



**HAPPY HOLIDAYS!
SEASONS GREETINGS!**



Happy Holidays

What a fabulous year! Just wanted to thank you for your continued support. My small client base is what supports my small family, so we all thank you! We hope you passed a wonderful holiday season.

This year has been filled with an over-abundance of experiences. I managed to survive a year as president of our homeowners association (needless to say, I have taken that one off my list for 2005!), I began my masters program at Rollins in Counseling and Mental Health (got my report card! All A's ~well, one was an A-, but we don't mind!), I continued with my handful of dedicated clients, continue administrative and creative tasks with my husband on our webdesign business, finished up a third year teaching at IADT, and developed non-profit websites for Justin's old cub scouts and our community at Lake Francis. The new year brings the opportunity to cut down on some tasks and focus on my masters degree schooling, my small business (Evtechie! only 5 more months before I come out from under my Non-Compete!) and a reduced course load at IADT (down to three from four). I am amazed I survived the year!

I have been so busy that I haven't had the opportunity to do the research needed to put together an Evtechie Newsletter, and have gotten a few comments from clients to "put me back on your mailing list!" - which follows with the remark, I haven't taken a soul OFF the list- I just haven't had time. So here is a grand effort to tickle the computer interest of my Evtechie friends-

Featured Notes:

- Your New Year LIST
- Time to Upgrade or Buy?
- This Month on Evtechie
- Techie Tip

A list of Tasks to keep your computer happy another year!

It is time for the usual maintenance. I know I have left my [maintenance lists](http://evtechie.com/pdf/MaintainXP.pdf) (<http://evtechie.com/pdf/MaintainXP.pdf>) with many of my clients, but I know how my clients are - only a handful attend to these tasks on a monthly basis- the rest like to invite me over to have things cleaned up (I don't mind!)

1. Make sure you have renewed your antivirus software!

Trend Micro's Internet Security: My favorite antivirus company released the newest version of their software a few months ago. They continue to out support the usual ranks of the "Internet Security" crowd- and they offer a big bang for your buck... Right now they even let you purchase a three license package.(you have to poke around, but it is worth it- <http://www.trendmicro.com/en/home/us/personal.htm>). New in their latest version is not only the firewall, but also a spam stopper and spyware/malware scanner! You don't need to have each program seperate with pop-up blockers, spam filters, Ad-aware Removers and all that.

- **Anti-virus:** Trend Micro (makers of PcCillin and a huge supporter in the corporate industry - also the first to offer PDA antivirus) continues to be top of the charts with their antivirus capabilities. They offer a free "housecall" virus scan from their servers which I use frequently with clients who report issues. Many of the latest viruses can disable a stagnant antivirus product. PcCillin continues to impress me!
- **Firewall:** Firewall needs are growing rapidly as many users are moving from dial-up to DSL or High Speed Digital Cable. Essentially, when you are open to the internet, your computer uses all kinds of "virtual" holes (called ports) to communicate over the internet in many ways. A firewall makes many of your ports invisible to intruders, malicious web sites, and worms that like to exploit those holes.
- **Anti-Spam:** Ahh- Trend's security also includes that (do I sound like a commercial? Honestly, I don't get a dime for this!!) Trend begins filtering junk by putting a SPAM tag in the subject header. You can quickly "can" the SPAM! (For advanced users: I set up a filter to send it to my trash- I was pleased!! I still check my trash before I delete it, to be sure I didn't miss anything important!)
- **Web-Filters:** This may sound a bit more advanced, BUT if you have children in the house you may want to place some filters on your internet access.
- **Malware Scan:** I used Ad-Aware to scan for spyware, malware, and junkware on my system. Trend has added a scanner and once a week it reviews my system for junk.

Here is a link, if you are curious:

<http://www.trendmicro.com/en/home/us/personal.htm>

2. Clean out your junk! Take some time to clean out your temporary folders on your system, including running a Disk Cleanup. If you haven't done it all year, you will notice an increase in surfing speed and system speed. The easy way to clean up is to first run Internet Explorer - Tools --> Options --> and on the new popup window, click on Delete Cookies and Delete Files.

Then do a disk cleanup by going to START --> All Programs --> Accessories --> System Tools --> Disk Cleanup and run it- ckecking off all your boxes except compressing old files (that can take years).

