



IT Tips and Tricks #16 – Windows XP Service Pack 2

After last time's gentle humour (or not, depending on your point of view!) we thought that we would look at one of the current "thorny" issues that is taxing writers and users of all things IT: Microsoft's new Service Pack 2 for Windows XP.

In summary, Windows XP Service Pack 2 is aimed fairly and squarely on improving the security of systems running on the Windows XP platform; unfortunately, following the problems that many users experienced with XP's first service pack, some people have been waiting to hear whether installing the update will create fewer problems than it solves.

Generally speaking, most upgrades appear to have gone smoothly provided that users have followed some basic principles, first. These include performing a full data backup, removing spyware & adware programs and running a full anti-virus scan (using the latest DAT files for your anti-virus program).

Microsoft, itself, is aware of issues with this important upgrade and has produced a number of Knowledgebase articles to assist. Rather than repeating everything within this Tips & Tricks, we have set out below a number of references where you can check them out for yourself.

- Article from PC World online giving an overview of the issues
 - <http://www.pcworld.com/news/article/0,aid,117990,tk,wb101104x,00.asp>
- Microsoft's own Knowledgebase article covering issues with certain software programs
 - <http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?kbid=884130&product=windowsxpsp2>
- Links from Microsoft to PC manufacturers sites
 - <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/sp2/oemlinks.mspx>
- The Windows XP Service Pack 2 site
 - <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/sp2/default.mspx>
 - http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/sp2/sp2_whattoknow.mspx

By taking the time to do some research first, followed by an application of sound principles that we should all follow before installing new software (and I'm sure that we all back up our documents on a regular basis!), then the installation of SP2 should be relatively painless with the benefits of the new version far outweighing the downsides; hopefully, this article will help in this aim.