

10 Warning Signs Of Impending Computer Disasters

These Tips Can Help You Avoid Expensive Downtime And Repairs

Computers rarely stop working overnight. In most cases, there are early warning signs that problems are brewing.

Here are 10 surefire signs that you need to get a professional to investigate your network ASAP:

1. Your workstation or server starts running very slowly, freezes up, or crashes.
2. Your web browser has been changed to another strange browser you've never seen before.
3. You are getting an unusual amount of pop-up windows, even when you aren't surfing the web.
4. You don't know if every computer on your network has the most current virus definitions.
5. You don't know if you have a firewall in place or the last time it was updated.
6. You haven't attempted to restore your data from a backup tape or other storage device in awhile, and you aren't checking your backup log for errors.

7. You receive e-mails accusing you of sending spam, and/or you find e-mail messages in your "outbox" or "sent" folder that you didn't send.

8. Your computer starts making a grinding, clicking, or loud whirring sound.

9. The fan is constantly running.

10. You are getting a growing number of error messages, and you are forced to create work-arounds to complete certain work tasks.

If any of these signs are present, you should contact a pro immediately to investigate further!

The old saying of an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure is especially true in the world of computers and all things digital; and if you are like most businesses, your computer network is critical to the operation of your company - so make sure you don't procrastinate if any of these signs are present.

Ideally, you should perform regular health checks and maintenance on your network to make sure problems don't crop up. Here's why:

- Critical security updates need to be applied at least once a month to protect you from a constant flow of new hacker attacks.
- Firewall, virus and spyware protection need to be monitored and updated on a daily basis because new attacks are released daily.
- Your data backup system needs to be monitored and tested frequently to ensure easy data recovery in the event of loss. The rate of tape drive failure is 100%; that's why you need to frequently monitor your backups.
- Servers and workstations need regular tune-ups to keep them running fast and error free.
- Monitoring of disk space is important to avoid data loss, crashes, and storage problems.
- Server event logs need to be monitored for early alerts to network issues.

One of the biggest mistakes business owners make is taking a reactive approach to network support and maintenance rather than a proactive one.

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Need help? Call the Tech Experts 24 hour computer emergency hotline at (734) 240-0200.



5 Things You Need To Know If You Buy A New PC

Great Tips To Keep In Mind When Shopping For Your Next Computer

For the best customization, service, and support after the sale, buy from Technology Experts. You'll pay a little bit more but we'll make sure you get exactly what you need without any hassle or problems.

When you are ready to buy a new computer, one of the first questions you may ask yourself is, "Where can I get the best deal?" Obviously you don't want to pay more than you have to, price shouldn't be the only thing you consider before making your decision.

If you shop the local electronics superstores for weekly specials, you can easily get a standard machine at an ok price. This option would work best for you if you're not too picky or if you don't have any special requirements for gaming, graphics, or your special business software.

If you buy over the Internet from a major manufacturer, you'll get more choice and customization on the components, chip speed, RAM, hard drive size, and video components, but you'll pay a slightly higher price. But, the biggest downside to buying online is that you'll have a hard time getting technical support if something goes wrong.

Not a week goes by where we don't get a client who wants to pay us to fix a warranty-covered machine simply because the manufacturer is making it next to impossible to get the problem taken care of. In many cases, these companies have help desks located outside of the US, which means you might have a hard time communicating with them.

Sometimes only a component (like the hard drive) will go bad. When this happens, you'll have to ship the entire machine back wait a couple of weeks for them to repair it and ship it back. You also run the risk of losing all your data and configurations.

If you have special requirements, need help in selecting a machine, or if service before, during, and AFTER the sale is important, then you'll want to buy from a local shop like Tech Experts.

Here Are 5 Big Reasons To Buy Your Next PC From Tech Experts:

1. You'll get a senior technician who will take time to explain your options, answer your questions, and help you make a good buying decision based on what YOU need, not what we have to clear off the store shelves. At an electronics superstore, there's a good chance you'll end up talking to a teenager working on commission who doesn't have any real technical expertise.

If you buy online, you'll get very little or no help in selecting the right combination of components and options, so this works best **ONLY** for those individuals who really know what they are buying.

2. Superior technical support and service after the sale. If you've ever dealt with a manufacturer's technical support in the past, you know how frustrating it can be. After waiting on hold for days, you'll end up speaking with a "technician" who doesn't have a clue. Most of the time they're just reading from a script and taking you through a series of system checks that won't help.

Whenever you have a problem with a machine that you purchased from us, we'll troubleshoot it for free. Plus, you won't have to wait on hold when you call, which brings me to another point...

3. If you need technical support on a computer that you bought from us, you won't go through voice mail jail or be transferred to another country. You actually get to speak to a friendly, local technician.

4. We'll set up your e-mail account, Internet access, check your virus protection, set up your firewall, and other preferences and settings. When you buy from a superstore or online, it's up to you to configure your new machine.

5. We'll custom build or upgrade your PC here in our office. Maybe you just need more memory and a video card added. If you simply want to "upgrade" your PC to save a few dollars, we will gladly do it for you.

The bottom line is this: if you are shopping solely on price and aren't too picky, then watch the weekend papers for sales at your local electronic superstore. They can offer a great price on a standard machine. Usually you can save anywhere from \$100—\$200 this way.

For semi-customization at a decent price, check the Internet. There are hundreds of online resellers offering PCs at competitive prices.

For the best customization, service, and support after the sale, buy from Technology Experts. You'll pay a little bit more but we'll make sure you get exactly what you need without any hassle or problems.



Hackers Are Now Targeting Macintosh Computers

Until recently, MacIntosh computer users have long enjoyed relative freedom from hacker attacks; however, Symantec says online criminals are now setting their sites on Mac users.

