

**Finally! Your Computer Woes Are Over!
Just Call The Man... The PC Man.**



Glenn Crabtree
The PC Man
Call or email today:
704.344.9379
glenn@homepcman.com

- Has your system crashed?
- Is your computer too slow?
- Want a high speed Internet connection?
- Can't load the latest software or games?
- Need more memory?
- Need virus protection?
- Want to send email to family and friends?
- Bring your children into the internet age.
- Need help choosing new system & setting it up?
- Need to upgrade or general repairs?

No need to take your system to the shop and wait an eternity to get it back. We come to you!

"I needed someone to help me get the most out of my computer system. Dealing with email and the Internet has always been a bit overwhelming for me. Glenn has made it fun and exciting to use the computer, not frustrating and laborious, for our entire family"
Satisfied Client

Now you can get computer repairs and general help right in the comfort of your own home. Expert service, setup and training.

computer help for the home



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In My Humble Opinion

You might ask yourself sometimes; "Why do I need a computer anyway?" Could it be because it makes things easier? Or does it make things a bit more complicated?

You may need a computer to test out all those crazy viruses out there. What are they all about anyway? You may need one to make sure you don't miss out on those wonderful little hidden cameras I hear about all the time. What do you do with those things anyway?

A computer should be beneficial. If they could only help me figure out how to balance my checkbook every month. If they could only help my kids do well in math. If they could only help me win the lottery! But they can't, so what good are they anyway?

If a computer is supposed to be a good tool, why does it break down all the time? If a computer is so smart why can't they make one that will repair itself when there is a problem? How in the world is a human able to beat a computer at chess? I can't figure that one out.

But alas, a computer is engineered and made by humans. We can't seem to get it all right. It is the humans of the world that make it all fit together. We, as part of this world, try to make it all worthwhile. A computer is just another device that fits in with everything else to make it all easier, and it is humans that can make it a real chore to deal with....imagine that!

Have you hugged your computer lately? Probably not, but cheer up it will get better.

Glenn



It is estimated that they are approximately 300 million obsolete computers in the United States, with less than 10% being recycled. The problem is, what do we do with them as consumers?

Obsolete computers are the fastest growing part of our waste stream, growing 3 times faster than any other waste product. One report estimates that a pile of these obsolete computers would reach a mile high and cover six acres. That's the same as a 22-story pile of e-waste covering the entire 472 square miles of the City of Los Angeles.

The computer you're using contains lead, mercury, barium, cadmium, flame retardants, other toxic materials and is considered hazardous waste when it's thrown away. So what do we do with them? There are government funded programs, but how do we find out about them? The graphic above was taken from a web site by a consumer group called the **Computer Take Back Campaign**. They are trying to bring an awareness to the corporate world of a better sense of accountability for electronic waste (e-waste). They say there may be upwards of 600 million obsolete computers out there.

This is partly a consumer problem, but moreover it is problem created by the manufacturers and totally ignored by

large corporations. The PC manufacturers should be promoting the use of less toxic materials in the production of our PCs. The corporate world should take more of an active role in recycling them.

Should the computer manufacturers be required to take back their old PCs and recycle them? Should the government fund the private sector to form a recycling program? These are serious issues to be answered. We have all discarded old electronic devices and PCs without really being aware that they are toxic and a danger to the environment.

The **Computer Take Back Campaign** is trying to help with that education. They are also promoting the responsibility of the manufacturers of these devices to fund the collection and recycling of hazardous electronics devices. I for one would very much like to recommend to my clients to use a particular method of disposal. I am not aware of any easy way to get rid of an old PC.

We can probably do a better job of phasing out these toxic chemicals being used in the manufacturing process. We can certainly require the PC makers to disclose what toxic chemicals are contained in there devices.

Lets get involved in the process and become aware of the potential dangers.

The Daily Backup

The Handheld Sweet Spot.

Handheld computers have joined wireless phones and briefcases as essential tools for most small business travelers. That's a good news/bad news sort of thing. The bad news is there is an overwhelming selection of handheld devices to choose from, from \$100 to \$700. It's tough to figure out the differences in all of them. The good news is that in this technology world, handhelds have become more powerful even as prices for them has dropped. Let's take a look at three priced at between \$300 and \$400 that offer most of the latest features and benefits to the mobile professional.



The **Dell Axim X5** is based on Microsoft's Pocket PC platform and is priced at \$249 and \$349. It has a 400 MHz processor and 32 MB of RAM on the cheaper model and 64MB of RAM on the high-end model. It is the heaviest and largest of the bunch. The screen is, however more crisp and larger than the others. Axim's support both the widely used CompactFlash cards for extra memory and the Secure Digital add-on cards for storage and items like modems. It also incorporates removable batteries for longer use. The second battery can be charging while using the Pocket PC for an estimated eight hours each. This one is Handheld Computing top pick in handhelds.



The **Handspring Treo 90** combines the functionality of a Palm device with a wireless phone. Why carry two devices when you can carry one? It features a built-in keyboard that is more easily pressed by your thumb. It is very easy when you get used to it. It is based on the Palm platform and is very small, 4.2 inches high and only weighs 4 ounces. It can easily be carried in your shirt or trouser pocket. It can only display 4,000 colors compared with the other two at 65,000. It supports expansion cards, Secure Digital and Multimedia Cards not the more widely used CompactFlash. This one is less powerful but can be a phone for only \$299.



