



Technoid  
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From The Desk of: Randy Connell  
Owner of Technoid, Inc.

**Dear Fellow Computer User,**

There are no shortages of horror stories about fly-by-night computer repair shops causing problems as a result of their unethical or incompetent behavior. I'm sure if you talk to your own friends and family you will get an ear-full of the unfortunate experiences they have encountered in this area.

You see, the computer industry, along with a lot of other industries, has its own share of unethical businesses who will always try to take advantage of uneducated buyers in their greed for easy money. Fortunately, businesses like these are the minority, but we know they exist because we have had a number of customers come to us to clean up the disasters they have caused.

**Another big problem of the computer industry is that it is not regulated like many other industries.** Automotive repair shops, electricians, plumbers, lawyers, realtors, dentists, doctors, accountants, and even restaurants (to name a few) are heavily regulated to protect the consumer from receiving substandard work or getting ripped off. However, the computer industry is still very new and there aren't any laws in existence to protect the consumer.

Anyone who can turn a computer on can market themselves as a computer repair technician or shop. Even if they are honestly trying to do a good job for you, their inexperience can cost you dearly in your machine's performance or in lost or corrupt data files. That is why we decided to offer this report.

The information in this Guide is provided to help raise standards within the computer repair and support industry, and to give YOU useful information to help you guard against the unethical or incompetence of some companies and technicians.

## **The Five Most Costly Misconceptions About Computer Maintenance and Repair**

### **#1: If your computer is working fine right now, it does not need any maintenance.**

This is probably one of the biggest and most deadly misconceptions that most computer users fall victim to. Computers are just like cars. If you don't change the oil, change the filter, rotate the tires, flush the transmission, and perform other regular maintenance on your car, it will eventually break down and cost you FAR MORE to repair than the cost of the basic maintenance.

There are certain maintenance checks that need to be done daily (like virus updates and spam filtering), weekly (like system backups), and monthly or quarterly (like checking for and installing security patches and updates, disk defrag, spyware detection and removal, checking the surge suppressor and the integrity of the hard drive, and so on). Your computer repair technician should be adamant that you have regular maintenance done on your machine and should offer to set up automatic virus definition updates, spam filtering (to avoid viruses), and automatic system backups OFF-SITE.

**If your technician does not press you to let him do this for you, then RUN – don't walk – out of their office.** Lack of system maintenance is the NUMBER ONE reason most people end up losing valuable files and incurring heavy computer repair bills. If your technician isn't offering you these services, you need to find someone else to support your computer or network for two reasons:

1. Either they don't know enough to make this recommendation, which is a sure sign they are horribly inexperienced, *OR*
2. They recognize that they are *profiting* from your computer problems and don't want to recommend steps towards preventing you from needing their help on an ongoing basis.

Either reason is a good one to get as far away from that person as possible!

**#2: The maintenance tools provided in the Microsoft Operating System and software are all the maintenance you need.**

Again, this is a terrible misconception. Microsoft does NOT include ALL of the security features to protect your data from viruses, hackers, and data loss or prevent your PC from running slowly.

Additionally, Microsoft (and other software vendors for that matter) is constantly providing critical patches and updates to their software to protect you from viruses and hackers. However, if you don't know to look for them, or if you don't know how to install them properly, you could easily end up getting burned.

**#3: My nephew/neighbor's kid/brother-in-law knows this computer stuff and can help me solve my problems.**

If only this were true. Obviously, not all technicians are created equal. Just because a person is good with computer applications (what we call a power user) does NOT mean they know how to install a critical security patch, detect and extract a deadly virus, or upgrade your machine.

Most people look for a part time "guru" to help them save money, but this often comes back to haunt them. Every day we get new customers who call up needing us to clean up a mess that was caused by an inexperienced neighbor, friend, or relative who was just trying to help. If the person you have working on your machine does not do computer repair and support for a living, there is a good chance they won't have the knowledge or experience to truly help you. Technology advances at lightening speed and it takes constant learning and practice to master it. If your part-time technician is not working on PCs and networks every day, they probably only know enough to be dangerous.

**#4: All computer repair shops are created equal. Your best option will be the one who offers the lowest price.**

As we stated a moment ago, you get what you pay for. A cheap price usually means a cheap job. Really good technicians do NOT work cheap because they are in high demand. The only technicians that will work cheap are those that are just starting and they are grossly inexperienced.



