



Why is your computer like your car?

Because it needs regular servicing to give you the best ongoing service. Have you noticed that the super fast PC you bought a while back now seems to be slowing down? The reasons for this can be many, but if you have the system serviced, as you would your car, then you can be sure you are getting the best out of your investment. Most people are aware that a car only stays at peak efficiency and reliability with regular maintenance and that if this is neglected it is more likely that it will breakdown, expensively, at the most inconvenient time. The same applies to computers, which accumulate a lot of unnecessary junk that needs to be cleared out periodically and the system "tuned". The junk consists of temporary files, unused programs and worst of all unauthorised content such as viruses. As the disk drive in the computer fills up it will start to slow down just as a heavily laden car will. Regularly cleaning the junk files out leaves the operating system of your computer more room to operate and so it is less likely to slow down or even crash if it runs out of space, just as a car will run better if not carrying a lot of unnecessary cargo.

Additionally the various parts of the files become scattered and so take longer to get a file together when you need it, just like trying to find the tools you need to repair the car, when you know they are there but they have become scattered instead of all being in the toolbox. Just as you can find all the tools and put them all back in the toolbox, for quick access when needed, so the de-fragmentation process will do the same for a computer, by gathering together all the parts of the files into contiguous locations. With your car when it needs servicing, unless you are expert and have the time yourself, you will put it into a garage for servicing, where people with the right tools and knowledge will carry out the service. With the computer you can get somebody to come in regularly to service your machines, but like putting the car in for a service, may involve some inconvenience and loss of availability or you could get the computer system continuously monitored and maintained using a remote service over the Internet. By having the servicing done continuously, your systems are kept on top form with many problems resolved before you are even aware that they exist, wouldn't be nice if the same was available for your car? As a bonus the experts continuously monitoring your system are also available to answer any questions you may have, rather than waiting until the next service.

You wouldn't let a stranger have access to your car, they could steal it and use it for illegal purposes, such as raiding a bank or joy riding around, using your petrol and maybe causing damage to or writing off your car, and you would have to explain away any speed camera tickets they picked up! The affects of viruses in your computer could be similar in that some of them hijack your machine and use it for other purposes such as a denial of service attacks and sending of Spam Email, or they could just cause your data to be destroyed. So with your car you have keys, alarms and immobilisers so with computers firewall devices and Anti Virus software are used to deter unauthorised access. But the best alarms etc are useless unless they are kept in good working order and correctly applied and the same applies to computers, you can buy and install firewalls and AV software but if it is not correctly applied and maintained it will not be effective. As the threats to computers are continuously changing so the protection must change to retain it's effectiveness, and as some of the changes needed can require specialist knowledge the best way is to get in an expert either in person or using remote management technology.

With all your data on your computer, what would happen if the computer became defective or was stolen or destroyed? With your car you take out insurance which will pay out to replace it, but your data is more like the one off, only one of it's kind car in that it is unique to you, you can't buy another copy off the shelf. So data requires more than just ordinary cash insurance and this is where data backup comes in, which to be effective must take regular copies of the data and secure them away from the original. Traditionally this has been done in a number of ways involving tapes, CD's, DVD or even floppy disks, but with any of these methods you still have the inconvenience of remembering to insert the correct media each time and to secure it once the backup has been taken. Then should you require to restore some of the data you have to find the correct piece of media load it and then get your file back, it would be much simpler if all your backup copies were available in one place. With the availability of broadband Internet it is now possible to use a remote backup program that stores your data copies at secure off-site locations, yet you have instant access to all the retained data through a simple interface, similar to that used to find files on your own computer. Additional benefits are that there is no additional hardware or media to buy and maintain and that your data can be securely accessed from a replacement machine should the original become unavailable.

So in conclusion if IT is not your business get your IT properly maintained before IT drives you out of business, your mind or both.

For more information on the availability of services to keep your IT running efficiently. Contact 01189441111 or email info@umtali.co.uk.