

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

Welcome to Computer Bits, a series of articles on computers and network information. Since Service Pack 2 (SP2) for Windows XP has been released, I thought I'd give you my thoughts on installing it.

There have been a number of articles, both for and against installing SP2, from Microsoft and from many other sources. Because Microsoft has made Windows XP more secure by default with SP2 there has been a lot of people cautioning not to install the service pack. I will admit that there are applications that will not work properly when SP2 is installed and there are settings that need to be made to make these applications work again. This is due to the Internet Firewall that is turned on by default and the security improvement in Internet Explorer which prevent applications from pushing files to your computer while you're on the internet or company network. Microsoft has provided documentation on their website that details the problem applications and how to make them work again. From personal experience I have had no problems with applications on my computer or the client ones I've installed the service pack on. In fact, I would say about 95% of the users of Windows XP should not have any problems with the service pack. To be safe though, I agree with Microsoft's recommendations to install the service pack on a spare or little used computer and test it in your environment.

One of the new features of Internet Explorer (IE) is a pop-up ad blocker that not only blocks pop-up ad but also pop behind ads (you know, those ads that come up behind you IE Window that you don't see until you close it). This pop-up blocker is good but not perfect. I still have my other pop-up blocker running and it still beeps to let me know it's blocked something. So I would recommend that you keep or install another pop-up blocker just to catch things that IE's blocker doesn't.

If you are still leery of installing SP2 and have any questions or concerns, please let me know and I'll try to help you with them.

If you have a computer or network question you'd like answered and you think others would like to know the answer too, please forward them to me. My email address is meggert@wi.rr.com, my phone number is 262-679-7704 and my fax number is 262-679-7664.