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ReadyNetGo ... News

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TIP OF THE MONTH

Q. My printer (or network printer) won't print - Why?

- A.** There are a number of reasons why printers stop responding. Here are some of the first items to check:
1. Is the printer turned on and are the cables attached? *Sounds obvious but sometimes machines get turned off mistakenly or cables loosen.*
 2. Is there sufficient paper in the tray? Is there a paper jam?
 3. Do you have the correct printer selected in the print dialog box?
 4. Is someone else on your network able to print? Did someone have a print error that hasn't been cleared yet? *Until the error is deleted from the print queue, no print jobs will print.*
 5. Does the print server need to be reset (i.e. turned off, then back on)? *If the print server isn't responding, no one will be able to print.*
 6. Do the margins of your document fit within the paper size you have chosen? *Depending on the program you're using or the task you're trying to print, you may not get an error message on the screen. Reformat the margins and try printing again.*

Welcome Our New Computer Guru

That's right! A new computer guru has been born. Mark & Carin are the proud parents of Ryan Christopher Molfetta. He was born on December 13 at 1:19 am, weighing in at 8 lbs. 2 oz and 20 1/2 inches long -- simply adorable and already showing signs of becoming a computer whiz like his proud papa!

How Does My Network ... Work ?

Have you thought about how you and your coworkers access the same files each day? And how difficult and time consuming your daily activities could be if you did not have a network?

One of the best reasons for understanding how a network functions is for troubleshooting minor issues -- such as why the printer won't print. Knowing some basic information can go a long way especially when you need someone to talk you through a computer problem over the phone. That's why we're starting off the New Year by explaining common network definitions and how to map a network drive.

Common Network Terms

LAN -- Local Area Network -- system designed to connect computers within close proximity to one another. LANs are useful for sharing resources and data (such as printers and files).

WAN -- Wide Area Network -- system designed to connect multiple LANs. Typically, regional or national offices within the same network will be connected by a WAN.

Hub -- a multi-port device used to connect computers together to share resources. Hubs work by transmitting packets of information to every port. For this reason, hubs are slower than switches and routers.

Switch -- a type of hub that efficiently controls the transferring of information on a network. Switches will transfer packets of information to a specific port rather than all ports like a hub.

Router -- device used to connect LANs to other LANs and/or the internet. Routers have different levels of sophistication depending on the application needed. Some routers will include firewall protection; important for transferring information between the public (i.e., internet) and private network (i.e., LAN).

(over)

Print Server – a device that allows a printer to be directly connected to a network. It provides a pathway for your computer to “talk” to the printer without wasting unnecessary computer resources (allowing your computer to work on other programs while you’re printing). Print servers also eliminate the need for a workstation to be turned on before printing.

Server – a computer that is dedicated to providing resources to the network. The server will house all programs and data while the client computers (individual workstations) access files and other resources through the server.

Peer-to-Peer Network – usually consists of two to six computers that share resources through a hub. This type of network does not use a dedicated server to house programs and data. Instead, one of the workstations serves as a central place to store data (“server”) and do backups.

How to Map a Network Drive

One of the advantages of networking your computers is that you have access to files on your own computer - no need for switching to a different PC to access a particular document. Sharing files, folders, and drives also eliminates the need for large hard drives on each computer since almost all of the programs are stored in one central location (on the server).

When you establish a network of computers, you can access other computers on the network by clicking **Network Neighborhood** on your desktop or by opening Windows Explorer and clicking the plus sign next to Network Neighborhood. But this can be time consuming, so mapping drives and folders became the commonplace way to speed up accessing network files. Fortunately the process is simple, just follow the steps below:

1. Open Windows Explorer
2. Click **Tools** on the main menu and highlight **Map Network Drive ...**
3. A dialog box appears with a **Drive:** letter highlighted. [Automatically, windows will assign the next letter available for your new link. Ex: if you already have a C: and D: drive, when you click on map a network drive, the letter E: will appear in the Drive: box. You can change this to whatever letter you want as long as the computer doesn’t have that letter assigned already.]
4. Next to **Path:**, type in the path of the folder or drive you want to access. **Ex:** \\HPBrio\my documents
* HPBrio is the name of the computer you want to access and my documents is the folder you want to access.

IMPORTANT: Before mapping a path, the computer drive or folder that you want to access must be set for sharing. To do this:

1. On the computer you want to access, open Windows Explorer. Right click on the drive or folder you want to share.
2. Left click **Sharing ...** (If Sharing is not visible, go to **Control Panel** and double click **Network**. On the Configuration tab, click the **File and Print Sharing** button. When the dialog box appears, make sure the boxes are checked to give others access to files and printers.)
3. Click the bullet next to **Shared As**
4. Under **Access Type**, choose the level of sharing you want to allow. Read only means others can only read your files, no changes or edits are allowed. Full means read and write capabilities. Password means the user must supply a password before access is granted.
5. Click OK when finished.
6. To check to make sure **Sharing** is activated, locate the drive/folder you just shared in Windows Explorer and look for a blue hand beneath the folder or drive. The hand indicates the drive (folder) is shared.