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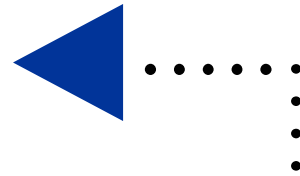
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Point forthcoming
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BuyaVCPC.com

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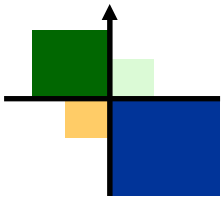
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Jeremy gets a new office, New Drop-off/Pick-up Point forthcoming, Build a VCPC kiosk/Buyavcpc.com

By, Matt La France

I recently sat down with Jeremy, president and CEO of Vermont computing to find out a little more about what is going on at VCI.

“Right now the focus is on new PCs, and the domain name buyavcpc.com. We have a new line of VCPCs—same price, but a better computer. So our focus right now is on PC sales.”

In conjunction with this focus on PC sales, a kiosk has been placed in the store where customers may sit and configure their own VCPC. Online sales manager, Matt La France recently added an “in-store-pickup” item to the shipping options. Customers who configure a machine in the store, or from their homes, can opt to pick the machine up at the store when it’s finished. It also allows customers to select from a wider range of add-ons and peripherals than what’s available in the store, at special online-only prices.

I also spoke with Jeremy about his new office at Vermont Technical College’s Enterprise Center on Rt. 66. Jeremy said,

“It allows the staff more room at our current location and allows me to focus on things and be more productive. And I’m sure the staff is happier without me around all the time, ha-ha. But seriously, before I only had things in two places, my home and the store, and now there are three places so it’s harder to keep track of everything, but it let’s me focus on my projects.”

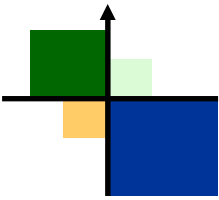
Jeremy knew others that had space in the building and is happy he was able to make the move from the retail store to this new location.

I also got a chance to chat with service manager Ian Stewart about drop-off/pick-up points.

“What we are planning is setting up a pick up point where customers can drop equipment at a location that is convenient for them, rather than driving to Randolph to drop their PC off at the shop.”

This drop-off point will be coming to the Barre/Montpelier area initially. The way it works is a customer will go to the drop-point, which will be at a related store such as an electronics store, fill out the paperwork, and drop off their machine. VCI will get notified by the operator, and come pick up any machines on a schedule every couple of days. The customer will be contacted and the PC will be worked on in the office. When finished, the customer will pay over the phone with a credit card, or by mail with a check. Once paid for, the machine is taken back to drop-off point where the customer can pick it up.

This will allow customers to take advantage of the great service that VCI offers, without the inconvenience of driving outside of their local area. For customers who are not in the immediate area this will be a huge time saver. The specific drop-off point has not been finalized yet, but will be coming soon.



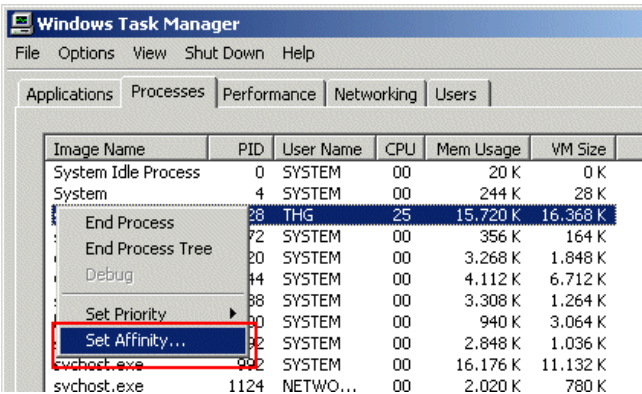
TECH TIPS

Automatically set Processor Affinity in Windows XP Professional

<http://articles.techrepublic.com.com/5100-10877-6168870.html>

If you have a dual-core processor, you may discover that certain older applications that ran fine on systems with a single core CPU have problems running with two cores. For example, your application may suddenly begin maxing out the CPU usage at 100 percent, appearing to lock up. Windows XP Professional's Processor Affinity setting allows you to work around such problems by configuring older applications to use only one of the cores. Here's how to set it up:

1. Access Task Manager.
2. Choose the Processes tab.
3. Right-click the process associated with the problem application.
4. Select the Set Affinity command. (If you don't have a dual-core system, you won't see the Set Affinity command.)
5. From the Processor Affinity dialog box, clear one of the CPU check boxes.



You could perform this manual operation every time you run the application, but the THG Task Assignment Manager (available for download from Tom's Hardware) allows you to create profiles that automatically assign applications to a specific CPU every time you run them.

Remove clutter with Windows XP SP2's Duplicate Finder tool

<http://articles.techrepublic.com.com/5100-10877-6160661.html>

Even if you're a conscientious computer user (i.e., you regularly delete unnecessary files, empty the Recycle Bin, and run Disk Defragmenter), you may be unaware of a potentially big waster of hard disk space: duplicate files. Applications can litter your hard disk with duplicate files, or you can actually create duplicate files by copying files from one folder to another.

Windows XP's default installation doesn't provide you with a decent utility for tracking down duplicate files. However, Microsoft does have a tool called Duplicate Finder, which is part of the Windows XP Service Pack 2 Support Tools. Here's how to install and use the Duplicate Finder tool:

1. Download the Windows XP Service Pack 2 Support Tools and follow the instructions for installing the Complete installation version.
2. Open the Run dialog box by pressing [Windows]R.
3. Type Dupfinder in the Open text box and click OK.
4. Once DupFinder loads, simply select the drive or folder to search and then click the Start Search button.
5. When DupFinder completes its search, you can scan through the list and examine the duplicate files.

