

Software – Activation & Registration

I had a problem just recently. We bought another PC and new programs had to be loaded on it. They were ones I was already familiar with, so the only thing I had to get used to was the updated operating system. Everything was going well until I started work one morning and Microsoft Word started playing up. It had been fine for 2 or 3 weeks, even the day before; but suddenly files wouldn't load properly, and those that did couldn't be edited. I was furious, blaming the new Windows and was ready to throw the computer in the trash. My wife came to the rescue and phoned our local expert who suggested: "It sounds like your word processing package – have you activated it?"

"Oh," said Ruth, "I didn't realise I had to." Following the reminder, she went online and had fixed my problem in a minute – it was that easy for someone who knows. Needless to say, I didn't, not about that kind of stuff, and this set me wondering how many others are in the same boat?

Apparently, whether from the Internet, or purchased in hard-copy DVD form, many programs contain scripting which limits usage and even the number of times they can be loaded. These hidden instructions can time-out the entire program after a set period has expired, or severely limit a good portion of the usual functions, making it very basic and sometimes virtually useless.

If bought online and downloaded, registration and activation will be taken care of at the time. The one thing to watch out for is the grade of program – is it the full package, a small starter, or merely a trial version? The last will definitely stop working eventually, probably after 30 days, unless you pay for the real McCoy.

The same rules apply to boxed DVD's, but you will probably have to go online to register and activate your new program. Most of these can be loaded a number of times, usually 3 or 5 separate installations. After that, they won't load at all, not unless you get on the Internet to buy more licences. The idea of this multi-load facility is in case your computer crashes and you have to re-load programs. If, however, you decide to put the same program, be it work or play-related, on other units – say one of the same package on the PC, laptop and a tablet – always assuming this is permissible, just remember 3 might be your lot! So, think twice before treating a friend to one of your games and using up your allocation of re-loads.

Remember: when you load or download your programs, don't forget to register and activate them – that's the stress-free way to do it.

Return to the Web Page to read, download and print information on a variety of topics



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