

Got Questions?



# VERMONT COMPUTING INC.

Email us and we might feature your question in the newsletter!

newsletter@vermontcomputing.com

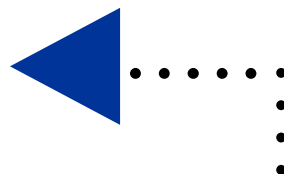


## Store Hours

Mon – Fri 8:00 – 6:00

Sat & Sun 10:00 – 12:00

# VCI



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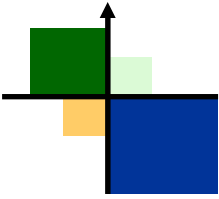
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# COMPUTER TALK

## Things you'll miss when you upgrade to Vista (and how to get some of them back)

Excerpted from *10 Things you'll miss when you upgrade to Vista (and how to get some of them back)*

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



### Why can't I separate my toolbars anymore?

One of the first things I do when I set up a new operating system for daily use is configure the desktop to suit my working habits. For years, that has included dragging the Quick Launch bar off of the main taskbar and docking it vertically on one side of my screen. That gives me more room for the open program icons on the taskbar and more room to place program icons on the Quick Launch bar for easy and fast access.

In the first few Vista betas, I found that I was unable to move the taskbar or separate its sections, even after unlocking it...A little research revealed that this was no oversight, but instead is a new "feature" designed to prevent the problem of people inadvertently separating the toolbars...Thank goodness I found a way to get my Quick Launch bar back where it's supposed to be:

1. In Windows Explorer, browse to the Quick Launch folder (typically `Application Data\Microsoft\Internet Explorer`). Vista's Start menu search feature makes it easy to find:

Just type Quick Launch in the box.

2. Drag the Quick Launch folder to the edge of your desktop. It creates a toolbar there. You'll probably want to right-click and select View | Small Icons to make it look better.

You can do this with any folder to create a toolbar of its contents.

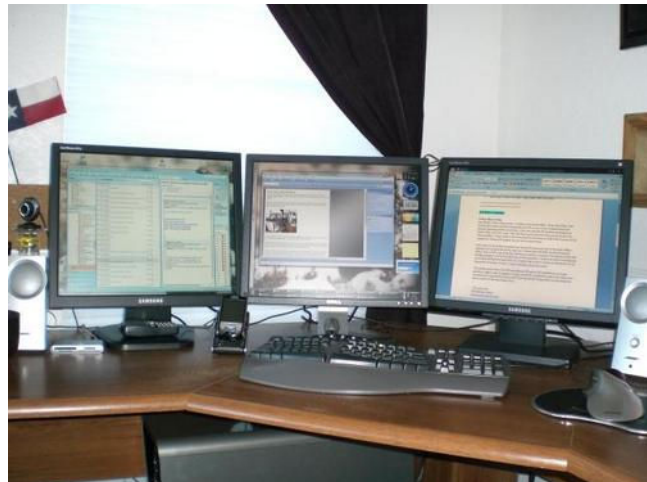
### Why is it so much harder to use multiple monitors?

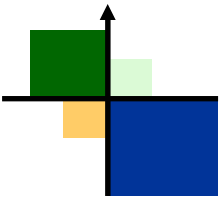
Windows XP perfected multi-monitor support. It became truly plug and play; I could throw two or three video cards into a computer's PCI slots, plug in my monitors, and XP recognized them almost every time.

Then along came Vista. When I installed it on my XP machine that was running four monitors, two off an ATI x600 PCIe card and two off a Matrox 450G PCI card, I got the Aero Glass interface on the first two (ATI), and nothing—black screen—on the second pair (Matrox). Research showed the Matrox card wasn't Vista capable, so I bought a card that, according to advertising, was: a GeForce 5200. Still no joy; still no third screen.

Finally, documentation became available on the Microsoft site indicating that to run Aero Glass on multiple video cards, they must use the same WDDM driver. If you have two Aero-capable cards that use different WDDM drivers (e.g., an ATI card and an nVidia card), Vista will disable one of them. It turns out that it is possible to use the cards together with the older XPDM drivers, but you don't get the Glass interface and associated Vista eye candy. Now I have three monitors working fine on my Vista machine, with a GeForce 7900 card paired up with the GeForce 5200.