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With your valuable data, precious family photos, favorite music files, and other irreplaceable documents at stake, do you REALLY want the cheapest technician working on your machine?

We take the view that most people want value for money and simply want the job done right. You will find that we are not the cheapest and we do not apologize for that. You will also find that we are not the most expensive. We simply feel that we should offer a good service at a fair price.

## **5 Critical Characteristics You Should Demand From Your Computer Repair Guy or Shop**

- 1. Demand that they have at least one professional certification.** Unlike barbers, nurses, lawyers, and other professionals, there are no state certifications or licensing requirements to be a computer consultant. Print up some business cards and you too can be a computer consultant. While there are certainly great technicians who don't have these certifications, many people feel that by hiring consultants with industry recognized certifications is just common sense. A technician can be certified by a vendor such as Microsoft or by an independent organization such as CompTIA or Brainbench. Technoid is a certified Microsoft Small Business Specialist along with a few others.
- 2. Demand someone who has a long-standing reputation.** Let's face it; there are a lot of other computer repair technicians out there, but many are new, just getting started, or computer techs working on the side. You want to make sure you avoid hiring a fly-by-night technician between jobs that sets up shop one day, and is out of business within a month or a year. Only deal with computer technicians and repair shops that have a proven track record in your area. Technoid has been servicing customers in the Fox Valley and surrounding areas for nearly 4 years as of this writing.
- 3. Demand that they have specific knowledge or expertise on solving your particular problem.** Do NOT let someone practice on your machine. If they have not worked on your problem before, they should TELL you that in advance. There is too much risk involved financially and in your data and equipment.
- 4. Demand that your technician backs up your system BEFORE working on it.** This is just common sense. Don't let them touch your machine before your entire system is securely backed up just in case something goes wrong.
- 5. Demand that your machine comes back with the same settings, look, preferences, and applications that you had on it prior to the work.** There are a lot of second-rate shops with inexperienced technicians who will end up causing you more problems than you bargained for. Very frequently, these inexperienced technicians will recommend that you wipe out your hard drive and re-install Windows to fix a problem. This means you lose all of your settings and preferences, as well as losing all of the software programs you have installed. Sometimes this is unavoidable, but should ONLY be done as a last resort.

**WARNING:** In addition to wiping out your hard drive, some of these shops will put illegal software on your machine using a stolen license. Not only is this illegal and putting you in a position to get fined, but most illegal software (especially Microsoft's) is locked, which means you cannot download and update critical security patches. This leaves you unable to update your machine and protect it from deadly viruses, worms, and hackers.

## **Your Customer Bill Of Rights**

Here is what I promise to deliver if you choose Technoid to service your computer or company network:

1. When you call us during regular business hours with a computer problem, we guarantee that your phone call will be either answered immediately or returned within 60 minutes or less by an experienced technician who can help.
2. You deserve to get answers to your questions in PLAIN ENGLISH. Our technicians will not talk down to you or make you feel stupid because you don't understand their "geek speak".
3. You deserve complete satisfaction with our products and services. We will do whatever it takes to make you happy. No hassles, no problems.
4. You should EXPECT that no damage will be done to your machine or your data. Before we start working on your computer or network, we will evaluate your problem and alert you to any potential risks involved in fulfilling your job. If there are any risks, they will be explained in full, and your authorization and agreement will be obtained before the work commences. You can also choose to have your data backed up before we start any work on your machine.

A large proportion of our business comes from referrals from happy, satisfied customers. We want you to recommend us and we know that you will only do this if you are happy with the services we provide. That is why we work so hard to go above and beyond the call of duty.

### **Don't Take Our Word For It; Just Listen To What Our Customers Have To Say...**

"I utilized his services in support elements of sales that I've done. I've brought him in to help with services that I've sold. I can't afford a full time support person on staff, and using Technoid allows me to have top-notch support at a price that I can afford."

- **Pat Hoan, ACCESSdocs Industries**

"With building cars, if there is something to make it faster, stronger, better... less expensive, we do it. From working with Randy... he's the kind of guy who will do that too."

- **Jeff Hume, CMJ Performance Automotive**

"He was completely thorough and professional and knew exactly what needed to be done. .... He did a great job!"

- **Bob Webb, Chicago, IL**

"Of the hundreds of information technology professionals I have worked with over the past 20 years, Randy truly stands alone. The breadth of his knowledge, and his tireless commitment to solve any problem, are trademarks that make him unique."

- **Greg Stephan, Greg Stephan Communications**