which is recognized by potential employers. If you become a member, you will have a network of other students with similar interests.

Association for Computing Machinery-Women (ACM-W) is also a nation-wide organization. ACM-W aims to attract more women to the computer science department. ACM-W is open to both men and women who are interested in achieving the organization's goal.

The meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month. For more information visit <http://catpages.nwmissouri.edu/m/acmw/>

Digital Electronic Media (DigEM) is an organization for IDM majors and multimedia minors. You may have a non-related major and still become a member as long as you are interested in design of any type. If you are interested in becoming a member, visit <http://catpages.nwmissouri.edu/m/digem/welcome.html>

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Printed copies of Technically Speaking are available at the Front Desk

Help Desk x-1634

Help Desk Hours

M-T	8 am-10 pm
Fri	8 am-5 pm
Sat	11 am-4:45 pm
Sun	1 pm-10 pm

Notebook Support Center Hours

M-F	8 am-4:30 pm
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Library Lab Hours

M-T	7:30 am-11:45 pm
Fri	7:30 am-4:45 pm
Sat	11 am-4:45 pm
Sun	1 pm-11:45 pm

Questions?
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How many times have you been searching for employment in the newspaper using a red pen to circle potential jobs? Generally the pen and paper method has been seen in the past, especially in movies. In today's society, researching and eventually applying for jobs has become an easier task; job search engines do all the hunting for you! Job search engines will be very beneficial to your future, for within a few years, you will be looking for a job that fits you. Why not make the job search process easy on yourself and try an online employment agency?

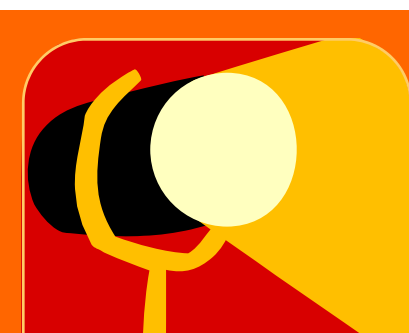
The first step to creating an account with an online employment agency is to submit your personal information along with an electronic résumé. Once you

have created an account, you will be allowed to apply for jobs online. The job listing will have available positions matching criteria you specified and will also search whatever area or region of the country you are interested in working. However, online agencies do not stop at helping you find a job. The agencies also send you articles via email to help you manage your career once you have found employment. One example of an online agency is Monster.com, which advertises helping people find happiness for the rest of their life -- a satisfying job.

Many people find that once they actually get offered the job they applied for, they do not know what steps need to be taken next. Monster.com has a

web page directed solely toward answering questions new employees might have regarding a number of issues. Not only do they answer questions you may have through online chat rooms or email, but they also send a monthly newsletter to all subscribers with the month's most frequently asked questions to help those who have yet to think of the problem.

Next time you are searching for a job, you should try using the online resources made available by Monster.com and other online employment agencies. Using online employment agencies should definitely help you cut back on time spent looking for a job and help you see exactly what is out there in the wide world of work!



PERT SPOTLIGHT Tabatha Verbick

Tabatha Verbick is one of the supervisors for the PERTs and works as a User Consultant for Client Computing/Information Systems. She also supervises the Computer Lab Consultants in Owens Library and assists in supervising the PC Technicians in the Gateway Electronic Campus Support Center (GECS). Each summer she teaches for Upward Bound Math and Science. Tabatha is passionate about photography, likes crocheting and enjoys scrapbooking.

Tabatha is an alumna of Northwest with a Masters of Science in School Computer Studies, a B.S. in Statistics and a B.S. in Computer Management Systems. She loves traveling and camping, and one of her favorite travel destinations is Monterey Bay, California. Some day Tabatha would like to pursue an education in photography and cultural geography.



Windows Vista

by Chris Grandfield

Everyone is talking about Windows Vista. What is Windows Vista? What does it offer that Windows XP does not have now?

Windows Vista comes in four different versions: Home Basic, Home Premium, Business and Ultimate. Microsoft says Windows Vista is the most secure Windows ever with Windows Defender and Windows Firewall built into the system. You can find what you need quickly with Live Search built into the system and Internet Explorer preinstalled. Windows Vista has improved the network connectivity, so you can stay connected whenever you want. All of these features come with the Home Basic edition.

