Reddit offline cache

Miss, this is up to a 14 day process, it has been 3. - /u/Macaveli54

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hm1s6/
miss_this_is_up_to_a_14_day_process_it_has_been_3/

I once had a women call up about her phone being out for repair. She had been in store and had her phone sent off for repair a couple of days prior and given a loan phone in the mean time. So she called up to check the status, seemed pleasant, was told it was up to a 2 week process, thought this would a handy call. So I get her reference number and checked it out, told her that it was "in transit", triggered! She went crazy. She started accusing me personally of losing her phone, even though I didn't process the repair it was apparently my fault, that her phone is "lost to the ages" (actual quote) I have no idea how I could have triggered her but I weeks.

"Miss, this is up to a 14 day process, it has been 3, I'm sure that if you check the status tomorrow or even in a few hours you'll find that it will say at repair center."

15 minutes in it's not getting through to her, she seems to think that because it has been in transit for 3 days that it has been and it was my doing somehow. Looking to speak to my manager at the time, who immediately said there's no point cos he'd be repeating everything I said. So at the 24 minute mark, I refreshed the page and sure enough, "at repair center" let her know this, didn't believe me, told her how she can check on the website herself, told to her to have a nice day and cut the call.

Edit:

Just quick note about my manager not taking the call, cos a few people mentioned it this was a call center with about 100+ agents on the phones at a time and maybe 6-7 managers at a time, they're needed for serious issues and to help with genuine queries, really no point in reiterating something as trivial as this.

"Not backing out just wanted to see if you was a honest type" - /u/Destava

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hlwcz/
not_backing_out_just_wanted_to_see_if_you_was_a/

The title is a direct copy-paste from a message I've received from one of my clients.

support')
I'm a freelance web designer/student creating all sorts of websites for clients. I've been working on this guy's
website for a couple weeks now, let's call him $client.
Now before we begin let's have a bit of backstory:

I have an ad up on a website that we'll call $website. It clearly states several programming languages that I've
got experience with, and that I offer software development/web development services. Now it also states that
I will do small jobs for free as portfolio work as I want work to add to my portfolio. For big jobs, I request to
be paid either a lump sum at the end or hourly.

Enter $client:
(Please note that some of the messages in these conversations have been shortened)

>$client: 'Hey there I'm looking for someone like yourself who is highly skilled and have the right skills to
pull off my next REVENUE SHARING Web Project'
>$me: 'Hi there, sure thing! What exactly do you need?'

($me and $client discuss details of project)
$client is looking to create a revenue sharing/PTC site with a certain script that at that point he may or may
not have already bought. But he's missing programming/hosting experience so he's looking for someone to
do it for him. I explain to him that because of the size of the project I'll have to charge him my hourly rate
(£7.00) or a lump sum. He agrees and mentions that he wants the site live by September (I accepted this
project in April).

He asks me to check out the website of the script and asks me if I'd be okay working with it. I check it out
and it doesn't look like something that's difficult to do. Still, I'm skeptical about scripts like this charging at
least £80 for a one domain license. I tell him I've never done it before but he accepts anyway. I try to check
the documentation to see what I need for the installation. I can't find any installation requirements, only
a .php file that you have to put on your server which checks if the required components are installed on the
server. So that would mean that you'd have to rent the server/hosting package first before you could check if
the script works in the first place. Weird, but oh well...

He mentions that he's creating a logo for the site (please don't). I offer to do it myself since I have designing
experience as well. I whip up the logo within a day and present it to him. He's very happy with the result and
tells me he's very happy to have found someone like me (ok).

We order the hosting package and the domain and I get started on installing the script. I download everything
I need and start reading the Installation Manual. I get all the way to uploading the script and installing the
license when a message pops up before installation on the domain: $errormessage (I can't remember the
exact message), please change $error in php.ini. Please no. As you might have already guessed, we just

bought a regular hosting package which puts you on a shared server with multiple people sharing several components, including the php.ini (the configuration file for PHP). So this can't be changed. (Thank you £80 script for telling me this after installation).

Side note: He had already purchased multiple add-ons like logging in with Facebook etc, which put the bill at £160 for the script.

I get back to the client and explain why we need a VPS for the script. I also mention once again that I've never before set up a VPS as a web server but am willing to take the challenge. He agrees, we rent a VPS and get our money back for the other hosting package (nice).

