Green Computing

There is no doubt that the growth of technology has had some powerful benefits for the world as a whole, but there is a dark side to these advances as well.

With computer technology changing so rapidly, there has been a proliferation of old computers, monitors, printers and other pieces of equipment in landfills. In addition these scrap items are also shipped to the developing world for disposal, where the heavy metals and other toxins seep into the environment and cause health problems for the indigenous population. Computers, monitors and printers may look harmless, but they often contain very dangerous components like lead and mercury.

Given these environmental risks, it is important for all computer owners to be as green and environmentally conscious as possible.

There are many ways computer users can lessen their impact on the environment without sacrificing the speed, computing power or convenience they need. From making sure old equipment is properly disposed of to recycling rechargeable batteries and toner cartridges, there are

many things computer owners can do to have a positive impact on the environment.

Know What Can and Should be Recycled

Rechargeable batteries can and should be recycled, and recycling centers are available at many electronics retailers and office supply stores. Consumers should keep an eye out as they shop – stores will often set up convenient bins where consumers can drop off their batteries for recycling.

Toner and ink jet cartridges can also be recycled, and many vendors will even provide a prepaid return label to make returning used cartridges easier. When changing a toner cartridge or ink jet cartridge be sure to look in the box for a return label, and use that label to return the used product. If no label is provided you may be able to print one at the company's website. Even if no labels are available, many places collect those used

cartridges for recycling and refilling. Look for collection bins at your office supply store.

Vote With Your Dollars

When it comes to the environment, consumers have more clout than they realize, and one of the best things consumers can do is vote with their dollars. With so much focus on green technology and environmental impact, many companies are trying to be better corporate citizens. Consumers can reward those pioneers by choosing to buy their products, while shunning products made by less environmentally conscious companies.

The environment is a subject every consumer should be concerned about, and there are ways each of us can make a real difference at the office. **T**

AccSys Solutions

Feature Business Quiz:

Is Your Accounting Software Working Hard For You?

Congratulations, if you are using accounting software, you are obviously no longer doing your accounting manually. However, is it working hard enough for you? Take this short quiz to find out!

1. How much time do you spend each month reconciling your bank(s)?

a) 2-5 hours

b) 5-10 hours

c) more than 10 hours

d) under an hour, I use the bank reconciliation feature in my software.

2. Your Sales Manager asks you for a report that tells them "Which Customers have purchased "item A" but have yet to buy their first companion "item B". You:

a) Panic. You have no idea how to do this.

b) Call home and tell them you won't be home for dinner tonight.

c) Tell them it can't be done and hope they believe you.

d) Pull the data out of your sales analysis tool, or better yet, hand them a professionally laid out spreadsheet report and go home early.

3. Your staff are still printing journals and documents to paper and then filing the paper copies. Which best describes how you feel about this?

a) Happy. They are doing exactly what I told them to do. I don't know why they keep rolling their eyes at me.

b) Guilty. All that printing is a waste of paper. And who likes filing?

c) Impatient. Whenever I need to see that report it takes me forever to go find it.

d) Neither guilty nor impatient. Our software files PDF versions of these reports automatically in an orderly fashion. No printing required!

4. You have recently taken over your department and realize that you have duplicate or out

of sequence customer or vendor numbers, GL accounts, or part numbers. You:

a) Quit on the spot. They don't pay you enough.

b) Resign yourself to a lifetime of frustration.

c) Hire a summer student to redo all the codes so it will be fixed moving forward. You can live without the history.

d) Use a readily available, compatible toolkit to redefine or combine the codes. Problem solved.

If you answered a, b or c to any of these questions, you can make your accounting software work harder for you. These features are readily available and easy to implement. Contact us today to learn more about putting these solutions to work. **T**

the **TechnoTips**

Energy Saving Practices: Sleep Vs. Shutdown

When a computer is shut down, it takes time to boot it back up. However, while a computer in "sleep mode' boots up faster, sleeping computers still use energy, although 20-50 times less than when the computer is being used. So what is a good compromise? Adjust your power settings so that your computer enters sleep mode after a few minutes of inactivity. Then, at the end of the day, shut it down completely. Also, despite common belief, did you know that it does NOT harm your computer to frequently shut it down and start it up again? It doesn't take any more energy, either.

Clear Your Browser's Cache

Every web browser stores a cache of the websites you visit, to reduce bandwidth usage and server load. This is called the browser's cache. Clearing it occasionally can make some websites run smoother and free up space on your computers hard drive if it's running low. If you are using **Internet Explorer 8,**

here are instructions for clearing your cache. Other versions and other browsers will have a similar procedure to perform this maintenance.

1. Once your browser is open, click the Tools menu.

2. Click on Delete Browsing History

3. Select Temporary Internet Files

4. Click the Delete button near the bottom of the window to delete your temporary files (i.e. clear your cache).

Note: If you want the browser to automatically clear the cache whenever you close it, click the Advanced tab. Click to check the box next to the Empty Temporary Internet Files folder when browser is closed option (in the section labeled Security). Click OK. This will delete everything except cookies. Note: IE8 has a "feature" which retains some cookies even after you clear your cache if you do not UNCHECK the "Preserve Favorites Website Data." If you truly need to clear your cache, you will want to uncheck this!