

## Amusing anecdote – good for a laugh

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What a lovely story heheh :-)

>-----Original Message-----

>As I read the innumerable posts regarding loss of product ID's, product

>CD's, mysterious virus infections, forgotten passwords, SP2 calamities and

>other tales of woe, I can't help but chuckle quietly as I jump from one

>desperate post to the next. I've been working with computers for a while

>and I'm not even close to being as knowledgeable as some of the old-timers

>here like Carey Frisch, Bruce Chambers and Larry Samuels. I help out my

>friends and some private clients with their computing problems on a casual

>basis.

>

>A friend called and said he had an office worker who was having problems

>with her home computer and asked if I could take a look and see if I could

>help her out. I said sure, and she called me and we arranged a time for me

>to come over to her place and check out the machine.

>

>It was a brand new Dell Dimension 8400, the box was sitting in her hall.

>She had cable internet service, professionally installed. She told me to

>sit down and see what I could do to fix it. I hit the power button and

>nothing. I hit it again and still nothing. I asked her if this was the

>problem and she laughed saying that it turns on just fine, kneeled down on

>the floor by the desk and flipped the power switch on a multi-plug surge  
>protector. The computer, printer, scanner, monitor, cable modem, web camera  
>and speakers all fired up at once! I must have looked amazed because she  
>asked if there was anything wrong.  
>  
>Over the din of the machinery coming to life I explained that a power strip  
>was not the way to start up your system or its peripherals. When I returned  
>my attention to the monitor, I could see that I was in for some real  
>trouble. The poor thing was finding new hardware left and right and trying  
>to install everything in the book. It crashed, of course. I asked her if  
>this was the problem she was having and she said no, it usually started a  
>couple of times before she could get on the internet.  
>  
>After I disconnected everything but the monitor, modem, mouse and keyboard,  
>I started the system up. A few of the "hardware not found" popups later, I  
>got to the desktop. It appeared to be normal (thankfully) with the usual  
>Dell stuff littered about. I found the Internet Explorer icon and hit it to  
>connect to the internet and see what was going to happen. At this point,  
>she pointed to the screen and said to watch closely. As IE came up, so did  
>the first of what would turn out to be over a dozen popups. Everything from  
>the usual pornography to plain, blank windows. Then the RPC shutdown, of  
>course!  
>  
>She jabbed her finger at the countdown box and said that this was the main  
>problem, she could only stay connected for a minute at a time. This seemed  
>to annoy her to no end as it meant she could only surf to sites that would  
>load in under a minute and only get one email at a time! What kind of  
>internet was it that would only let you on for a minute at a time? It was  
>difficult to stifle my laughter at this point. I got

the countdown stopped  
>*and made a quick recon of her system.*  
>  
>*No anti-virus enabled, even though Dell had shipped the unit with McAfee.*  
>*No anti-spyware software. No firewall enabled. In fact, no security*  
>*measures of any kind. I asked her if she knew about the built in Windows*  
>*firewall and she said yes. She didn't know that it had to be enabled to*  
>*work. When I asked her if she had turned on the McAfee anti-virus suite she*  
>*said she didn't know that it had to be enabled to work, either. I asked her*  
>*if the technician who installed her cable modem had mentioned any of this*  
>*stuff during his visit. She said yes, he had said that Windows XP can take*  
>*care of all of that for her, not to worry.*  
>  
>*I grabbed my utilities CD, containing copies of Ad-aware, Pest Patrol,*  
>*Spybot Search and Destroy and Spyware Blaster. I installed all of them, ran*  
>*the updates, then browsed over to get her a copy of AVG Anti-Virus and Zone*  
>*Alarm. With a cable modem connection, AVG and Zone Alarm were downloaded in*  
>*just a few minutes. While I waited for the serial number to come down from*  
>*AVG, I installed Zone Alarm, the free version, and started scanning her*  
>*system.*  
>  
>*At this point, it was just a matter of sitting through the scans and*  
>*allowing the applications to find and delete the incredible number of files*  
>*that had installed themselves. After about an hour and a half, her system*  
>*was clean. I had to do a Google search for the Blaster.exe fix because I*  
>*couldn't remember where I had found it myself. McAfee had identified it,*  
>*but couldn't delete it for some reason. She was delighted. I explained*  
>*what I had done and what she had to do to keep her system from getting*  
>*infected again. She wondered if some of those emails she had been getting*

>had something to do with her system problems.  
>  
>I remember thinking to myself that this had to be a bad dream. She had only  
>been able to see a part of her email so she had only opened a few of them.  
>When she explained that she did not know who these people were, but wanted  
>to see what they were emailing her about, I had to laugh. I couldn't help  
>it. I told her not to do that again, only to open mail from people you know  
>and are expecting to hear from. As I explained each of these problems I  
>encountered to her it was obvious that she wasn't stupid, she was getting  
>the point, it was just that no one had ever bothered to help her. All the  
>information was making sense to her, now that she was getting exposed to it.  
>  
>Once I had made sure that her machine was truly clear and clean I showed her  
>how to use the Windows Update feature as I had to leave for other business.  
>Of course, it was a huge list, the machine being new and the version of XP a  
>few months behind the updates. She understood that some updates would  
>require a reboot and she felt she could handle it. She was extremely happy  
>that someone would take the time to help her.  
>  
>On my way out, I pointed to the pile of paperwork and CD's on the coffee  
>table and told her not to lose anything. She laughed and said that she got  
>the message, loud and clear. My work here was done.  
>  
>So, people, listen up! The point of this is you have to get the knowledge  
>you need to operate your computer properly. Save all the paperwork that  
>came with your system. Save all the CD's and any packaging they were in.  
>Install, update, and configure a firewall, anti-virus software and  
>anti-malware applications. Save your receipts! Save and read the  
>installation instructions for your computer and anything else you connect to

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>*it. Register your system so you can take advantage of  
the makers warranty,  
>and do take advantage, you paid for it! But, most of  
all, ask questions.  
>This is what these newsgroups are all about. Thanks to  
all the old-timers  
>for all the help! Happy computing.*  
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