

# COMPU 360 BYTES

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This FREE newsletter offers news and tips to our customers regarding upcoming trends in technology.

Our goal is to keep our customers well informed about computer technology.

## IN THIS ISSUE:

PC Performance	1
Reasons for slow running PC	1
Speed up PC Startup	2
Turn Off Windows Splash Screen	3
Other ways to boost PC performance	3
Compu 360 News	4

## PC Performance

PC performance seem to deteriorate after a steady use for a year or two. There are several reasons for slowdown of PC performance. Some of the factors which cause sluggish PC performance are: dated and unnecessary files which are taking up valuable space, resource-hogging software programs, under-powered hardware running modern software, and so on.

Some of the signs of PC fatigue are: applications taking longer time to load, momentary or permanently freezing of PC, and video playback problems.

Okay, now that we know a little bit about the reasons for a sluggish performance of a computer, is there anything that can be done to correct these issues? Well, there are a few things that we can do to speed up your computer.



## Reasons for a slow running PC

There are numerous factors which negatively affect the performance of a PC. Among the common reasons for a PC slowdown are:

- The files saved by Internet Explorer, Firefox, or other web browser over time.
- Programs installed on a PC which configure automatically to launch at startup and run in the background, thereby eating up valuable computer resources.
- PC components may lack the “juice” to



efficiently run newer software. This is true if you upgrade to a newer version of Windows (XP to Vista or Windows 7), and also if you install a software application which require a lot of system resources (like CPU processing speed, random access memory (RAM), and so on).

In this newsletter, we will focus on how to speed up the performance of your PC from startup to running various software on your PC.

## Speed up PC Startup



When you first turned on your new PC, it started up quickly. However, after years of use, now when you turn on your computer, it takes longer to boot. Is there something that you did which made your PC to slow down the boot process? Let us take a closer look as to what the PC does when you boot it up.

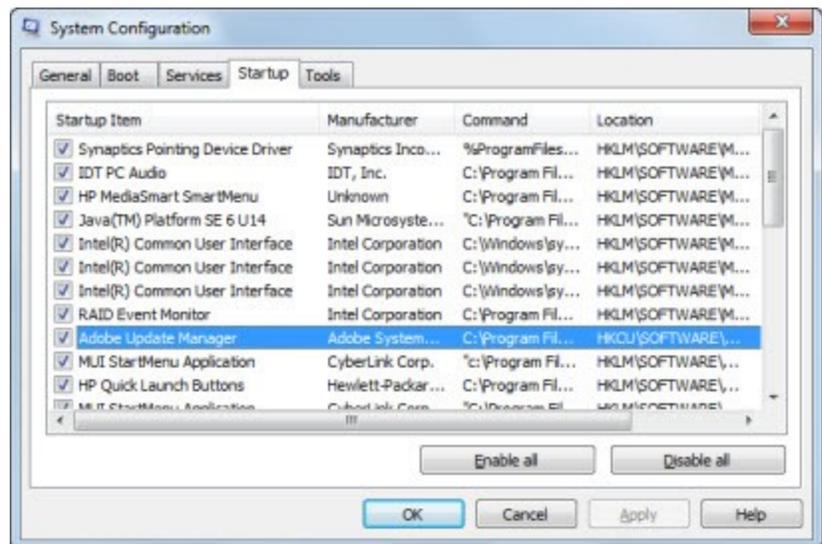
When you turn on your PC, it goes through the boot process. It runs Power On Self Test (POST) which checks your computer hardware. Next, the Basic Input Output System (BIOS) searches for the boot device, which is a hardware component used to start the operating system. If all goes well, your PC begins to load Windows operating system. Once Windows is started, it loads Windows services, which run applications in background. After Windows is loaded, the programs in the prefetch cache are loaded. And here is the main reason for your sluggish startup of your PC.

The longer you have had your PC, more programs launch during the startup process. These programs include antivirus, antispyware, and other utilities. There are also programs which do not need to be started when you start your computer.

If we can prevent unnecessary programs to start and run in the background at computer startup, we can speed up the startup process of a PC. It is very important to

differentiate between programs which are necessary to load at startup versus the programs which are not at all necessary to startup your computer. If you disable a necessary program from starting up during boot up process, then your PC may not boot at all or may freeze or cause some other problems.

