

Computer Corner

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Dial-up Internet Hit Hard In January

January is always a hard month for dial-up Internet users. Dial-up connection and availability through your Internet Service Providers (ISP) will be “spotty” if you can get “on-line” at all.

Each year, December marks the number one month for computer sales, and Internet users. New users “sign-on” for the first time to find “**Internet Traffic Congestion**” (ITC), which is the result of everyone connecting to the Internet at the same time.

Symptoms of ITC:

- Several busy signals when attempting to sign on
- Loss of connection for no apparent reason
- Slow response from web sites
- Poor connection speeds
- Slow email response
- Generally poor Internet experience

Easier Connections in February

You’ll find it easier to complete dial-up connections in February. ISP’s upgrade their equipment to meet new demand during January, and like many New Year’s exercise programs, people lose interest, or switch programs by the end of January. So, cheer up, February is coming!

Cable/DSL Users

DSL/Cable users may feel the fall-out during January, but it’s less likely to have an impact on user connections. Cable and DSL users may notice slower response time from web sites due to heavy Internet traffic. This will pass by the mid January. Keep your head up; you still have better connections than most of the country.

Q: *“Our home computer is setup for four different people. We each have our own login for Windows XP. I don’t like the pictures that show up next to each name. Is there a way to change them to my own pictures, or pictures of each family member? I’d like that.”*

A: You’re in luck! There is a way to add your own “User Account” pictures.

If you don’t like the user account pictures that come with Windows XP you can add your own.

1. Click – Start, Control Panel, User Accounts, (find the user account you want to change and click) Change My Picture
2. Next, click – Browse for more pictures, (find the picture you want and double click the picture).
3. Close all open windows and log off if you want to see how the user account picture looks.

Q: *“I created a graph paper in Word XP and printed it. Now, every time I open Word, the graph opens up. I don’t want to open it every time I start, what can I do to get rid of it?”*

A: Each time Microsoft Word opens, it opens the default document template “NORMAL.DOT”. It looks exactly like the graph you created. Here’s how to get the normal blank document back on startup.

In Windows XP, Normal.dot (“.dot” extension = document template) is located in the following directory

C:\Documents and Settings\\Application Data\Microsoft\Templates\
* Substitute the currently logged in user for “<current user name>” *

- Delete (if found) ~\$Normal.dot (This is a backup file for Normal.dot, and is hidden so you need to show all hidden files from the “Tools”, “Folder Options” menu selection in order to see it
- Rename the Normal.dot file to Normal.bak
- Start Microsoft Word, and it should create a new clean template page, which is blank

NOTE: You cannot open, edit and save Normal.dot directly. It is the template file, which is opened when Microsoft Word starts up. You MUST NOT have your Word program open when you rename Normal.dot in the example above.

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