The **Palm Tungsten T** is a new device from Palm. It is a true Pocket PC, but it operates on the new Palm OS 5. It incorporates many programs and features offered by Palm. This one is the most expensive at \$399. This one will allow you to use the HotSync capabilities that many of us have become familiar with on other Palm devices. It is only 4.8 inches high and weighs in at almost 6 ounces. It has built-in Bluetooth for better short range connectivity. This allows you to connect to printers, synchronize to your PC and access to email and the Internet via a compatible mobile phone. This is one the best Palm has come out with in this price range.



Windows Messenger vs. MSN Messenger



Yes, Instant messaging is ready for primetime in the business marketplace. But the problem is developing in to which is which. AOL instant messaging is in a class by itself, after all they started it all.

The two being used today in the windows environment are MSN Messenger and Windows Messenger. Basically, Windows Messenger is a Windows XP-only product. MSN Messenger is for everything else, including Macintosh. They both support instant messaging, voice calls, and file transfers, but Windows Messenger also supports video calls, application sharing, shared whiteboard, and remote assistance. These new features that are used by Windows Messenger are XP-specific. They are all quite useful in certain situations.

During your considerations of upgrades and migration to new programs and operating systems, keep in mind: don't upgrade to XP without a minimum of 600 MHz speed and 256KB of RAM. Don't install Windows Messenger on any operating system besides XP. For those that have been resisting using instant messaging, it might be a good tool for your business or home.



Automatic Data Backup Services

Saf-T-Net is the program/service that is the safest, easiest way to ensure one of the most critical components of your business - Your DATA!
Available From CDN Technology

THE DAILY BACKUP

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CDN TECHNOLOGY INC

The Daily Backup

TOP SOFTWARE DOWNLOADS FOR WINDOWS

☀ **Presentation Publisher V3.0**
www.cmbsoftware.com/publish.htm

Turn your own pictures and sounds into a slideshow presentation or screen saver and send it to your friends, family or clients!

☀ **WinZip V8.1**

www.winzip.com/

The most widely used zip program for sending and receiving email attachments on the Internet. Download free evaluation copy today. A must have!

☀ **Password Pro**

www.cmbsoftware.com/passpro.htm

A very powerful, yet simple to use tool that will keep track and manage all your passwords and links. A very useful tool!

☀ **CD to MP3 Ripper 1.0**

www.cadkas.com

Convert your store-bought CDs to MP3 files so you can download to your MP3 player or conserve space on your hard drive. Easy to use and very handy.

☀ **Art & Antiques Organizer Deluxe**

www.primasoft.com/deluxeprg/art_antiques_organizer_deluxe.htm

Windows software for private and corporate collectors, small galleries, dealers, artists, publishers, appraisers, small museums, and clubs. Software helps you to organize, catalog, and manage all art and antique collections.

☀ **Windows AllCleaner**

www.allcleaner.com

Protect your privacy and keep your system clean with AllCleaner (a.k.a. Cache & Cookie Washer Pro), which automatically cleans your browser's cache, cookies, and history along with your Windows tracks, and much more!

☀ **Remove Popup**

<http://www.removepopup.com/>

Intelligent program that can detect potential PopUp windows and close them so fast that you will not even have the time to see them! It really works!

The Internet is propagating parasites and leeches that try to figure out what you like on the Internet.

Being the victim of any of the known parasitic sneakware to harvest your personal habits and Internet usage is no fun. Some of the ones I have heard about and researched are:

FlashTrack
Xupiter
Comet Cursor
FreeScratchAndWin
Gator
TOPtext
Surf+
Flyswat
WhenU.com
OfferCompanion
Tickler
Gain

This is just a very short list of the many out there. These programs, sometimes called scumware or thiefware are prolific on the Internet. It is all in the name of advertising and target marketing. There are not any Federal laws to date that prevent them.

Part of the problem I see is that some of the time these programs will eventually jam up your computer and sometimes bring it to its knees, just like a real virus. Fortunately the knowledge of these problems is growing and the resources for dealing with them are growing even faster.

There is also a move toward lawsuits against some of the bigger spyware companies. Gator is in a big lawsuit from firms like The Washington Post, The New York Times and L.L. Bean. They are going to get a taste of their own medicine. This particular lawsuit is about the advertising efforts gained from information 'stolen' from PCs about surfing habits.

I recommend running a good spyware program to get rid of the guys. Your PC will run better because of it. Some good ones are

SpyBot
Ad-Aware
Spyware Eliminator

I am sure there are others but these make a good start. There may also be a need for manual removal of latent plug-ins that they leave behind.

Virus attacks on the rise



Here is the "Top Five" list of viruses for this month.

1. PE_Nimba.E
2. JS_Noclose.E
3. PE_Nimba.A-O
4. Worm_Klez.H
5. PE_Elkern.D

The Nimba Virus has returned to the top after months of absence. It started moving up back in December and now it is at the top. It is a network aggressive virus very dangerous to business networks.

Make sure your antivirus program is up to date. Also apply patches to your browser that are available. The issue is complicated, so if you feel like you have this virus, contact a competent IT consultant to help you completely remove it and protect you from similar future infections of network aggressive viruses.

Is It Time to Upgrade,

or is it time to just buy a new system. The considerations these days should be can I run the programs I need with acceptable speed. If not you need to find out if extra memory would help.

Most important, don't upgrade to Windows XP without doing the research as to whether your PC can do it. Minimum 600 MHz speed with 256KB Ram. The higher the processor speed the lower the amount of RAM. A 1.2 MHz Pentium III could do it with less memory.

Just to give you an idea you can get a new PC for between \$600 and \$700, complete with monitor. Check out Dell, Gateway, IBM and HP/Compaq for the latest deals. For in-town PCs check out Circuit City or Best Buy! And, of course, if I can help further with the process give me a call.