I have a tiny bit experience in using the command line in Linux so I was sure I'd find my way after a while. I look up some guides and start installing the OS on the server. I SSH in and start installing the required components. (Apache, MySQL, Mailserver, etc, etc). After installing everything and pointing the domain to the server I set up a free admin panel to make life easier. I put up a test page etc, everything seems to be working. I wasn't expecting things to go so smoothly as I'd never done it before. (It took me about 6 hours but oh well).

I go to bed that night and start mulling over things a little, like how I'm gonna install the script tomorrow etc. I was about to fall asleep as I realize... Shit. I haven't checked the mail server, I grab my phone and check if I can connect to it. Spoiler Alert, I can't.

I spend the next couple days and nights working my way through Linux dovecot/postfix guides trying to get it working. After I finally get everything working with SSL encryption etc. I start working on installing the script, which went easy enough with a few support tickets to the creators of the script. After setting it up I work on getting the site working with SSL as well. I figure that out and everything's done. Please note that all this took me about 2 weeks (not working 8 hour days) because of slow support tickets etc. Now yesterday I customized the site to the $client's wishes and was going to finish the job today.

Now earlier this week, we'd agreed on a payment that I'd be getting in installments as he wanted some of it to come out of the site's profits. It would be 3 installments of ~120 each over a course of 1.5 months. I'd agreed to this knowing that I could suspend his site if he didn't complete the payments.

Side note: For the website he wrote up a ToS, FaQ and a Privacy Policy. All 3 of which, had loads of spelling/ grammatical errors that I (a Dutchie) had to take out and correct. So the messages that I copy here are his actual words, not my errors.

Now here's when it gets good, this morning I wake up and see a message pop up:
(Again these are shortened)
>$client: 'Hey, me and my partners have agreed that we will looking for a company to manage our website so we don't have to Waste time on shit like this so we can focus our attentions on our business. So after payment bro coz we dealing in money and stuff I will have to get all login details back off you for everything.'
>$me: 'We'd have to transfer the server and domain though. Since that's all in my account still'
>$client: 'Yes I l know. But I'm sure that server migration won't take long esp after the 60 day period is up and won't take long to Sort out, how many other companies do it bro? I will work with you both to sort it.'

Oh yeah almost forgot, he calls me 'bro' all the time.

>$client: 'Anyway onto more important issues! Coz I know the score how much developers usually charge for This type of work I have been quoted from £80-250 etc. Let's narrow down what work you actually did: Server install, Script install, Logo design, Bit of text, Changed a few images. (That's not to say I'm not appreciative and happy with your fine work coz I am) I feel like I'm being robbed here bro so can you give me your real hours then let's renegotiate another price. Baring in mind that the work that you Agreed to do, took around 2 weeks, but how many hours did you actually work for bro? When in actually it's should have taken you less than 2 weeks. When I know, as I am almost 40 years old and know the industry, that this work don't cost this much of time and money. So please be fair and honest with me like I have with you. I'm a start up business bro not a punk and a charity so let's keep it real here. Plus I'm not a bank. So please you give me a fair honest figure and I will agree to it'

Uhm, okay? So we'd already agreed on a price? But now you're suddenly being robbed? And your site had to be live by August/September, but now it could have been done in 2 weeks? While I've explicitly said that it would take me some time since I have no experience with it. Hmmm...

>$me: *Send file with hours* 'Here are my actual hours from this week, and the weeks before. This is fair and square the hours I've put in. And getting quoted 80-250 is from actual developers. People who've been doing this for years on years. Not from someone on $adplatform looking to get into uni. Also, when did we say that it would take less than 2 weeks? You said 'as long as it's finished by august/september' (not to mention that you said there'd be a bonus if I got it finished before July, which I did. but I don't really care about the bonus) What I do care about however is that we agreed on a price, and that you're now trying to go back on it. While I've been up till 4 in the morning at times trying to sort out the server, because as previously mentioned. I'm not a professional developer, I'm merely a student.'
>$client: 'Not backing out just wanted to see if you was a honest type. I'm just sick of people taking advantage of people. Baring in mind you stated you have some experience hence why I hired you. And no bonus would ever get paid unless I sanctioned, I'm the one who makes the final decisions. I'm not the one who started out all nice and friendly with me and then got shirty and funny when I mentioned payments would be made in installments. (Side note: I did not, I was just asking after promised payments) I.e deferred payment like I first mentioned. I'm not the one who promised to give most of his time away on this for free but then billed me for a Job that takes less than a week. (Again, never promised to do it for free) So let me stress big time to you for you to understand VIVIDLY. I'm not backing out but I don't like being fucked over as much as you (Yeah I don't get it either) so I ask you again. Give me you real hours and not nights where you stayed up and played with the script when the GF was asleep and now want to be paid for it. Just a little honesty goes a long way with me bro.'