Online porn hunters are the latest target. Visitors to porn sites are led to believe they can download a free video player when in fact they are installing malicious code onto their Macs.

Once the users authorize the transaction, the hackers can redirect the users future browsing to fraudulent web sites and possibly steal the user's information or passwords.

Sometimes they simply send ads for other pornographic web sites. This results in thousands of dollars in income for the criminals.

While common thinking is that Macs are essentially more secure

than PCs, security experts argue differently. They believe Macs are no more secure than PCs, and that the relatively low number of viruses, exploits and other cyber attacks directed at Mac users is due to Apple's relatively small share of the computer market.

With that said, the fact remains that for every single attack on a Mac, there are at least 100 attacks on Windows-based systems.

The Simple Document That Could Save Your Company From Complete Disaster

It's official: end users are the weakest link in the IT security chain. You can set up a firewall, encryption, anti-virus software, and password protection up to your ears, but it won't save you from the employee who posts his access information to a public web site.

Most security breaches, viruses, spyware, and other network problems are a result of human error—an end user unknowingly downloading an infected file, e-mailing confidential information, or disabling their anti-virus, to name a few.

So what is a company to do? While there is no surefire way to keep end users from making mistakes, you can dramatically reduce the number of problems by creating an acceptable use policy (AUP) and training your employees on what is and what is NOT acceptable behavior.

But if you want your employees to actually adhere to your security policies, here are a few tips:

- **Keep it simple.** A long, confusing policy that looks like a legal document is about as easy to read as the instruction manual for your digital camera. Make the policies clear and easy to read. Give examples and include screen shots where necessary.
- **Provide group training.** Many companies make the mistake of distributing their AUP by e-mail and telling employees they must read it on their own. This gives the employees the option of NOT reading and simply signing and submitting. You don't need hours of classroom training but a simple 15 or 20-minute session will force even the most reluctant users to learn a thing or two.
- **Keep employees updated.** To add to the above tip, make sure you update employees on a regular basis to keep the policies fresh in their minds and to educate them about new threats.
- **Explain the consequences of not following the policy.** This is both explaining the negative effects to the business as well as disciplinary actions that will be taken if they refuse to follow policy. Occasional violators should be warned, and habitual violators should be disciplined.
- **Monitor their behavior.** The best policy in the world won't work if it's not enforced. There are many tools on the market that can do this for you automatically.

Need Help In Creating An Acceptable Use Policy and Training Your Staff?

Not only can we help you create a customized acceptable use policy for your staff, but we can also provide training on the topic and even install network monitoring software to make sure it is enforced, and that your policy is working.

Call us at 734-457-5000 or visit us online at www.MyTechExperts.com for more info!



Contact Information

24 Hour Computer Emergency Hotline

(734) 240-0200

General Support

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(866) 993-9737

support@expertsmi.com

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Take advantage of our client portal! Log on at:

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10 Warning Signs Of Impending Computer Disaster, Continued

In other words, they wait until something stops working and THEN they call in the professionals to fix it. This approach not only costs more in the long run, but it also leaves you vulnerable to more devastating crashes such as data corruption and loss, virus attacks, and extended downtime.

Even NEW computers and equipment need regular maintenance because new threats are constantly evolving.

Fortunately, there is an inexpensive and easy way for you to completely avoid - even anticipate and prevent - these problems while making your network far more secure, reliable, and problem free.

We call it our "No Problem Network Support" plan, and it's designed specifically for the small to medium business owner that doesn't have the time, expertise, or staff to perform this regular network maintenance.

Thanks to advancements in support technology, we can now monitor your network 24/7/365 days a year and provide all the maintenance

your server needs for a fraction of the time and cost.

For a flat, monthly fee, you'll get 24/7 remote monitoring of your network to not only ensure that it is running at peak performance, but also to guarantee that your data is being backed up and secured, that your virus definitions are up-to-date, that your firewall is configured properly, that your server is optimized, as well as keep an eye on over 100 system processes and alerts that could spell problems brewing.

If you hired a technician - even a junior one - to perform these basic network tasks, it could easily cost you \$40,000 in salary, insurance, and hiring costs. If you were to out-source this type of service, it would easily run you \$800 to \$1,000 a month in hourly, on-site fees.

However, thanks to the No Problem Network Support plan, we can deliver all of these services to you for as little as \$189 per month.

We're so certain that you are going to LOVE this service we are willing to give it to you for 3 months,

absolutely FREE, and without any obligation whatsoever.

If at the end of those 3 months you aren't absolutely convinced that this service is worth every penny you are paying for the fast service and peace of mind, simply call or send us an e-mail that says, "this just isn't what I had in mind," and we'll stop the service immediately—no payment, no obligation.

That way, you have absolutely nothing to risk. What could be more fair than that?

But if you decide to keep the service, we'll bill you a flat monthly fee that you've agreed upon up front - no surprises, hidden costs, or extra fees.

And, to make it even more of a "no-brainer," we're going to offer the first 5 clients a very special VIP discount to create an even greater incentive for you to sign up TODAY.

To take advantage of this FREE 3-month trial, contact us at 734-457-5000, or e-mail info@expertsmi.com.

Going On A Trip?

Here Are 4 Web Sites You Should Visit!

- The U.S. Department of Transportation (www.dot.gov) offers airline, highway and rail safety information.
- The Transportation Security Administration (www.tsa.gov) has advice on safe travel by air, land and sea. For example, they post tips on dealing with airline security checks.
- The U.S. State Department (www.state.gov/travel) provides information on what to do before, during and when you return from a trip overseas.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov/travel) Don't come home sick! This site offers health-related travel information.