Here are tips for working with the list of duplicate files:

Use either the Print Report or Export Data commands on the File menu to create a permanent record of the duplicate files.

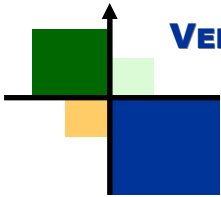
Use the Sort command on the View menu to reorganize the list for better analysis.

To get more detailed information about any file, select the file, pull down the File menu, and select the Info command.

Leave duplicate files in the Windows folder and its subfolders alone.

If you don't recognize the duplicate file, it's better to use the Rename or Move commands on the File menu rather than the Delete command.

Note: This tip applies to both Windows XP Home and Windows XP Professional.



PERIPHERALS

Quad-Core Processors to Go Mainstream by 2009

<http://www.extremetech.com/article2/0,1697,2115129,00.asp>

By the end of 2009, today's high-end quad-core processors will eventually appear in close to half of all mainstream desktop systems, according to new data released by market research firm iSuppli on Tuesday.

Intel's current Core 2 Quad and Advanced Micro Devices' forthcoming quad-core processors—all of which combine four processor cores into a single silicon die—are still hampered by high costs and limited availability, iSuppli said...

...But that is expected to dramatically change over the next two years as quad-core microprocessor technology gradually begins to penetrate the mainstream desktop PC segment.

iSuppli says that while no mainstream desktop PCs will ship with quad-core microprocessors in the first half of 2007, quad-core penetration in mainstream desktop PCs will rise to 5 percent by the third quarter of 2007, and then to 7 percent by the fourth quarter.

In fact, that penetration will continue to increase in the following months, according to the firm, hitting 18 percent in the fourth quarter of 2008, and then rocketing to nearly half of the market (49 percent) in the fourth quarter of 2009.

"Quad-core microprocessor technology is coming to the mainstream, and with it is coming capabilities that presently are reserved only for high-end systems," said Matthew Wilkins, principal analyst for computer platforms at iSuppli, in a statement on Tuesday.

"It will allow users to do more tasks simultaneously, but now, the 'more' can be converting videos, burning DVDs, playing complex 3D games, or ripping music—all at once—and still have performance to spare," Wilkins continued. "To put this into context, a quad-core-based PC is very similar to a quad-microprocessor system from the pre-multicore era, such as a workstation or server, which would have been very high-end system, priced well in excess of \$10,000."

iSuppli says it defines mainstream desktop PCs as "those having the most common specification and functionality available, and that are priced between \$500 and \$1000." In the first quarter of 2007, mainstream PCs accounted for 42 percent of total desktop computer shipments, iSuppli said.

The low-end "value" desktop PCs are not expected to make any use of quad-core microprocessor technology over the next two years, according to iSuppli...

AMD Outlines Restructuring Plan After Loss

<http://www.extremetech.com/article2/0,1697,2118958,00.asp>

Advanced Micro Devices reported dramatic losses in first quarter revenues, which executives called unacceptable. AMD also delivered a rough draft of a restructuring plan that will return the company to its former status, executives said.

AMD recorded operating and net losses of \$504 and \$611 million, respectively, or \$1.11 per share. AMD recorded revenue of \$1.23 billion, down 30 percent from the fourth quarter and 7 percent from a year ago...

...According to the company's executives, the plan is fairly straightforward. "We need to grow the top line, change our cost structure in line with the competitive environment, and execute flawlessly on our product and technology roadmaps," Meyer said.

In order to do that, AMD will be accelerating some of its initiatives, including simplifying its sales and marketing organization in order to improve its responsiveness to customer demand, restore its value proposition in the channel and refocusing marketing spending on demand generation programs, and also increase its emphasis on acquiring new customers and broadening our portfolio with existing customers.

Meyer also said that while the company knows it can't cut its way to prosperity, there will need to be "some significant adjustments to its business model" - in other words, layoffs.

"...We're reassessing our overall staffing plans," Meyer said. "Specifically, we're going to limit ourselves solely to critical hires, and to the extent that we add resources, we'll focus primarily on doing so in lower cost geographies."...

Broad Patents Threaten to Stifle Innovation

<http://www.eweek.com/article2/0,1895,2119425,00.asp>

...Vonage faces potential bankruptcy following the patent lawsuit defeat recently dealt to it by telephone services incumbent Verizon, and considering how liberally the United States Patent and Trademark Office hands out monopolies over the basic ideas on which upstarts such as Vonage build their businesses, Vonage certainly won't be the last business innovator to find itself so endangered.

As with so many software and business method patents that grab industry headlines, the patents that Baby Bell Verizon is wielding against Vonage have an odor of obviousness. Today's Internet was born in the context of our telephone networks, so there was nothing particularly earthshaking about adapting voice traffic to flow from the circuit-switched networks of classic telephony to the packet-switched networks of what would become the Internet. Indeed, today's VOIP technology is rooted in the Network Voice Protocol first implemented in 1973.

...Bill Gates once famously pointed out that "If people had understood how patents would be granted when most of today's ideas were invented and had taken out patents, the industry would be at a complete standstill today."

...Rather than waiting in vain for government leaders to check patent overgrowth enough to carve out a space in which entrepreneurs may operate, perhaps the IT vendors who stand to profit from tomorrow's start-ups by providing them with the development tools, platforms, and components on which they'll build will see the value of carving out that space on our behalf...