



TECH TIPS

Holiday Trivia Question: Which is the only Santa's reindeer that is named after another animal?

Email your answer to: answer@tbyd.ca for your chance to win Tim Horton's coffee & doughnuts delivered to your door!

Most USB Sticks Lost On The Subway Are Swimming In Malware and Completely Unprotected

Hard drive prices may be skyrocketing, but USB keys are almost a dime a dozen these days. Maybe that's why people lose them so much; apparently, folks drop memory sticks at major rail lines by the literal bucket load. An auction lot of lost USBs on Sydney railways were recently tested, and the findings showed that losing those sticks may have been a good thing after all - most of them were riddled with malware. Two-thirds of the USBs were found saturated with malicious programs, and none of them were encrypted. So, any thoughts? Other than "Maybe I should encrypt my USB drive while the thought is fresh in my head", that is.

Geek Gift Idea: 3D Printed Robot From My Robot Nation

For the geek who has everything, from motherboard art to processor key-chains, My Robot Nation today announced the official launch of what it claims is the world's first consumer friendly digital-to-actual 3D creation service. Chalk this one up as a rad and unique gift idea, for yourself or someone else. What this company does is let you create your own robot collectible online, then have it made in full-color and in 3D. It'll go perfect with the pocket protector I bought...

Trivia Winner Funk's Painting

Congratulations to the Winner of the Trivia Question for Tim Horton's coffee & doughnuts

Located at Unit 1-1375 Niakwa Road E, and with a staff of 15, and 4 subcontractors, they provide new residential quality custom painting services in Winnipeg. For more information about Funk's Painting, please call them at 204-255-8206.

Funk's Painting heard about Technology By Design through one of our door-to-door campaigns. At that time, Funks Painting replaced their previous IT provider with TByD, and have since been very happy with our work. They find TByD's communication excellent, and our service timely and professional. Funk's Painting rates Technology By Design at 9 out of 10!

10 Practical Reasons Not To Pirate...

Buying software or... not? After all, why buy when you can pirate everything most of today's popular titles for the low, low cost of free? Well, we'll tell you. Before you decide to go torrent an application or game you've been keen on, consider our 10 practical arguments against piracy, and always try to remember - you get what you pay for.

1. Stability: You know that feeling of unbridled rage gnawing away at the cockles of your soul when you buy a new piece of software on the first day it becomes available, open it, and then discover you have to wait another hour and a half for a launch day patch to download and install in order to make the application useable? A lot of pirated software will allow you to relive the experience every time you launch them.

2. Storage: If you're anything like us, your rig's drives are already full of photos, games, music, movies, applications, and work-related files. Space is at a constant premium. When you're dealing with pirated software, not only will you have to contend with the amount of data the installation chewed up, but you'll also have to consider whether or not the installation files are worth holding on to. After all, just because you were able to find and torrent a program once, doesn't mean it'll be easy to find or download again, right?

3. Updates: Many moons ago, buying a piece of software meant whatever came out of the box is what you were stuck with, whether it worked as you'd hoped it would or not. If you long for such whimsically frustrating times, pirated software's the way to go. In most cases, no matter whether you're using a bogus serial number or a cracked copy of an application, you can likely kiss any and all updates and additions goodbye.

4. DRM: Few subjects in the geek circles cause more drama, venom, or troll-baiting than **Digital Rights Management**. Created as a direct response to digital piracy by individuals and organizations who, instead of paying the suggested retail price, prefer to pay the low, low price of absolutely free. This has led to quaint practices like requiring games be constantly connected to the internet for DRM verification, which, as anyone who planned on play **Diablo 3** on a cross country flight will tell you, sucks.

5. Viruses & Malware: Software obtained via P2P sites and torrents are an awesome delivery system for **viruses and malware**. Knowing that no sane PC user would want to intentionally install a virus or malware application, many a wily blackhat hacker and scriptkiddie has piggybacked their malignant work on to the back of cracked software, anticipating that in your eagerness to get your hands on a program you've had a hankering for, you won't notice it's there until it's installed on your system.

6. No Tech Support: If you're rocking pirated software, you can still ask for help online from other users through any number of forums, but beyond that you'll be out of luck. In order to grab the attention of any publisher sanctioned helplines, chats, or other resources, software users require either a legitimate activation key or a support code provided after activation. That's what you get when you procure something for nothing.

7. Legal Issues: It doesn't matter whether you're talking video, audio, or software (or audio/video software for that matter,) piracy can land you in a whole lot of hot water. Don't drop a ton of coin on your legal defence: just pay for what you play instead.

8. Killing PC Gaming: While the rumours of the death of PC Gaming may be greatly exaggerated, software piracy has definitely left the industry looking a little browbeaten. This past week, word came down from the DRM-loving scamps at Ubisoft that one of their **most anticipated titles** won't be released for PC due to—you guessed it—piracy concerns. Looking at the numbers, you have to admit, those fears are well founded. When 2D Boy's World of Goo was released for the PC sans DRM, the developers noted that as reward for trusting gamers not to pirate their creation, they were suffering a 90% piracy rate.

9. Slows R&D Efforts: Software development is a business like any other. When a developer's product flies off of store shelves or is downloaded through legitimate channels, developers and publishers are motivated to cultivate improvements to their wares. Conversely, more piracy means less money for developers and publishers. This translates into less motivation to produce add-ons, patches or hot-fixes for existing titles.

10. You're Screwing Developers: When it comes to software, most titles represent months, if not years of someone's daily work. With tough economic times quickly becoming the norm, rather than the exception, it's easy to justify the theft of intellectual property, but screwing over your fellow geeks in the name of saving a few bucks? That's harsh.