Side note: Yes I was up at night trying to get things to work, but I didn't put these in as work hours.

>$client: 'I'm not the type to mess people about so please play fair with me thanks. Tell you what I haven't got time for this shit so I will get my brother to sort this out with you later. You will get paid as planned and we will sort it out so we can move to company. This shit is getting stupid now and I don't do stupid. So will give you a final figure based on the work you have done. Then next time I will hire a company. Thanks for understand, $client.
>$me: 'What part of this is not fair to you? The nights I stayed up are NOT on the list of hours. I do have experience yes, but not in setting up a server, which I have said before starting. And yeah, it might take a team of people to do it in less than a week. But why didn't you choose the quote of 80-250 then? Why didn't you go with the team of professionals? Why did you go for a student with a $adplatform ad?'
>$client: 'Coz you seemed fair and friendly and didn't get those quotes till after I hired you and spoke with a few individuals. Ffs aren't you listening to meeeeeeeeeee' (LOL)
>$client: 'Don't worry let's end it here. So let's sort of end this crap here you will be paid accordingly and thanks for helping us. Just my brother gets a little pissed off when he thinks people taking him for idiot'

Wait, what? Your brother is talking now? (He did mention him before and how he was a web designer, which in turn made me question why he didn't do it). This is all in the same chat btw.

>$client: 'From now on you be dealing with me. I will personally sort this out with you. Just Do me a favour fella complete the jobs as of today we will pay you. Payment dates will arrive soon. Regards, $brother.'
>$client: 'Let's keep it professional yes. Thanks, That's all. $brother'

Once again, uhm... Okay?

>$me: 'Sure, like I've said. The site will be finished today.'
sometimes'

Then he proceeds to talk business, and how he can't see the site even though I added his IP yesterday. (The site has been whitelisted for construction).
Side note: 'Maintenance mode' is a feature of the script where you can whitelist several IP's to exclusively view the site.

>$client: 'How come it's been taken off?' (The IP)
>$me: 'It hasnt been, it's been there since you send me the picture (of his IP)'
>$client: 'Has all IPs been added yet? We need to show investors you see'
>$me: 'You haven't sent me any other IP's'
>$client: 'So how does that work when we want the site to go live but keep it in construction mode but still want all ips viewing it'
live.'
launch'

Please note that this is apparently $client's web designer brother...

>$me: 'You want it to go live?' (The site has no ads on at this point)
>$client: 'Yes please'
>$me: 'You got it'
>$client: 'So can call IPs see this now?'

...

>$me: 'Yes'
>$client: 'Good man now we are in Control of the construction page. (You're not) This is what we wanted instead of depending on you all the time so we can show our investors till it's time to go live'
>$me: 'But it's already live now... People can already do everything...' (Buy packages etc)
>$client: 'No I have stuck it back on maintenance mode in settings like you can do with most other scripts and software. It's just that it's live but it's cannot be seen yet till its finalised and ready. Unless your a big time investor which is what we plan to do very soon. Just gives us more independence to show and tell our selected viewers.'

That's literally what it was on, he's just removed the IP's from the list now... (Also yes he has access to the script's admin panel (not the server admin panel))

>$me: 'That's what it was already on though? On maintenance mode. You've just removed the IP's now. That's the only difference'
>$client: 'Oh right I thought you done that through the server lol oh my bad lol'
>$me: 'Must dash off will catch up later'

O... Okay?
I ended the conversation and finished the site. As of now me and my gf are both laughing at the conversation and his 'brother'.
Some people are weird man.

tl;dr: Created website for a client who ended up going back on his promised payments and sends his 'web designer brother' in for a chat.

Patrick Star's Theory on Office Equipment Moving. - /u/hbar98

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hn89y/
patrick_stars_theory_on_office_equipment_moving/

Howdy and hello! I have another tale I'd like to share, and this time is about moving office furniture!

Previous stories:

little_fingers_sink_warranties/)

[Cows Hate Internet](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/60v22s/error_cow_on_line/)

And now, on to today's story!

