

Re: Windows Explorer Has Encountered A Problem

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"=?Utf-8?B?UGludG8xdWs=?=" <Pinto1uk@discussions.microsoft.com> writes:

>Hi, i am using windows xp and everytime and right click on "C"and then
>properties, i get the following error:

>"Windows Explorer has encountered a problem and needs to close. We are
>sorry for the inconvenience."

>Why does this happen and how do i resolve it.

<<<New Developments down at the bottom of this, but still no fix, yet>>>

If you have recently installed SP2 on your computer then there have now been about 200 people reporting very similar problems to what you are reporting. Some find that anything which uses Windows Explorer (Recycle bin, folder shortcuts, control panel, search, etc) all have a similar problem. Some find that right clicks are their major problem. Some find any click. Some find it crashes on open. Some find it refuses any clicks. Some claim they know how to fix this but I've read the tens of thousands of postings on SP2 and I don't think you will find any with "the fix" for this, at least not yet. Less than a dozen people ever reported finding a solution for this.

But, some find it will work when you boot in safe mode.

And, some find it will work when you create a new user and switch to that user to try it.

One of those might be a temporary work-around till you get an answer.

Some claim it is all spyware and viruses but I haven't seen any posting that confirmed this for the Windows Explorer problem. I carefully and repeatedly checked, no viruses or spyware and my windows explorer locks up every time. <<<Late breaking news, after

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hundreds of people reporting this problem, ONE person did let me know that trendmicro actually found a WORM_SDDROP.A virus/worm, he removed that and it appeared to solve his problem, so that's 10,000 times people chanting "it's all viruses and spyware" and one correct diagnosis>>>

Some claim it is all "bad applications" like Divx or Spy Sweeper being installed that is responsible for this, a very few people have confirmed this appeared to be the source of their problem but others have these installed and have no problem, most reporting the problem don't have these installed and still have the problem. I don't have either and it locks up every time. And unfortunately there is still no list of specific files known to cause this.

Some claim it is all "ShellExtensions", little accessory gadgets that sort of script extra cute features. The advice for that is to install free ShellExView and to try (carefully) disabling these features one at a time, if turning one off doesn't do anything then turn it back on and try again. I did that with all 75 at once and it made no difference at all. Two people have reported that disabling one extension they had did appear to fix their problem.

Some claim it is all "corrupted user profiles" that are the cause of this but I've never been able to track down a tool that would check a user profile to see if it was corrupted. There was one web page that Microsoft had which described a way of reporting errors found in this but this doesn't appear feasible for XP.

You can try to uninstall SP2, there are various descriptions of how to do that, using Control Panel/Add-Remove Programs or using a Restore point or doing a Repair Install of Windows or reformatting your hard drive, each of those is a bigger hammer than the previous method, but a number of folks have reported having various problems when they try to remove SP2 or after they do so. To be fair, SP2 probably fixes thousands of small and massive bugs in Windows XP and if you can get it to work it is probably a good thing to have.

You can escalate to Microsoft, go to <http://support.microsoft.com/windowsxpsp2> and give them all the details and clues and patterns you can find. There is no guarantee that their analysis or directions will be correct or even not make it worse. They told me I must "have some corrupted files, repair windows back to install state and then reinstall SP2 twice while in Safe mode." Before I did that someone posted the "switch user" workaround that let me get by temporarily. I sent email saying that if it worked for one user then it seemed less likely it was "some corrupted files" and asked if they still wanted me to blow windows away. They have not reponded to that in a number of days now. But I can imagine what it is like inside now.

You can try each one of these things and see if any one of them helps, but don't expect a fix.

<<<New Developments>>>

I just spent another two hours in chat with Microsoft Support, he changed his diagnosis a dozen times, going back to things we had already concluded had nothing to do with this, he thought that a file might have been corrupted during installation and this would leave an error message in /windows/setuperr.log, that file is empty, so he thought there might be answers in /windows/setupapi.log but he said he was not trained to know how to interpret that file, and the final conclusion was that he didn't know how to fix this one and I was "escalated", again.

So the next guy had me run msconfig, in the startup tab disable all items, in the service tab hide all Microsoft services and disable all, reboot the machine, tell it not to show or launch the config window... the Windows Explorer problem is unchanged and I was "escalated" again.

So the next guy had me download a copy of Process Explorer and dump out all the dll's that are connected with Windows Explorer and mail them to him. Just like the situation with shell extensions, I see that all but a couple of these are Microsoft supplied. But we will see what he suggests next.

I have repeatedly told them I don't just want to randomly change things until we don't notice the problem anymore, I'm going to track down the real root cause of this one and we are going to get a fix for this.

I hope something in this helps someone. But it appears that the large majority of people never get a fix for the "Windows Explorer" problem. If someone tells you to try something and it doesn't help then please make a posting so we can start accumulating what suggestions don't do any good. And if someone tells you something that does work then please report it.