



## Service Pack 2 Released

Service Pack 2 (SP2) for Windows XP was recently released, and the repercussions were felt immediately. The service pack is important with regards to security and stability, but it can cause problems with various software packages if configurations are not updated accordingly. A short list of known programs that may react poorly to SP2 are located on Microsoft's website, but the issues can extend further than the documented pieces of software.

Some of the more important changes that SP2 incorporates include: the addition of a Microsoft firewall and a pop up blocker, and automated checking of anti-virus and Microsoft updates. If

these additions are setup incorrectly, specifically the Microsoft firewall, users may see adverse effects on their computer's overall performance.

If you are wondering whether or not it is crucial to install SP2, strictly speaking it is not.



Remember however, that Microsoft releases these updates for a reason, most importantly to resolve known

issues with the operating system and to increase security. This particular update is considered critical by Microsoft.

Your best bet? Have M&H Consulting complete the update for you. While there is never any guarantee that a Microsoft update is not going to cause problems, having a knowledgeable technician do the job for you is your best way of avoiding these difficulties. Our clients who are on a maintenance program with us will automatically receive the benefit of this service pack being installed for them. If you are interested in learning more about our low cost maintenance programs, call us at 866-964-8324.

## Protect Your Company From Disaster

Here are the top 5 things your company can do to avoid disaster:

5. Windows Updates. Making sure your Windows systems are updated with the most up to date patches is of utmost importance. These Windows updates can increase security and stability. While it is rare for an update to give immediate, noticeable results, they do help prevent future problems, which makes your life easier in the long run. Microsoft releases these patches often, and almost always in response to a recently found possible threat.

4. Firewall. Much as backups are your insurance against catastrophic loss of data, your firewall becomes your insurance against intrusion from outside of your local network. A firewall creates a barrier against anyone who may attempt to gain unauthorized access to your system. Other benefits of a firewall are the ability to limit or monitor internet access from inside of your network. While no security measure can guarantee protection from hackers, a firewall is your most cost effective option.

3. Battery Backups. Small cheap battery backups can help prevent thousands of dollars in equipment damage

and data loss. The next time there is an electrical surge or power goes out, there is no need to be wishing you had just saved the file you were working on.

2. Antivirus. Viruses are one of the most common problems encountered by PC users nowadays. They can circulate via the internet, by trading files between PCs or via E-mail, and can spread rapidly. There are many different types of viruses out there, some of which can corrupt your data and others which attempt to replicate and send themselves out over e-mail, taking up your valuable network resources. An effective antivirus measure is very important for stopping the majority of these issues from happening.

1. Backups. M&H can not stress enough how important

a reliable backup scheme can be for a company. Imagine, as painful as it may be, a fire raging through your office and destroying all of your computer equipment. Insurance, of course, will cover much of your loss, but what about your data? Given a reliable backup scheme (e.g. keeping an offsite tape or storing your tapes in a fire-proof safe), recovering your data and getting your company back up and running is a relatively easy process. Maintaining reliable backups is simply a smart business practice, much like the insurance on the building itself. Backups are your insurance taken out on the data that you depend on for day to day operations. Remember, if you're not testing your backups with an occasional test restore, there is no way to really know if it's working.



*"It just says to reboot."*