It's summertime in Missouri! Again. It's hot, it's muggy, but I'm done with classes for a while so I can work a little more here and there while I try to make ends meet. They don't always meet. I'm not working for the school as much (don't really need a lot of tech support when most of the school is away), so I'm working more for the local computer shop, doing what needs to be done.

The one day...

Cast of Characters

average.

$boss: The BossMan, a late 20-something guy who is really motivated.

$om: The office manager. Your typical office managerial type.

$sec: The secretary. The one actually using the computer.

Story Begin!

> $boss: Hey, $me, I need you to do something different today.

> $me: *looks up from various computer guts* Sure, what's up?

> $boss: I need you to go... on a service call! **thunder, banshee wailing, dramatic chipmunk, etc...**

> $me: Uh, sure. I've never been on a service call before. What's the job?

> $boss: It's simple. Just install this printer onto the computer they show you.

record scratch Now, according to the rules of tech, the words "simple" and "printer" NEVER go together. Printers are vile beasts that feast upon the nerves of techs. At the factory, ever printer gets a ghost and a pair of invisible eyes installed. They know when you are there, they know when you are away. They

know when to start working as the words, "Well, this won't work..." are still coming from your mouth.

Anywhoozle, $boss hands me a $happy printer. This being that awkward time of the late 90s, early 00s, the printer is rocking a parallel port on the back. No biggie, I've done this literally dozens of times! I'm sure this one will be no different!

I grab the printer, make sure I have the proper cable, and head across town to the small office. I don't recall what the office actually did. It may have been some sort of insurance or whatnot, but it was terribly important that bits of paper get moved around, and the lack of a printer was holding them up!

I exit my car, grab all the supplies, open the door, and find my way to $om.

> $me: Hello! I'm from $computershop, and I'm here to install this printer.

> $om: Great! Follow me.

a few moments of walking pass

> $om: Hey, $sec, $me is here to install the printer.

> $sec: Okay, just let me finish this up.

> $me: No worries! I need to unpack this thing anyway.

several moments of exciting unpacking continue, followed by a few minutes plugging the computer in

> $me: Aaaand now I need to install the software.

Yeah, $happy software was always great. It takes a long time (the 4x cd-rom drive wasn't helping), but I get the printer installed. I print a test page, and it works. I have the $sec print from her program, and it works. I know how problematic printers can be, so I have her restart the computer, go back into her program and print, and it works

> $me: Alrighty, you should be good to go! Thanks for allowing $computerstore to help you!

> $sec: Thank you!

One day passes

I'm back at work, elbows deep in the guts of a computer. $boss walks in and he is not happy.

> $boss: What did you do yesterday?

> $me: What do you mean?

> $boss: The printer. $om called and said that it wasn't working, that it's your fault.

$boss then proceeds to tell me that it is vitally important that the printer work RIGHT NOW, something about monthly reports not getting done, costing them money, and so on.

So I jump in my car, drive across town, and walk back into the office. $om is there, and she is not happy.

> $om: We pay you good money, and the job wasn't done right! Fix it now, or we are pulling our contract.

> $me: (trying to stay calm) I'm sorry, but when I left yesterday the printer was working. I had the $sec verify that it was printing before I left.

> $om: Whatever. Just FIX IT!

I walk to where the $sec sits, and something is missing. Actually, several things are missing: namely the tower, the keyboard, the speakers, the mouse, and the monitor. The printer, however, is right where I left it, cables terminating in the air.

> $me to $sec: Uh, where's your computer?

> $sec: It's about time you got here! My printer isn't working!

> $me: Yeah, I can see that. Where's your computer?

> $sec: Well, I didn't like where it was, so I moved it. Fix the printer!

> $me: See, that's the problem. You didn't move the printer with the computer. It won't work unless it is plugged in.

> $sec: What!? You didn't tell me that yesterday. It should work! Fix it!

> $me: Again, where is your computer?

> $sec: Over there. *points to a very small cubby space with no room to place the printer.*

> $me: Yeah, that won't work. The printer needs to be close to the computer.

> $sec: Fine! Whatever! You move it!

So I move the computer back to its original spot, hook up the printer, print a test page, then head back to inform my boss of the situation.

> $boss: Are you kidding me?

A couple days later I get an apology from the office, and my boss starts to not second guess me.

tl;dr: $sec dreams of a future where printers are wireless. We are still waiting for that dream to be fully realized.