For the remaining 8 things you may miss, please read the full article at <http://www.techrepublic.com/>





## A BIT OF ADVICE

# Pop-up Windows

**Know the difference between the good, the bad, and the annoying**

*<http://www.techrepublic.com/>*

There's been a lot of publicity about pop-up windows, and most of it hasn't exactly been rave reviews. But it hasn't always been this way. In fact, pop-up windows were a positive component in the beginning. Created long before tabbed browsers, their purpose was to present information without interfering with the current browser window. These days, due to security risks as well as the annoyance factor, a standard feature among browsers is to block or control pop-up behavior. But before you start telling your browser or other privacy programs to block all those pop-ups, you need to understand why they happen and what you should really be doing about them.

Most pop-ups are part of the content from the Web site the user is visiting, containing either requested information or info the site thinks one might like. But other pop-ups are just spam that's both invasive and malicious in nature. These types of pop-ups are actually an alarm telling you that something's wrong with your computer and you need to fix it. Let's divide pop-ups into two general categories—normal and alarms.

### Normal pop-ups

Some pop-ups are information you've requested—music or video content from a link you just clicked or a download you requested (hopefully from a trusted site). Web-access e-mail programs use pop-ups to create or reply to e-mail, which mimics a traditional e-mail client.

In addition, some pop-ups are targeted advertising marketed specifically to consumers visiting a Web site. If you find yourself getting too many of these advertisements, it's probably due to the sites you're visiting.

In general, all of these types of pop-ups are the kind you want. And if not, you can easily dismiss them with a click on the X. These are the pop-ups you should be controlling with your browser or privacy program. But the other types of pop-ups are the ones you want to see—because they're alerting you that something's wrong with your system.

### Alarm pop-ups

You don't want to block the pop-ups that indicate a problem with your system—these are the ones you want to see and take action on to resolve. For example, if pop-ups are launching through the Windows Messenger Service, you've got a potentially serious problem.

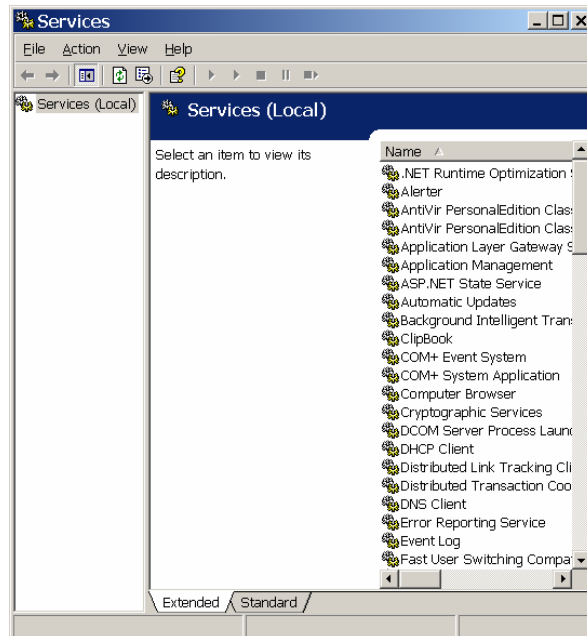
To get rid of these pop-ups, you need to turn off the Messenger Service. Follow these steps:

*Go to Start | Run, type services.msc, and click OK to launch the Services applet. Scroll down to find Messenger. Right-click Messenger, and select Properties. On the General tab, select Disabled from the Startup Type drop-down list, and click OK.*

This is a serious security issue. While the Messenger Service pop-up starts with data on UDP 135, this pop-up indicates that the Windows networking ports (i.e., TCP/UDP 135, 137 through 139, and 445) are open to the public. This pop-up is an alarm that you need to block these ports with your firewall.

Another type of alarm pop-up is the browser flood. As soon as your browser opens, you start receiving a swarm of pop-ups. This browser "spam" is telling you that spyware/adware is running on your system. While this is usually why people enable pop-up blockers, that's comparable to rolling down your window and sticking your head outside so you can see to drive.

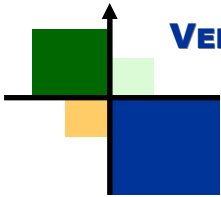
What's the real solution? Clean your Windows! Blocking the alarm doesn't solve the problem. If your system has experi-



enced this type of behavior, start shopping for a spyware/adware removal tool (maybe several), and clean your system.

