

PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

Computer Tips and Tricks

Christopher Grant

President/CEO of Grant-Tech LLC

Keywords: computer maintenance, computer tips, improving computer performance, practice management, temporary files

As an Information Technology (IT) Services provider to the Healthcare industry, we receive calls and emails every day relating to computer issues from prospective clients. After a brief conversation, we find that some of the issues could have been resolved by the callers themselves.

The calls range from very simple preventative maintenance activities, to complex issues such as dealing with viruses, malware, spyware, computers running slowly, and many other important and potentially devastating problems. Don't get me wrong, Grant-Tech LLC is in business to make a profit and are always available to assist our clients with technology issues. There are some things, however, you can do yourself and at the same time save some money while keeping your computers in "Tip Top Shape." This will keep your computers available to you and your staff when you need them most.

“ *There are some things ... you can do yourself and at the same time save some money ...* ”

Correspondence regarding this article can be emailed to info@grant-tech.net or sent to Grant-Tech LLC, 1114 W. Bryn Mawr Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60660 (773) 675-1423. All statements are the author's personal opinion and may not reflect the opinions of the College of Optometrists in Vision Development, Optometry & Vision Development or any institution or organization to which the author may be affiliated. Permission to use reprints of this article must be obtained from the editor. Copyright 2011 College of Optometrists in Vision Development. OVD is indexed in the Directory of Open Access Journals. Online access is available at <http://www.covd.org>.

Grant C. Computer tips and tricks. *Optom Vis Dev* 2011;42(4):240-241.

Here are a few simple things you should do:

Clean Out Those Old Temporary Files

Frequency: At least once a week

Time Required: About 5 minutes

Difficulty: Easy

Why: Manually cleaning out the Temp folder in Windows is often a necessary maintenance step.

Removing temporary files is a quick and easy task that can help save disk space and keep your PC free of file clutter. Just follow the step-by-step directions below to manually clean out the Temp folder. If this is the first time you have ever cleaned out this folder it might take a little longer to

delete all those old temp files that have gathered since you began using your computer. After that and if you manually run this maintenance tip on a weekly basis, it should not take much time at all.

Here is how:

1. Click on Start. Type "type" in the search box, and then hit the Enter key. This command will open the folder that Windows Vista, 7 and XP has designated as the Temporary folder. These are folders and files Windows needed at one time or another but are no longer useful. Everything in this folder is safe to delete.
2. To remove individual folders or files, hold down your Ctrl key while left clicking on each item you want to delete. Release the Ctrl key when you are finished.
3. To delete these items, hit your **Delete** key or click the **Organize** button (Windows Vista and 7) or **File** (Windows XP) on the toolbar menu, followed by the **Delete** option.

- a. You will probably be prompted to confirm that you wish to Delete Multiple Items. Click on **Yes** to confirm.
4. If you would instead like to remove everything inside the Temp folder, click on the **Organize** (Windows Vista or 7) or **Edit** (Windows XP) and then choose **Select All** from the menu.
 - a. NOTE: If you are prompted that there are hidden files in this folder, just click on **OK** to bypass the message. A few hidden files hanging out in the Temp folder probably are not important enough to worry about.
5. Again, to delete these items, hit your **Delete** key or click the **Organize** (Windows Vista or 7) or **File** (Windows XP) button on the toolbar menu, followed by the **Delete** option.
 - a. You will probably be prompted again to confirm that you wish to Delete Multiple Items. Click on **Yes** to confirm.
6. After all the files have been deleted you can close the folder window and empty your Recycle Bin, permanently removing the files from your PC.

You may receive an Error Deleting File or Folder message while the files are being deleted. This just means that one of the files is in use by a program right now. Click OK, close all open programs, and repeat the steps above, if you still receive the message, try restarting your PC and repeating the process again.

Deleting these files can keep your computer running in “Tip Top Shape”.

You can find other Computer Tips and Tricks by visiting our website at www.grant-tech.net or look for our next *Tip and Trick* in future issues of the OVD Journal.

[Editor’s note: I just did this and found almost a gigabyte of combined wasted space on several of my computers. This is a “tip” you probably need to implement immediately! Dominick M. Maino, OVD Editor]

Grant Stevens is a practice management consultant and can be reached at 1114 W. Bryn Mawr Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60660 (773) 675-1423, www.grant-tech.net.