Just over 180 seconds to go - /u/ UncommonNormal

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hmsg7/just_over_180_seconds_to_go/

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week.

We have a main patient record system at our hospitals, which for the purpose of this story we will call $psys.

Now a genuinely amazing event happend before the essential maintenance of $psys. An event so rare it can be compared to a unicorn.

WE WERE ACTUALLY INFORMED OF THE PLANNED MAINTENANCE IN ADVANCE

The maintenance was scheduled for mid day and was to take exactly one hour. Now when they say *one hour*, they mean **ONE HOUR**. They never take any longer becuase $psys is a major hospital system, it being down for one minute is inconvenient let alone one hour. I don't know why mid day and that decision is nothing to do with our department anyway so please don't ask.

In the week leading up to the maintenance of $psys Loads of emails went around advising ***ALL STAFF*** of this essential maintenance and gave all the details of when it would be down and for how long. All staff are advised to revert to their backup processes during this time and to be well prepared.

Now we *always* get phone calls from staff who never bother to read their emails and then complain about the system being down. Now becuase we had the advanced warning we also put a message on the phone system for that time period advising staff of the maintenance. So anyone phoning us to complain would be fully aware.

So this time we were really hoping we wouldn't get any calls for staff complaining about the maintenance to $psys. Can you see where this is going? Well keep reading and see if you are right.

$Me = UncommonNormal

$Rec = Receptionist for a department or person or something (she never did tell me)

phone rings

> $Me: "Hello *generic greeting* how can I help?"

> $Rec: "I am a receptionist and I need access to $psys and it isn't working!!!"

> $Me: "Unfortunately there is scheduled maintenance to $psys at the moment *(looks at time, there are just over three minutes until the system will be back online)* but the system will be....."

> $Rec: *Interupting* "I know that $psys is down, I saw the emails. I need access to in NOW!!!"

> $Me: *internally: Wow she actually read the email*

> $Me: "Unfortunately you can not access the system whilst it is down for maintenance. You should be reverting to your backup process. But in just over two minutes $psys will be back online."

>$Rec: "I can not wait for the system to come back online! I need access to it now!!"

At this moment I would like to point out that I am extremely patient with our staff on the phone. I know that nurses, doctors, receptionists and admin staff are under a lot of pressure and stress, so I never (well, almost never) snap back at them (story for another time).

Also before anyone asks she is a receptionist, definitely not a nurse. She will not be treating any patients and will not be giving out any life saving information from the system. If our A&E department managed to go without $psys for almost an hour and work from their backup process, so can she.

> $Me: "As I said the sytem is offline. It is impossible to access it at the moment. In just under over one minute you will be able to access the system again."

> $Rec: "Just bring the system back online NOW!!!"

> $Me: "Unfortunatley it is not that simple, we can not simply flip a switch and bring the system back online. It would take longer to interupt the maintenance, revert the system back to how it was and turn it back on. In just under a minute $psys will be back online and you will have the access you need."

Now I would like to point out that the whole time I was explaining anything to her she was huffing and puffing and tutting. Also I was checking the status of the system and it had just been made live again, exactly

on time!!!

> $Rec: "I don't want excuses, I just want to get back in to the system. Why can't you jus...." *she was interrupted by a colleague in the backgroung and I hear muttering* "We are back in to the system now. Maybe in the future you could be more helpful when we phone. You are supposed to be a helpdesk."

SLAMCLICK

> $Me *to a dead phone line* Is there anything else I can help with? Anger management maybe? No, ok. Have a nice day and never call again. Bye.

TLDR: I can't wait quietly for 3 minutes, so I will rant for 3 minutes instead.

EDIT: A few missing bits of info for clarity.

Dual Monitor Confusion - /u/DivineShine

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hnwrb/
dual_monitor_confusion/

I was showing our head of HR a new part of a dashboard we'd made this week ahead of showing all the heads of department. It came to a part where clicking a staff member's name throws you into a piece of software where their staff record is.

He seemed happy with it all, but expressed concern that not everyone has 2 monitors. I was confused, but realised the staff record had opened on my 2nd monitor initially as that's where I'd last had Chrome open.