3. Run Ad-Aware! While we surf - and especially if you have KIDS surfing, you end up with all kinds of messes (including phantom search engines that require more "expert" attention). The biggest mess is spyware and malware. Use Lavasoft's [Ad-aware](#) to quickly clean up spyware on your system. if you haven't downloaded and used this program, take time to do it! Lavasoft's site has an icon for download.com and gets you quick access to the download (then install it and run it!) My task sheet explains in detail.

4. Run DeFrag! Our computer starts like a new pack of cards. Everything organized and in order. As we use programs and complete tasks those cards get mixed up. So when you request the Ace of Spades, it takes longer to find it in the deck - the same with your computer - it gets fragmented and then when you request that document you wrote a week ago, it takes a bit longer for the computer to find the file. THAT is why we have Defrag. Defrag reorganizes your computer's decks of cards so that when you attempt to access something, it happens quicker! Run Defrag by going to START --> All Programs --> Accessories --> System Tools --> Disk Defragment. You can't do other things when this is running. Close ALL tasks, and turn off any program running in the background.

Is it time to upgrade or buy "anew"?

This question comes up a lot, usually after the holidays when many families are eager to spend their holiday winnings on new technical upgrades.

Moore's Law states that every 18 months a processor's capacity is doubled. Moore's Law is named after Gordon Moore, co-founder of Intel, who in 1965 noticed that the number of transistors per square inch on integrated circuits had doubled every year since the integrated circuit was invented. He predicted that this trend would continue for the foreseeable future. Most experts, including Moore himself, expect Moore's Law to hold for at least another two decades.

That being said- our systems depreciate just like a car, except the technology inside is outdated within 18 months (unlike cars that really never have anything new!). If your system is older than four years, you are likely to spend a pretty penny getting it cleaned up, upgraded, and optimized compared to investing in a newer system. What often happens in technology is that once a system begins to fall "behind the times" the demand for parts decreases, which in turn increases the price of upgrades for that particular system. YES, the hottest new technology costs a lot more, but I don't recommend getting the latest and greatest right away anyway. As the demand increases, the price drops.

Your best bet is to have your system evaluated- reviewed by a Techie, cleaned up and checked, then find out what the best options are. If you have a machine by a manufacturer, you can go to their website and put the model number in, they often offer upgrades to systems which most often include memory or CPU (processor) upgrades. I love to advise on such things and can personally help you understand what those upgrades are and what they will do for you.

This Month on Evtechie.com...

I do a lot of research on topics that often come up with clients. Usually the answers I find stay with the client. Regardless, I should take time to share them in Techie Tips, which is why I have an archive of resources. I have yet to find a handy way to organize the content- some day I will, meanwhile, the research I do brings me to dozens of wonderful sites that have answers (although many of you believe me to be a know it all, I often depend on the wise experiences of others as well as my own computing adventures!) This month I have posted some wonderful tips of the F# keys on your keyboard as well as the differences between Hibernate and Standby on Windows XP. Check out the updates on: <http://www.evtechie.com>

TechieTip...

Every keyboard has a row of keys along the top marked with the letter F. Here's what some of them do:

F1 - Need help? If you want to get help while working in any current program just press this key.

F2 - After highlighting a file or folder in Windows Explorer, press this key to rename it. Press Enter to move on.

F3 - Press this key while working in Windows Explorer or on the desktop to generate the "Find Files" window.

F4 - Press this key to open the Address bar in Internet Explorer. To close an open window press Alt + F4.

F5 - You can make sure the Web page you are viewing contains the latest information by pressing F5 to refresh it. And by the way, it does the same thing when you are looking at files in Windows Explorer.

F6 - Press this key to move the cursor around in Windows Explorer.

F8 - If you continuously tap F8 on boot up you can get yourself to "safe mode" which is the cleaned up version of Windows before all your HooHah is installed in regular mode.

F11 - key toggles between a regular-sized Internet Explorer window and a full-sized one. It also works in Windows Explorer.

F7-F12 - function differently in different programs.

~ In MS Word for example, F7 pulls up the spell checker
~ F10 activates the menu.

Coming Next Time

Who knows... I'll try to make it good!

- Until then, I thank you for your continued support and wish you a wonderful Holiday Season,

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