(Approx. 371 words)

Dan’s Desk

Most Common Issues that Need Repair from a PC/Mac Repair Shop Perspective

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This month I am updating the presentation highlights from the session I gave at the APCUG virtual Technology Conference held back in 2019. I spoke on “Most Common Issues that Need Repair from a PC/Mac Repair Shop Perspective.” Here are some of the highlights:

Failing or Failed Hard Disc Drives/HDD

Symptoms

* Poor performance
* Boot failure message
* Hard drive failure prediction message issued by Self-Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Technology (SMART)

Solution

* Replace HDD with HDD (I no longer recommend doing this; you will be much better off with an SSD in almost every case)
* Replace HDD with Solid State Disk (SSD) If old HDD is still bootable, clone to a new drive
* If the old HDD is not bootable but is still readable, copy personal files off for later transfer to the new drive

Web Scammer Messages

Symptoms

* Locked out from PC with message panel displayed with a number to call
* Phone calls claiming to be Microsoft, Dell, etc.
* Web page that states you are infected and must call

Solution

* System Restore to last system checkpoint
* Clean/reset browser start pages and/or search engine
* Install Malwarebytes and perform a scan to remove any nasty programs

Poor Performance

Symptoms

* Slower boot times than normal
* Mouse/keyboard slow to respond
* Browsers/apps slow to load/respond

Solution

* Check for hard drive errors, and excessive usage in Task Manager – many hard drives with capacities of greater than 500GB are failing much sooner in my experience
* Check for malware/spyware – run Malwarebytes
* Check for obvious ‘junk’ programs in Programs & Features, especially programs that claim to maintain drivers
* Check for missing Windows updates
* Check Event Viewer logs for error messages

Lockout/Loops After Updates

Symptoms

* Spinning circle with black screen
* Loop constantly restarting
* A message with automatic repair failure/attempts

Solution

* Try using System Restore in Advanced tools
* Sometimes just letting it run 15-30 minutes fixes it

If these do not work, back up personal files and try a reset of the OS. Sometimes, the HDD must be wiped and reloaded if Windows cannot be booted after all recovery actions fail.