

SENIORNET COG MEETING, 14th JUNE 2017

(NOTES ON SOME TOPICS RAISED AT THIS MEETING - Prepared by Ricky Berg)

These Notes have been prepared and distributed in the hope that they will be useful for all SeniorNet members, and are also available for viewing at any time on our website at <http://www.wellingtonseniornet.co.nz/newsletters.html>

System backups: After hearing about a couple of Member's experiencing major computer failures, the matter of having a backup of the Operating System e.g. Windows 10, was discussed.

In the past, when buying a new computer we used to get additional materials such as User Manuals and disks containing the Operating System, but these days a spare copy of the Operating System is usually held on the computer's hard disk. This is great if the computer starts playing up for some software reason, BUT in the event of a hard disk failure then the 'recovery' of one's Operating System is nigh on impossible. People are pretty good at backing up their data, but tend to forget about the heart of their computer, the Operating System itself.

Fortunately Win 10 makes it very easy and simple to create a discrete copy of the Operating System on a removable device, which can then be used at any time to sort out problems if they arise, or even reinstall on a new computer. The following instructions allow the Operating System to be backed-up to a 16GB flash drive –

Click the *Search* icon (looks like a magnifying glass), then type *recover*. From the resultant list, select "*Create USB Recover Drive*", which will open the Recovery Media Creator program ... insert the flash drive and follow on-screen instructions. The whole process will take about 30 to 40 minutes, after which store the flash drive somewhere safe.

Out of Memory: Sometimes when updating a computer application/program there will be a message on-screen saying that there is not enough memory to either install or run the update. Many times this occurs because there is a lot of data already in memory, and closing some running applications will be sufficient to free up space and allow the update to be installed.

It is recommended that if you get such a message, then completely re-booting the machine is a good idea because that will completely clear the memory, and thus enable the update to proceed unabated.

In the rare instance where the update continues to state that there is insufficient memory available, this is usually where an update is too advanced for the type and age of the computer itself, and in most cases the 'old' installed program will continue to run just fine.

Deleting old Operating System files: In these days of significantly large hard drives, there is little point worrying about lack of storage space. However, some people may wish to reclaim storage space, and deleting files that have served their purpose will do this. When we update the Operating System, older or replaced files are kept aside just in case we want to 'roll back' or undo the latest changes, and eventually these files simply just build up and become obsolete.

One of the easiest methods to carry out this cleansing, is to use the *Disk Cleanup* feature ... click Search, type *disk cleanup*, and select the program. Carefully select which areas you want cleansed (personally I'd include *Temporary*, *Upgrade Log Files*, and *Recycle Bin*), and click the *Cleanup* button.

ISP access to modem or router: Some people have become concerned that their Internet Service Provider (ISP), may be able to access their modem, and subsequently any routers and thence their home network. All modems connected to a commercial internet service are usually identified by the service provider so that firstly they know what service is to be charged for and to whom, and secondly so that they can fix any problems that may occur between themselves and your computer. This identification is by using what is called a *Media Access Control Address* (MAC), which every single device on a network (home or world-wide) has ... you may have even seen this number on the sticker on the base of some of your own devices.

Note that the ISP "accessibility" stops before any routing (wifi or Ethernet cable). There have been a few rumours that ISPs could access networks beyond their modems, but this seems to largely be myth, unless the computer owner specifically gives permission for this by way of a Remote Access link. Firewalls, Anti-Virus programs, and good Passwords on your router would kick in if anyone attempted an unsolicited intrusion.

Browser settings: It is quite easy to delete the list of searches and sites visited from a web browser, and most use similar means ... click on *Settings* and look for options such as *Clear Cache*, *Clear History*, *Clear Browsing Data*, etc. This will delete the lists of all the web sites you have visited over time, and also reduces the number of 'suggestions' that pop up when typing into the browser search field.

Some people prefer to not have 'suggested web sites' pop up as they type their own search, and in many browsers this function (also called *Page Prediction*), can be turned off ... again, it is in the Settings options.

Remembering passwords: With so many services requiring Passwords to access your personal information and data, a number of people are now using a Password Manager to aid remembering them all.

A recent survey of Password Managers has been carried out by PC Mag, and makes for good reading at <http://au.pcmag.com/password-managers-products/4524/guide/the-best-password-managers-of-2017>