After explaining a few times what had happened and my boss rolling her eyes I made a note to make sure everything will open on 1 monitor when demonstrating. The slightest difference can really throw some people through a loop at my place.
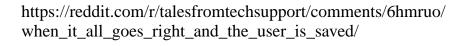
Have to stay grounded - /u/Jesuslookalike

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hmxdg/
have_to_stay_grounded/

Hello Talesfromtechsupport. I used to do computer tech help in high school and college, but these days I work for a manufacturer of commercial kitchen equipment. I'm the "Master Technician", when a field tech can't solve a problem they call me. My office number can be physically found on the equipment so I also talk to a lot of end users as well.

This guy calls in, his piece of equipment was working in his house but when he moved it to a generator it would not fire up. His equipment was 220V.

block."

>**end user** "I have 110 volts on the black wire, and 110V on the white wire."

>**lookalike** "What do you have across the wires?

>**end user** "I have 110 volts on the black and 110 volts on the white."

>**lookalike** "But across them?"

>**end user** "Should be 220 volts, they each have 110."

>**lookalike** "Measure it"

>**end user** "What?"

>**lookalike** "Put one probe of your volt meter on the black and one probe on the white."

>**end user** "I can't do that."

>**lookalike** "Why not?"

>**end user** "The probe won't be grounded."

>**lookalike**"... That does not matter. Do it."

>**end user** "It reads zero."

output."

>**end user** "This doesn't make any sense! I'm calling my electrician friend!"

When it all goes right and the user is saved - /u/mwerte

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hmruo/
when_it_all_goes_right_and_the_user_is_saved/

SMB sysadmin here, one of the things that I've sunk a lot of time into is backup and restoration abilities. Rarely does this get acknowledged, and hopefully it never will be necessary, but I had a small win yesterday that made me smile.

User comes over, lady in her 50s, very nice, not tech savvy at all.

User: "Mwerte, I overwrote a critical file I need, is there any way to recover it?"

Me: "I think so, were you using the network drive?" (please say yes please say yes please say yes)

U: "I was, its in the Accounting folder, the file name is accounting.xlsx"

M: *clicky clacky* "ok, it's back to how it was at noon today, is that good enough?"

U: "perfect! thank you!"

And then she went away smiling.

An hour (not even) of time spent configuring Windows Shadow Copies and it saved her a day of work. I know shadow copies aren't true 'DR', but for quick and easy problems it's a quick and easy fix. It felt good to help someone out. To her it was magic that saved her day.

Don't hand off responsibility for a system to someone who doesn't understand the system. - /u/Whazzits

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hoisb/
dont_hand_off_responsibility_for_a_system_to/

I support ~~our customers' emotional and mental weaknesses~~ software. A Confused Woman calls us. "Hi, I'm calling because the only person able to create users in our system left us, and I need to make a user account for myself and one Other Person."

I feel a headache already as I gather her name and company. She's not on our list of approved contacts for that location. "Ma'am, we generally don't create users for locations unless there really is no one at your location able to do so themselves..."

"The person who left was always the only person able to make users."

Shit. But there's a good chance Confused Woman is incorrect about that, and there's still someone around with access. "Okay. I'll remote into your system, just to see if anyone else still has an account..."

Huh.

CompanyDomain?"

"Yes!"

"Ma'am, from what I see, both you and Other Person already have accounts."

"Really?"

"Yes. And it says you are currently logged in, and have been for the past 8 minutes." About the length of our call, plus two minutes.

"...well, yeah, I guess I'm logged in, but I must not have the right type of account, because I can't do everything I thought I could..."

Right. "It says you have the highest level of permissions available to your company."

"Oh...well, the reason I called is because I can't do [insert basic function of software here]. It didn't work last time I tried."

How surprising. "That's OK, Ma'am. Let's walk through the process together. Go ahead and [insert description of only step in the process here]"

The sound of slow typing and a single, heavy click comes through the phone. "Okay, but last time I tried...Oh! It worked!"

"That's wonderful! You let me know if this issue pops back up again. I'll also email you the process we just went through, for your records."

Here's to hoping she actually reads it.

Friday Afternoon "Server Outage" - /u/ Ulfsark

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ho8kb/
friday_afternoon_server_outage/

The Friday after an intense week of dealing with Ransome ware and various storm caused server outages I finally get a moment to check on our ticket system. In our system I spot a fresh ticket titled "Server Outage" My heart sank, My brain instantly went to any of the "problem" servers that it could have been. The ticket itself is very vague and provides no info so I have no clue which site this is at. I start asking around and nobody has heard anything

I get a hold of the guy who created the ticket and find out... That he was training a new tech on the ticket system and that this was just a dummy ticket to train the new guy. After collecting myself as best as possible, I kindly asked him to use a different title for test tickets in the future.