Windows Vista Home Premium includes a feature called Windows Aero Desktop, which involves glasslike menu bars, Windows flip 3D and Live Thumbnails. Microsoft also says that Windows Vista is the best choice for laptops with Windows Mobility Center and Tablet PC Support. Home Premium also comes with Windows Meeting Space, which allows users to work together on a project over a net-

work. Home Premium allows you to add photos and entertainment with Windows Media Center. Another feature that comes with Windows Vista Home Premium is Windows DVD Maker, which is similar to Windows Movie maker, except projects created with Movie Maker will play in DVD players and works similar to Apple's iDVD.

Windows Vista Business includes Windows complete PC Backup and Restore. The backup program has been improved for backing up all of your important files.

Finally the Ultimate version includes a feature called Windows BitLocker Drive Encryption, which allows users to better protect their very important data.

Windows Vista Home Basic is priced from \$98.86 to \$139.99. Windows Vista Home Premium is priced at \$153.10 to \$202.00. Windows Vista Business is priced at \$187.58 to \$254.00. Finally Windows Vista Ultimate is priced at \$246.10 to \$328.67. More information can be found at <http://www.windowstvista.com>.

*“Microsoft says
Windows Vista is the
most secure Windows
ever with Windows
Defender and
Windows Firewall
built into the system”*

Computer Tips

4 Tips You Should Know

1 Sort your All Programs menu alphabetically by clicking Start, All Programs and then right-click any icon. On the shortcut menu, click Sort by Name.

2 To add a shortcut to your desktop, right-click your file. Click Send To and then click Desktop.

3 Press ALT+CTRL+P to switch to print layout. Press ALT+CTRL+O for the outline and ALT+CTRL+N for normal view.

4 To cancel an action, press ESC. To undo an action, press CTRL+Z. To repeat an action, press CTRL+Y.

Fun Links

MyPyramid.gov

Get a personalized eating plan before the bikini season and stay fit!

Bluefly.com

Buy designer clothes for cheap prices.

Bizrate.com

Free comparison shopping site. Get the best deals by comparing prices in several different web stores.

Zooming in a Good Deal

by Meredith Manning

If you plan on purchasing a digital camera, take the following considerations into account when determining which digital camera to purchase.

Set a price range

Determining your budget in advance will help you to avoid getting talked into spending more than you can afford.

Do your research

Go shopping without the intent of purchasing to enable you to get a better idea of what the market has available.

Megapixels

Take into consideration what you plan to use the camera primarily for. If you plan on using the camera primarily for still portraits, then a lower megapixel number is alright. If you plan to take photos at sporting events, a higher number will provide greater clarity.

Zoom

Be sure to pay attention to what the featured zoom is, is it optical or digital? Digital zoom will mean nothing if you are taking photos from any distance. So, spend the extra money to get a greater optical zoom.

Additional costs

Most cameras do not come with a camera bag, extra batteries, media storage cards or accessory lenses. Be sure to account for the extra costs when determining the total price of the camera. Some cameras include a small media card, but traditionally that only holds about 27 photos. Investigate the cost of a larger media card.

Pre-programmed settings

If you are a digital camera novice, preset settings can be your biggest asset. Some cameras only come with a few settings like portrait, action and low

light. The setting used for a picture can greatly increase or decrease the quality of photographs.

Bundle packages

Look at all the components that come in the package and check to see what they would cost on their own compared to the package price.

Additional features

Cameras now come with many additional features, which can be good. Actually look at what the camera can do. Video functions can be very useful, but if you already have a camcorder this feature may be redundant.

Buy what you like

If you like the camera, buy it! The likelihood of finding a camera that fits all your criteria is low, but be patient because the more you shop the more likely you are to find something you like and can afford.

P2P File Sharing

by Daman Kapoor

Who likes listening to music? Well, everyone does! How many of those who listen to music also have illegal music on their computer? A lot of people do.

Not all music available on the Internet is legal for downloading although many people think otherwise. Most songs available online free of charge are illegal and in violation of copyright law. Some college students have been fined up to \$150,000 per song by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA). Kazaa, LimeWire, Morpheus, Gnutella, iMesh, WinMX, Bearshare and G2 are among some popular peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing programs used to download music or other media files.

All music, videos and other copyrighted electronic data available through these programs or other websites on the Internet are illegal and in violation of copyright law. These programs cause problems with the Northwest network and are prohibited from use on campus.

iTunes, Urge, Napster, WalMart.com and Real Music Store are examples of services that offer legal downloadable music. Most of these services offer an industry standard price of 99 cents per song. Napster offers a 30-day free trial where you can download music and keep it on your computer for 30 days after which the license expires and you are no longer able to listen to the song tracks.