

Re: HELP! Dell told me I cannot watch tv on my tv AND work on com

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Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/Windows/microsoft.public.windows.mediacenter/2005-04/msg01570.html>

- *From:* "Peter Near [MCE MVP]" <peter@xxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Mon, 11 Apr 2005 09:19:11 -0400
-

Since you are talking about two PCs, you can have two different signal sources. Problem comes when you only have one PC, the signal for that one PC must be the same.

So analog cable on your PC and digital on your husband's PC should be fine.

Pete

yewing wrote:

Tiny Tim,

Thanks for the info. Again, you have been very helpful.

I am aware you can't hook up two different things to the tuners. I guess I didn't communicate very clearly when I was writing. Sorry about that. What I meant was that we want to hook up two cable connections to the tuners - both the same company and the same type of connection. My computer will be easy to do this with because my cable is straight from the wall. My husband's computer is another story because we use the digital cable with his connection so I will have to wait until I can afford another digital cable box so both set ups are the same thing.

I just really want to thank everyone that extended their knowledge to us here. You got us through this and I am thrilled to have my set up working just like I'd hoped! I couldn't have done it without all the outstanding assistance! Thank you, thank you, thank you!

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Yvonne

"Tiny Tim" wrote:

STB is Set Top Box or in other words your cable or satellite or digital TV receiver. The IR blaster is a cable with an Infra Red LED at the end that you attach to your STB so that the PC can change its channels to allow unattended recording. Of course, if you're watching live TV via the MCE PC, so that you can benefit from the recording buffer to allow pause or slow-mo etc., then you would use the PC remote to change channels rather than the remote for the STB. Your MCE setup should take you through the procedure to configure the blaster for your particular make/model of STB.

BTW, you suggested you want to use the twin tuners to attach different things to your PC(s). As far as I know, you can't. MCE will only work from one programme guide so you can't have e.g. cable attached to one tuner and satellite connected to the other. You need to have the same type of device, with identical programming, attached to each tuner. That might be two cable boxes, or two satellite boxes (same service provider) or two terrestrial RF connections. But you can't mix them on the same PC.

"yewing" <yewing@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote
in message
news:06BF0E85-F6BA-47CE-886B-18863AC2AC2D@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Pete,

YOU ARE BRILLIANT! I am viewing recorded t.v. shows on my t.v. while full screen computing on my monitor now!!!

I can hardly believe the 'expert' at Dell didn't catch that! I went through

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the entire set up with him several times. He supposedly went to their lab where he and another expert worked on the same configuration. His response was that it couldn't work. I intend to take time to call them back and let them know what the correct steps to take are so that they won't continue to misinform consumers.

I have another question, regarding my husband's configuration. Please forgive my ignorance, but what is 'stb'? His cable box? Also, what is an IR blaster? Tackling one computer late tonight was as much as I could handle for one very busy day. I'll work on his in the next few days.

THANK YOU so much. I was so frustrated and you solved my problem! I am so thrilled. Also, thank you for the extra advise about sharing file through the media center. I will be sure to look that up too.

I really can't thank you enough. You ROCK!

Yvonne

"Peter Near [MCE MVP]" wrote:

Well, you'll be happy to know that there's a simple solution. You said you ran svideo from the tuner card to the modulator. That is incorrect you need to run svideo from the video card to the modulator. Basically find out where your monitor is plugged in and there should be a SVideo connector right beside it. Sorry that the Dell guy didn't catch this, it's really quite a simple change.

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On the use case... I was originally going to suggest that you only need 1 PC and to return one of the MCE machines in favor of an extender. However, given what you've suggested it sounds like you have a legitimate need for 2 PCs - one for you and another for your husband to work on. You should be able to configure them as you mentioned below.

Your PC - connect from wall to the tuner card. Connect your video card's s-video out to the RF modulator and then to your TV.

Your husband's PC - connect from the STB to the tuner card using SVideo (if available, if not the composite or coax). Connect the IR blaster from the remote receiver to the front of the STB. Connect the SVideo out from the video card to the TV.

You may find it interesting to network the two PCs together so that you can share music, pictures, and television between the two. The music and pictures are fairly straightforward. Set up a share on each machine and then add that shared folder to the Music and Picture section of the other machine. Sharing TV is somewhat more complicated, but can be accomplished using a small utility called "Share recorded TV" which is located here: <http://www.thegreenbutton.com/downloads.aspx>

First things first, change that SVideo connection and get the TV working.

Pete

yewing wrote:

Pete,

I will try to explain what I am trying to accomplish as you request. Thank you for being willing to try to assist me.

First, let me address the driver issue. I tried to update the driver from

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windows, but it said there were no updates available. I then went to the nvidia website and successfully downloaded the latest driver there. The properties do give me the option to select to use a t.v. and to use dual screens, etc. However, the pc is still not sending a signal to my t.v. My t.v. is not necessarily older, but is new and cheap and little (just supposed to be one I could watch shows on while computing in my office). I hooked up s-video cable from the tuner card through an RF Modulator and then used coaxial cable to the t.v. from the tuner card. I went through the set up for the t.v./dual screens, but as I said before, it was unsuccessful. There simply is no output to the t.v. I am planning to read the pdf file Tiny Tim referenced more fully to try to work on this issue.