I'm pretty sure I left it at home... - /u/djxiii

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hoxuc/
im_pretty_sure_i_left_it_at_home/

Yesterday, someone found a iPhone in a meeting room at the University and they brought it to the Servicedesk because there was nothing on it to identify the owner. We plugged it in to a PC and it came up in iTunes with a username. Perfect. We looked up the phone number and called it to confirm. Phone rang. All we need to do is get the employee to come pick it up and we're done.

Not so fast. Here's how it goes when we call her.

>My Tech: Hi PersonWhoLostPhone, your iPhone was turned into the Servicedesk. It was left in meeting room H1012.

>PWLP: Oh, I'm pretty sure I left it at home today.

>My Tech: Um, no. We have it here.

>PWLP: No. I don't think so.

>My Tech: We've confirmed that this is your phone. We've called your number and it rang. You can come get it, we are open until 8PM.

>PWLP: I'm pretty sure it's at home though. I will check when I get home tonight.

Sure enough she didn't come by and pick it up. We figured she would come in and pick it up this morning after discovering that she had not, in fact, left it at home. but no....

Different tech gets call from this user who is having login problems. Gets her logged in and remembers that there is a phone here for her to pick up.

> Other Tech: I just wanted to remind you that your iPhone is here for you to pick up.

>PWLP: Oh, I'm sure it's here at home.

>Other Tech: No, it's here.

>PWLP: I'm calling it right now so I can find it.

Phone starts ringing in our Servicedesk Area.

>Other Tech: It's ringing here. Please come and get it when you are on campus.

>PWLP: . . . That is really weird. (hangs up)

About 20 minutes later the phone rings again. Same number. She is still looking for it at home apparently. We notice that there is actually 3 missed calls. It looks like she phoned the number last night as well.

It is now past lunch time. She is on campus. She has not come to pick up her phone.

He Prefers his Amounts in Dollars, Not Letters. - /u/Gavdra

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hezqb/
he_prefers_his_amounts_in_dollars_not_letters/

My bosses boss (who is a self-proclaimed "Power User") requested that I send him an excel report that contains some loan totals in different towns. The totals were in the multi-millions because there are so many loans being added together. Let me recap our conversation.

$boss- Hey $me I am looking at this report and there seem to be some weird problems.

$me- I made sure to thoroughly check the numbers to assure everything is coming out correctly, what's the problem?

letters.

$me- What.....Let me pull it up over here and see what could have gone wrong. *My head instantly starts thinking of all the possible ways a number could be randomly converted into letters...and finds nothing*

$boss- Okay because I have never used letters for a total before, I am not sure why you would do that.

$me-*after opening up mine I look in the first cell and see that because the number is too large it got reduced using scientific notation* Hey $boss, please try expanding the cell to show the full number.

me.

$me- Sure thing $boss.

TL;DR- My boss thought the dollar amounts were in letters instead of numbers in excel because he didn't expand the cell.

Edit: wow my first time posting on this sub. Did not expect this post to be popular! Thanks guys, love reading all the comments

Edit 2: I know you didn't ask but it was only 4 columns. Two of them didn't fit.

Talking into someone's mouth. Or RS-232 Wiring is HARD - /u/BarbaraDoran

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hnil4/
talking_into_someones_mouth_or_rs232_wiring_is/

(Not really obligatory: Long Time Reader, First Time Poster. Apologies if my formatting is toast.)

A long time ago I worked as a Software Engineer for a tiny and cheap outfit that made sensors. They were so cheap their software was written in an executable form of BASIC. Which, to be fair, was about all I was good for, so I can't really squeal on that point.

Where I did have issues, however, was when the higher-ups, in their infinite wisdom, decided their software people would make GREAT over the phone hardware tech support. They were wrong. So. Very. Wrong. Our days were soon constantly interrupted by customers looking for answers or needing repairs. Software design took a nosedive. So did hardware setup.

The sensors we made could be connected to a big box that would allow users to control and measure and generally keep an eye on what the little brown boxes attached to their machines were sensing. That box, in turn, could talk to a computer using an RS-232 cable. Our systems only needed a few of the pins connected but two were particularly important. RCV and SND. We supplied them but users could also make their own. This could lead to... issues.

