

a plus view NEWSLETTER

A + Certification Computer Repair News & Updates

CES Industries, Inc.

Spring 2000

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT



Greetings to all of you. This is our second newsletter and your response has been overwhelming. I thank you for your participation and hope that it will continue. As of now, we will be doing the newsletter every two or three months. Again, we are asking students and teachers to submit articles, stories, (serious and funny) pictures, etc. All submissions must be approved and submitted by your instructor to the address below. Every three months there will be a \$256.00 value certificate for the A+ Certification Exam awarded to one lucky winner.

We hope to have all A+ Computer Repair Program Instructors on our mailing list. If you know of anyone who is not on it or would like to receive it please let us know.

Mitchell B. Nesenoff, A+, Network+

Dr Seuss Explains Computers

From: Roger L. Cross

If a packet hits a pocket on a socket on a port,
and the bus is interrupted as a very last resort,
and the address of the memory makes your floppy disc
abort,
then the socket packet pocket has an error to report.

If your cursor finds a menu item followed by a dash,
and the double-clicking icon puts your window in the trash,
and your data is corrupted 'cause' the index does not flash,
then your situation's hopeless and your systems gonna
crash!

If the label on the cable on the table at your house,
says the network is connected to the button on your mouse,
but your packets want to tunnel on another protocol,
that's repeatedly rejected by the printer down the hall,
and your screen is all distorted by the side effects of gauss,
so your icons in the window are as wavy as a souse,
then you may as well reboot and go out with a bang,
'cause as sure as I'm a poet, the suckers gonna hang.

When the copy of your floppy's getting sloppy on the disc,
And the micro code instructions cause unnecessary risk,
Then you have to flash your memory,
And you'll want to RAM your ROM . . .
Quickly turn off your computer and go & tell your Mom.

Submitted by Joe Cirillo of Carlisle Area School District in
Carlisle, PA. Roger L. Cross is Joe's Pastor.

Mr. Ed's Tech Tips

Undoubtedly, since our last chat, you have heard about proposed changes to the A+ Certification Examination that were originally scheduled to be live by June or July of this year. As of right now, though, we can breath a collective sigh of relief, since the new changes, including the dreaded computerized adaptive format (CAT) will not happen until August of this year. CompTIA is still in the process of finalizing the programming and revising the current test, and as with all new products, delays are sometimes inevitable. They are now promising that by the end of August CAT will be here, but the contents of the test will NOT be changing. So for now, keep doing what you have been doing regarding subject matter.

continued

Don't Forget

Mail your articles to:

CES Industries, Inc.

130 Central Avenue, Farmingdale, New York 11735

Attention: NEWSLETTER Editor.

Tel: 631-293-1420 Fax: 631-293-8556

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Mr. Ed's Tech Tips *continued*

The revised test, as of today, is scheduled to go live sometime in the first quarter of the year 2001, and will include the addition of Windows 98, Windows NT, Windows 2000, and some baseline understanding of the Linux operating system. Of course, once this material has been firmly adopted as part of the curriculum guidelines, you can expect to see information regarding the changes both in my column and on our website.

This month's first tech tip is more of a first look than an actual tech tip. We are all well aware of the new operating system released by the behemoth of Redmond, which is Windows 2000 Professional (Server/Advanced Server/Data Center). ☺!!! What we may not be aware of is that the version released on February 17th, is simply Windows NT Version 5, and not the long awaited end to the Windows 9X grief. Windows 95/98 will still be here and, unfortunately, will be for the foreseeable future. Microsoft is planning a release of Windows called Windows Millennium Edition (Windows Me), which, if all goes according to schedule, will release to distribution sometime during the summer months. Currently Windows Me Beta 3 is available to developers and solution providers via the Microsoft Developers Network (MSDN). I have received my Beta copy and have had the opportunity to put the program through some of its paces.

Windows Me is simply an evolutionary step of Windows 9X. The program is built on the Windows 9X engine, and as such will not offer anywhere near the stability, security and dependability of Windows 2000 Professional (formally Windows NT – Workstation). First look at Windows Me congers up déjà vu all over again. It installs like, looks like and runs just like Windows 98. Windows Me has the same interface, same desktop, same control panel, and most likely, the same problems. The only benefit is that the learning curve is non-existent, since most if not all of the functions, are in the same familiar places.

