Ready Net Go, Inc.

IT Solutions for Businesses ... *Moving Forward*

Hardware Productivity Tips

Would you like to get more done with the little time you have? The devices we use can either help or hinder us. If you want to be more productive, think about upgrading one or more of your hardware items like your mouse, keyboard, office furniture or consider using portable or wireless devices. We'll go over some of the most useful hardware items in this newsletter that may help you have a great New Year!

Input Devices

One of the best ways to be more productive while sitting at the computer is to have a comfortable mouse and keyboard. There are several ergonomic models available that relieve pressure points enabling you to work for longer periods of time especially if you have hand, arm or back problems. For mice, consider a vertical orientation mouse that keeps your hand in the handshake position (*Figure 1*) or use a pen mouse or trackball. For keyboards, consider one that is split or tented which maintains the natural angle of your arms and wrists (*Figure 2*). All input devices can benefit from wrist rests that can alleviate the pressure of holding your wrist up while moving the mouse or typing on the keyboard.

Figure 1. Ergonomic, vertical mouse from Evoluent is offered in both right and left hand models.

Figure 2. The Microsoft Natural Wireless Ergonomic Desktop 7000 has curved keys and an attached wrist rest.

Chairs

Along with input devices, your chair is another important component of a comfortable work environment. If you fidget and suffer from backaches, it would be a worthwhile investment to purchase a comfortable chair. Consider ones with lumbar support and/or adjustable backs and arms or opt for a balance ball chair that helps you maintain good posture and strengthens back muscles.

Tip of the Month

Saving Money and Energy

To save money and increase your energy efficiency, turn off your PC when you will be gone for more than a few hours or overnight. Turning off your PC and monitor will prolong the life of your device and reduce energy use.

To make turning off your devices easier, attach them to surge protectors or outlet strips. After shutting down Windows from the Start Menu, turn the surge protector button off and you can walk away quickly knowing you'll be saving money. Since everyone's computer /peripheral setup is different, give us a call if you need help figuring out the best way to shutdown your devices.

Happy Holidays from all of us at

Ready Net Go!

Websites Worth Watching

1. www.howtocleanstuff.net - At this time of year, accidents are sure to happen. Check out this site for the best ways to clean just about anything.

Additional Productivity Tips

Monitors

1) Dual monitors (setting up two monitors side-by-side) enables you to significantly expand your view (*Figure 3*). If you work with spreadsheets, you will definitely appreciate the extra screen space. Likewise, if you frequently compare documents, you can have two documents or webpages open without having to toggle between them or use the split screen option. To make this work, you'll need two monitors and a dual port graphics card or adapter. Some quick changes to the settings on your PC and you will significantly increase your screen real estate.

2) Upgrade the size of your monitor. If you currently have a 15" or 17" screen, you're probably scrolling a lot. If you can afford an upgrade, larger screens provide more viewable space to see your tasks so you'll scroll less. Many monitors, especially widescreen monitors, can do double duty as TVs if you equip your PC with a TV tuner. If you are looking for a 19" to 24" screen, you may want to purchase a computer LCD monitor rather than a dedicated LCD TV (just make sure that the ports match up - i.e., both have DVI, VGA, or HDMI).

Media Card Readers

Digital cameras store photos on a removable memory card (e.g., SD, xD, CompactFlash). If you install a media card reader (*Figure 4*) in your PC, instead of keeping a cable with your camera all the time, you can transfer your photos by removing the memory card.

Figure 4. USB (left) and internal (right) media card readers are convenient for transferring photos.

Most readers can accommodate different types of cards so if you get a new camera or if a visitor wants to transfer photos or data and they have a different card or forget their USB cable, you'll be able to transfer the data quickly. You can purchase internal (installs in the PC) or external (attaches via USB port) media card readers.

Figure 3. This dual monitor setup enables you to see a much larger image on screen.

Bluetooth (wireless) devices

Like Wi-Fi, Bluetooth devices function via radio waves in the 2.4GHz range and allow you to connect devices wirelessly. But whereas Wi-Fi connects computers up to 300 feet apart for sharing files and Internet access, Bluetooth technology connects devices like a headset with a cellphone, or a mouse, keyboard, or digital camera with a printer that are in closer proximity ~ 20 feet. They work especially well for laptops and mice and using your cell phone as a broadband modem connection.

A Bluetooth headset (*Figure 5*) is an excellent upgrade and will allow you freedom of movement eliminating the need to hold your cell phone or worry about attached wires. There are many options - some are small enough to fit in the opening of your ear while others wrap discreetly around the ear lobe. Many offer stereo functionality allowing you to use them while listening to music or taking voice calls.

Figure 5. The Jawbone Icon (above, left) has both mono and stereo capabilities making it ideal for voice calls and listening to music. The Plantronics Discovery 975 (right) has a boom mic and excellent noise cancelling capabilities including WindSmart systems effectively reducing wind noise.

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610-856-0990
www.readynetgo.net/newsletter.htm