In Windows XP, Vista, or Windows 7, the utility used to configure Windows startup is **msconfig**. To start this utility, Click the **Start** Button, and in the Search box type: **msconfig** and press **Enter** key on the keyboard. The msconfig windows has different tabs. Click on the Startup tab to see which programs are currently running on your computer. In the screenshot below you will notice that applications like Adobe Update Manager load and run at startup of



your computer. However, these applications slow down your computer startup. To disable such applications during the startup process, click and uncheck the box for a startup program that you want to disable, and then click **OK** button. Please restart your computer to effect the changes that you have made in msconfig utility.

## Turn off Windows Splash Screen

You can side-step the Windows splash screen (the screen that appears during the boot process and shows Windows logo for a few seconds), thus saving a few seconds. To do this, go to the **msconfig** utility. Go to the tab titled “Boot”, then click on the option “No GUI boot”, and then click OK button.

Note that when you make changes in the msconfig utility, you will need to reboot your computer before any changes will take effect.

## Automatic Logon

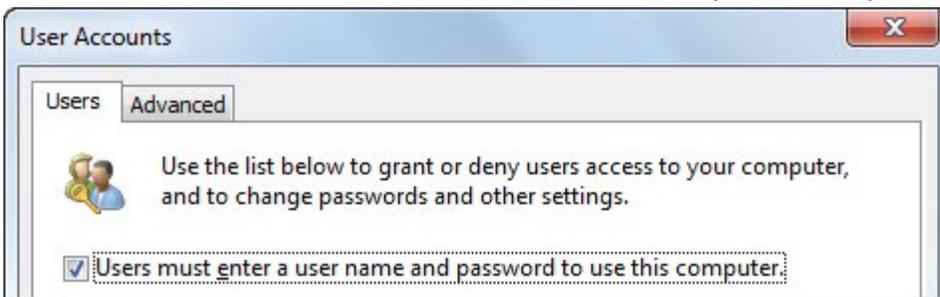
If you are using a PC at home and only have one user account, you can configure your computer so that it automatically logs on without asking you for a password during the boot process. Please note that if security is a concern to you, or if logon password is required at your work, you may not be able to use automatic logon.

To use automatic logon, click on the **Start** button. In Windows XP, click on the **Run** button to get to this box, and then type:

**control userpasswords2**

and press ENTER key on the keyboard.

In Windows Vista/Windows 7/Server 2008, click the Start button, and then in the Search Programs and files box, type: **netplwiz**.



Click and uncheck the box “Users must enter a user name and password to use this computer” and then click **OK** button.

## Other ways to boost PC performance

Now that you have resolved the issues with Windows startup, let us discuss other issues that could be slowing down your computer.

### Hardware issues

It is possible that your computer hardware could be slowing down your computer. Let us discuss some of the hardware related issues.

#### Memory

Random Access Memory (RAM) is the first thing to look at in case your computer is facing slowdowns. When you start a computer, all the programs which start during Windows startup get loaded into RAM. When you increase the amount of RAM installed in your computer, it allows your computer to run more programs simultaneously, thereby speeding up the boot speed of your computer.

As a general rule, Windows XP users should have at least 1 GB (gigabyte) of RAM, and Windows Vista or Windows 7 users should have at least 2 GB of RAM.

#### Hard Drive

A computer’s hard drive can also be a factor in your computer’s performance. All the programs are stored and launched from a computer’s hard drive. If your computer has a hard drive with 5,400 rpm spin speed, it will be slower to launch programs or retrieve information. However, if the hard drive spins at 7,200 rpm, it will be able to

retrieve the information from your computer much faster.

#### CPU speed

CPU speed in a computer also determines how fast it can process information. Intel’s Core 2 Duo, i3, i5 or i7 processors are going to give you faster processing power than older CPUs.



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## Compu 360 News

**Please call or e-mail your comments or suggestions.**



In March 2010, we will be adding computer classes: Internet and E-mail for beginners and Seniors.

If there is a service or computer class that you would like us to offer, please call or e-mail us.

We offer this newsletter to all our customers via e-mail, currently at least once a month.

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