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Here is what I am trying to accomplish. I have 2 of these computers, both with dual tuner cards. My initial goal is this:

1. To have my pc in my office for computing using the monitor. At the same time that I'm computing, I want to watch media center recorded video and/or live t.v. output by the media center on my little (non s-video) t.v. It's not good to have this big, beautiful monitor (19" flat panel) with a little window for t.v. and another little window for computing. The windows have to be reduced to a point that make it hard to read data and require lots of scrolling, etc. I want to use the cable straight from the wall to my pc. I don't mind not taking advantage of the digital channels our cable provides.

2. To have my husband's pc in his

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office for
computing using the
monitor.
At the same time
that he's
computing, we want
to run the media
center
recorded video
and/or live t.v.
and/or streaming
music from the
internet
through his
entertainment
system. We are
happy to live with
only using one
of the dual tuners
for now because we
want to connect his
system from the
p.c. through the
digital cable box
and then to the
t.v. and his
speakers that
are part of his
stereo system. We
do not have two
digital cable boxes
available for him
to use at this
point in time so he
is willing to live
with
that and only
record and/or watch
1 show at a time.
The dual tuners are
for
future use down the
road when we can
afford to expand
more.

So, on my husband's
system we need to
hook the pc's tuner
card through his
digital cable box.

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The instructions
that came with the
Dell pcs show that
you can hook the pc
tuner card to a
t.v. and/or to a
digital cable box.
We are not
absolutely
positive that his
digital cable box
has the ability to
hook up using
composite cable as
recommended on the
set up by Dell, but
we were going to be
consulting with
someone on that
when we went to buy
the cable.

Down the road, we
want to add 2 or 3
media center
extenders to t.v.s
located
in different areas
of our home. We
can't afford the
extenders at this
time
and wanted to wait
for that phase of
our home
entertainment
improvement
project for another
year or two.

First things first
- we wanted to get
mine up and running
to prove we could
use the media
centers the way we
want in the long
run. If I cannot
use them
to run the computer

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using the monitor
at the same time as
watching the t.v.,
then that is not
what I wanted and I
want to return the
computers to Dell.
I
just received the
first one last
Thursday and the
second one last
Friday and
Dell has a 30 day
time we can return
the computers if we
are not happy. So,
the clock is
ticking, but I have
some time to
determine if this
will work or
not.

One more point. The
Dell specialist for
windows xp media
center that I was
working with also
told me I could not
use a media center
extender to use the
media center on a
t.v. while working
on my computer and
using the monitor
at
the same time. He
kept saying
something about a
software overlay
that would
prevent it. He
agreed with me when
I asked him if I
basically just
bought an
expensive tivo OR a
computer, but not
both.

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I can live with the
hacks or work
arounds you
suggested, but I
first need to
get a signal going
to my t.v.

Thanks for your help and time. I really appreciate the assistance.

Yvonne

"Peter Near [MCE MVP]" wrote:

Unfortunately,
Dell is
somewhat
correct.
You
can't do
this
easily
or
perfectly.
I would
recommend
that you
tell me
what
you're
trying
to
accomplish
with
this
setup
and then
I can
help you
get

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where
you want
to
go.
Ignore
technology
for a
second.
For
example:

"I want
to have
a PC
that I
can use
while at
the
computer
monitor
for my
internet
browsing,
email,
word
processing,
etc. I
also
want to
be able
to view
television,
pictures,
etc from
two
televisions
in the
house at
the same
time".

As it stands, the general statement is that you can't use
fullscreen in one monitor while performing other PC tasks
over control of the keyboard and mouse when it is running

You can however use MCE in a window while using other app
the PC. This opens the door to a few "hacks".

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1.
Almost
fullscreen
- When
in a
window,
drag the
corner
or media
center
until it
is
almost
fullscreen.
You can
then
move
this
window
over to
the
secondary
display.

2. Video mirroring - Most modern videocard support this.
Center in a window on your primary monitor. In the video
find a setting for "video mirroring" and set it to VMR mo
take whatever video is playing in a window on your primar
play it full screen on your secondary monitor. Note that
display any of the media center menus or guide, just the

Realistically, the method to accomplish what you want is
media center extender. This allows you to have multiple
sessions running on the TVs in your house, with only one
them all. This might be the solution for you, but I need
about how you intend to use this system.

Pete

yewing wrote:

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I
just
invested
thousands
in
two
new
computers
-
Dell
8400
with
dual
tuners
and
windows
xp
media
center
2005.
I've
been
trying
to
configure
the
media
center
so
it
would
play
through
my
tv
so
I
can
work
on
the
computer
WHILE
watching
my
t.v.

After
being
on
with

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support
for
nearly
an
hour,
while
they
configured
my
settings
in
their
lab,
I
was
told
you
can't
do
that
with
media
center!!!
They
said
only
one
screen
is
the
primary
screen.
I
can't
do
both.
If
I
direct
the
media
center
to
the
t.v.
then
I
can't
use
the
monitor

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with
the
computer.

My
call
was
initiated
to
them
because
I
can't
get
a
signal
to
my
t.v.
I
do
not
have
a
t.v.
with
an
s-video
cable
where
I'm
trying
to
hook
things
up
right
now.
I
was
advised,
through
here,
to
use
an
RF
modulator.
I
tried
that

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too.
No
dice.
So,
I
called
technical
support.
Technical
support
transferred
me
to
a
"media
center"
specialist.

Please
help
me.
Have
I
just
purchased
two
REALLY
expensive
tivo
boxes?
I
have
these
computers
set
up,
networked,
and
the
packing
is
already
broken
down.
It's
going
to
be
miserable
trying
to

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return
them.
Yet,
I
don't
want
to
keep
them
if
they
can't
do
all
I
bought
them
for.
Please,
please
help
me.