My installation experience with Windows Me is exactly what I had expected it to be. The installation went quickly and smoothly, copying itself to the hard drive, going through the normal series of reboots, and finally presenting the desktop. As with any new operating system, there were some issues with drivers not being found, and in some cases, not working at all. Trying to find drivers that would work with the test platform was at best, a challenge. After spending many hours of configuration time, Internet

searching and a few trial and error type loads, all is working on the test platform.

In contrast to Windows 95/98, overall stability improvements do seem to exist, but compared to Windows 2000 Professional, I have already had to reboot the Me system twice, compared to my Windows 2000 server that has been running 24/7 since February 17th, without a single “blue screen of death”.

I promise to keep you updated as testing progresses.

“Hard Drive Hell”

I have had a few sites call for technical support regarding a very interesting problem, and it seems that “pilot error” is the cause. The symptom is that after installing Windows 95, (the installation goes flawlessly) but after the machine reboots for the final time, the CD-ROM disappears from the device manager and the performance tab reports that Windows is operating in 16-bit MS-DOS compatibility mode. No matter what you try, the CD-ROM cannot be accessed, and Windows will not come out of compatibility mode. I did some investigation and after many hours of trying to duplicate the problem, I finally succeeded.

I suspected that the problem was related to either a device driver or a virtual device driver not functioning correctly. This suspicion turned out to be completely wrong. The problem was an incompatible FAT/Master Boot Record. It seems that for some reason, people are trying to format and partition the hard drive using a disk containing MS-DOS 6.22 and not the Windows 95 installation disk. The program does format and partition the drive correctly, however, when windows installs, on some computers you get this problem.

The solution: As much as we hate to have to start again, this is the only way around this problem. First and foremost, you must have the Windows 95 installation disk. This is a disk that is provided to you in the A + Certification parts kit. (I hope you made copies of this disk). You will need to follow the procedure outlined directly below.

1. Reboot the computer into the system BIOS setup screen.
2. Set your hard drive parameters correctly using the auto-detect feature of the BIOS

Mr. Ed's Tech Tips *continued*

3. Locate the Format Hard Drive Option (May not be present on all BIOS Programs. If your computer does not have this option you will need to contact technical support for additional assistance.
4. Low Level format the hard drive according to the screen instructions. Note that this may take several hours to complete, and you may want to run this program overnight. In some cases, the BIOS will report success and NOT format the drive. If this happens to you, contact technical support for instruction.
5. Exit the BIOS setup and save all the changes .
6. Insert the Windows startup disk into the floppy disk drive, and restart the computer.
7. Run the FDISK partitioning program and be sure to choose large disk support. If you fail to select

large disk support, you will not be able to access the entire hard drive.

8. Reboot the computer.
9. Run the dos FORMAT utility, and format the hard drive.
10. Run the windows setup program from the CD-ROM

After completing these 10 steps, you should now have a fully functional Windows 95 installation. Check the device manager and the performance tab to verify that the problems are solved. If not, you may have to send the hard drive back to CES to be low level formatted using special software.

Until next issue...
Ed.

HELPFUL HINTS

Mr. Joe Cirillo, of Carlisle Area School District, in Carlisle, PA had an interesting experience with installing SIMMs when classes began building their computers. We noticed the SIMMs didn't seem to want to click into the slots easily, but with a little gentle coaxing they went into place. Later, during the initial power-on tests, several of the computers beeped loudly. We installed one of the POST cards that came with our equipment and got an error code of C1. Referring to the code sheet, we deduced that the error was in the SIMMs not seating correctly. We tried to swap SIMMs from one computer to another. That solved the problem for several, but that solution did not work for several others. Mr. Cirillo got a small round needle file from the metal shop and filed the holes on the SIMMs to enlarge them slightly and elongate them a bit. We reinstalled those SIMMs and have not had a problem with any of the SIMMs since.

~ NICE JOB, JOE! THANKS ~

If you would like to receive this newsletter also by E-mail; please send us your E-mail address at m.nesenoff@cesindustries.com

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MEMORANDUM

from

George Westinghouse High School
Brooklyn, New York

As a result of the success of our A+ Computer Repair Program, George Westinghouse now has the largest number of computer repair interns (18) in the New York City Board of Education Cooperative Education Program, which is more than any other high school in New York City. Students, under the supervision of a Board of Education computer technician, troubleshoot, repair, and assemble computers on-site in public schools and in district offices throughout New York City.

James Reilly

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