### Final thoughts

While pop-ups can be a pain, they sometimes indicate a more serious problem. Don't ignore all pop-ups—investigate the problem and make your system safer.



# SHUTDOWN

## Fun with End-users

*Courtesy of Computer Stupidities*

<http://www.rinkworks.com/stupid/>

**My Friend:** "What is Microsoft Word?"

**Me:** "A program that lets you type up documents."

**My Friend:** "Hey! Don't give me any of you computer jargon #%&\$, ok? I'm not a computer programmer!"

**Customer:** "I can't find Word on my computer anywhere."

**Tech Support:** "Ok, which PC do you have, sir?"

**Customer:** (eventually names the model we sold him)

**Tech Support:** "Ok, well, that machine doesn't come with MS Word, sir."

**Customer:** "Why not?"

**Tech Support:** "Well, sir, MS Word is a separate product from your operating system. We do sell it if you would like to buy it."

**Customer:** "Hold on, my friend has Word on his PC. Why are you guys selling incomplete computers?"

**Tech Support:** "Sir, some PCs come with office software, and some do not. The software is an optional extra."

**Customer:** "Right, fair enough then, I'll call in and buy Word."

The customer called in and indeed bought the MS Works suite. Two hours later, I got the same customer on the phone again.

**Customer:** "I have a complaint about this software."

**Tech Support:** "Ok, what seems to be the problem?"

**Customer:** "There's no seems about it! This software is junk."

**Tech Support:** "Can you be more specific, sir?"

**Customer:** "Whenever I type something, it makes red lines under the text. How the hell can I send someone an important letter with red lines all over it?"

**Customer:** "Wait, that password looks really gray. I'm going to type it in again."

My mom wanted to make a card for her sister, so I spend over two hours walking her through the procedure.

**Me:** "Ok, Mom...double click on the icon that says 'Word'."

**My Mother:** "But I want to put the picture on there, with the words."

**Me:** "Well, you want to write the words for the card, right? Then we paste the picture on there."

**My Mother:** "Well if I was going to use paste and glue, what the hell did I get this computer for?? I'm just going to get paste on everything, and it won't work anymore."

**Customer:** "I was wondering if this thing had a fan belt or something in it."

**Me:** "Sorry, a fan belt?"

**Customer:** "Yeah, it's getting slower each time I start it in the morning, and I wondered if there was a fan belt or drive shaft that might be slipping."

**Customer:** "I had been waiting on the phone for you guys for three days! So I finally decided to heck with it and did what the instructions said."

**Customer:** "Can you make a house call today?"

**Tech Support:** "Well sir, what seems to be the problem?"

**Customer:** "Well, two windows aren't working properly, and one is just plain broken."

**Tech Support:** "What version of Windows are you using?"

**Customer:** "Version?!? I have a 1984 Honda Accord."

**Tech Support:** "Do you get an error message?"

**Customer:** "I don't get an error message. When I try to log back on, an error message comes up saying that my account is already logged on."

**Tech Support:** "What does the screen say now?"

**Customer:** "It says, 'Hit ENTER when ready'."

**Tech Support:** "Well?"

**Customer:** "How do I know when it's ready?"

This customer was calling from a medical center.

**Customer:** "The computer is having trouble reading your upgrade."

**Tech Support:** "Try wiping the CDROM with a lint-free cloth."

**Customer:** "We don't have any lint-free cloths."

**Tech Support:** "In a hospital?"

**Customer:** "It says 'Disk 1 of 1.' That means there's another one around here somewhere..."

**Tech Support:** "Which format are the images you send?"

**Customer:** "Rectangular, 15x11 centimeters."

**Customer:** "I just called about half an hour ago, and the person I talked to said he'd mail me a new disk with new software on it. Where is it? I'm still waiting for it!"

**Customer:** "It says I've performed an illegal operation and will be shut down. Have I done something wrong?"

**Customer:** "Norton's disk checker tells me your program's illegal."

**Customer:** "Where is the lower case?"

**Tech Support:** "What version of that software are you using?"

**Customer:** "The computer version."

**Customer:** "Can you teach me how to use a computer?"