

Re: Basic question concerning driver upgrading

Source:

http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.perform_maintain/2006-04/msg00355.htm

- *From:* "Ted Ziegler" <teddy.z@xxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Mon, 17 Apr 2006 09:56:09 -0400
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There is no compelling reason to upgrade any hardware device driver *unless* the upgrade provides a solution to a problem you are experiencing with the hardware device. Upgrading a driver merely because a new one is available doesn't accomplish anything and can cause you grief if something goes wrong.

The purpose of a driver is to act as a liaison between a hardware device and the operating system. The driver relays instructions from the device to the OS, and vice versa. In other words, its role is strictly technical, and upgrading the driver solves technical problems. This is quite different from your typical program update, which can also add new whiz-bang features.

There are, nonetheless, people who try to keep up with every new driver upgrade, going on the reasoning that even if you have no hardware problems now, you may experience problems in the future, so might as well upgrade now. There's nothing particularly wrong with this way of thinking, so long as you are comfortable with taking the risk of making an unneeded change to your otherwise stable system, and you know how to get yourself out of trouble should the upgrade go south.

I personally take the conservative approach. When the time comes to upgrade a driver, I go directly to the manufacturer's web site and get the new driver there. Before I install the driver I carefully read the driver's Release Notes and also scout the technical support area and user forums to see if the upgrade I have in mind has been causing problems. If everything checks out, I install the driver. As you might expect by now, I follow the manufacturer's installation directions exactly.

Using this simple, common-sense approach I have never experienced a problem upgrading a driver.

On the other hand, you may also get replies from those cowboys who want to rope every driver in the stampede. What you choose is really up to you.

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Ted Ziegler

"Backup is a computer user's best friend."

"JJ" <JJ@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message news:B2E537F7-677B-4547

Re: Basic question concerning driver upgrading

-965A-4B8AF28C03CE@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

I got a HP Pavilion notebook about a month ago, and having little experience

of upgrading software etc, I 've tried to leap into the "wonderful" world of

upgrading software like drivers and so on.

But what the sites like Windows Update and HP Software download won't tell me (or at least I havent found any help concerning this question) is exactly

HOW I should do the upgrading.

For example, a couple of days ago I found my way to the Upgrade your software&drivers page under HP.com. They listed lot's of new versions of the

drivers in my notebook, and I happily clicked "Install now" to get the newest

versions of the drivers I actually use.

But then my Windows XP crashed, claming an error with my ATI display driver.

So I began to look into things and realised that it is best to uninstall the

older version before you install the newest one. But when I found different

suggestions to how this should be done (from simple "add/remove"-actions to

special "cleandriver"-software), I began wondering if this is really what the

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average computer–user is supposed to know and do.

So my question is:

Is it really true that you should not simply install newer versions of a driver without removing the older version?

And if you must remove the older one, mustn't you restart windows before

you

install the newer version? The reason I'm asking is that I guess

restarting

windows after removing your driver will make windows look for the driver

that

was originally installed. But doesn't that just take me back to square

one: I

have to install my new driver on top of an older one!?

So how should a simple upgrading of driver software from an older to a

newer

version be done easily?

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