

Computer Bits by Mark Eggert of Raad One Network Solutions, Inc.

Welcome to the first of a series of articles of computer and network information. Hopefully, you'll find some of this information useful. This first article covers regular computer maintenance.

As with all machines, computers need regular maintenance to keep them in good running order. These maintenance items need to be done at regular intervals and the longer you go between them the more likely you are to have a problem, which could cause data loss and/or lost productive. There are three maintenance items and each has it's own schedule.

The first is the most important as it deals with your data. You need to protect your business data by backing it up. Data should be backed up daily, weekly, or monthly depending on its importance. The BIOS (Basic Input Output System) also needs to be backed up. The BIOS should be backup at least once and then only when changes are made to it.

The second item is cleaning the computer. Not only should the case, keyboard, monitor, and mouse be cleaned but the computer should be opened and the inside cleaned of dust and debris. You should also check that all cables are tightly connected. An important part here is to check and clean the various fans in the computer. If they remain dirty and fail to operate overheating can occur and damage the internal devices. This check should be performed every four to six months.

The last item is a drive check. The Boot Diskette needs to updated whenever hardware is added or removed. The hard drive needs to be checked by running ScanDisk and DeFrag. Defragmenting the hard drive helps it read and write at optimal speed and keeps the computer running at full speed. These should be done monthly or when major files are added/deleted from the system.