Note: What follows is not word for word verbatim. Just what I remember.

>$CableGuy: Yeah. We can't get our PCBOX to talk to our chevron covered BigBrownBox.

>ME: Have you made sure the cable is plugged in?

>$CableGuy: Ayep. It's tight.

>ME: Have you ever had the two talk?

>$CableGuy: Ayep.

>ME: With that cable?

>$CableGuy: Nope. With the short one came with the system. But we made a long one.

>ME: (Wondering if they'd made it too long) How long?

>$CableGuy: XX Feet. (It was within acceptable range, but I don't remember what that was.)

signal?

>$CableGuy: (after a few minutes) Ayep. Pins are connected loud and clear.

Now I was puzzled. The boxes clearly weren't the problem so it had to be the cable.

>ME: Could you read them off?

>$CableGuy: Ayep. TXT to TXT. GND to GND. SND to SND. RCV to RCV. All clear as a bell.

I admit. It took me a moment to realize. Those of you experienced in these things probably see it already. scream.

LOOP (too many times)

>ME: It should be SND to RCV. RCV to SND.

>$CableGuy: Now that just don't make sense.

>ME: (Trying not to laugh) But it's how it should be.

>$CableGuy: I don't get it, though. Shouldn't they all match?

END LOOP

Ever have one of those times when the snappy comeback isn't there until you hang up the phone? Me too.

>What I wish I said: It's like talking into someone's mouth.

>What I actually said: Please, just try it.

>$CableGuy: Uhm. Okay. I don't know. But okay.

Then....

>$CableGuy: Well I'll be! It works. It works! (Applause from his side).

>ME: (thankful it's over) Excellent! Please let us know if you have any other issues later on.

>$CableGuy: Ayep! We'll be doing that! THANK YOU!

The whole thing took around half an hour, mostly spent trying to convince the poor fellow that some things don't get wired to the matching pin. Fortunately, although a bit slow on the uptake, $CableGuy and his compatriot were good-humored nice people who didn't throw a fit because things didn't work. Given some of the stories I've seen here, I know now that I evaded a bullet on this one.

I also know I never, ever, want to do software engineering or tech support again.

But I don't want a second monitor... - /u/ daxter154

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hgcmn/ but_i_dont_want_a_second_monitor/

Hello TFTS, I work at a medium sized bank as a developer, but since our tech support is outsourced I am the first line of support for IT problems in the office before we call for help (since it saves $).

Due to the nature of this bank, the majority of our users are in their mid 50s. I have no problem with this but as you can imagine, it can cause simple issues to make a hard left into absurdity.

Our story begins when I am tasked with upgrading our 4:3 single monitor fleet with brand new 27 inch dual monitors. For most of the day, the install went great and most users were excited to be able to have so much more screen real estate to work with, even if a few were upset with having less desk space that the new monitors took.

One user however, was not happy at all. Lets call her $User.

> $Me - Ok $User, are you at a spot where I can upgrade your workstation?

> $User - I Guess. But I really don't want a second monitor, I like my current setup... (incoherent moping)

before

> $User - No I won't! It will take me so much longer to get into my computer!

(we have a 5 minute idle lock policy that kicks users out to the login screen for PCI Security compliance, which results in people having to log in about 10-20 times per day, on average)

> $Me - What do you mean? At worst it will take you the exact same amount of time, we are only changing your monitors, not your computer.

> $User - Thats exactly what I mean! I don't want to have to log into each screen every time it locks! I won't be able to get anything done!

> $Me - *Physically dazed* Excuse me?

> $User - Yea! It already spend too much time each day logging in after i get logged out for being idle. If I have to spend twice as much time logging in, I won't be able to get anything done! I am already late sometimes punching in/out because of how long it takes.

> $Me - *Straining not to laugh* Thats not how it works...

TLDR: a gunman broke in and i used IT wizardry to disarm him

They were so sure they'd checked everything. - /u/GinevraWPotter

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hfhnt/
they_were_so_sure_theyd_checked_everything/

I was told you guys might appreciate this one.

A few years ago, I worked for a company that dispatched technicians to fix coffee, tea, espresso, and soda machines for certain coffee and convenience stores. I was working the northeast US and all of Canada.

Got a call from the management company that a store in Medicine Hat, Canada had their coffee maker go down. Now, Medicine Hat is not part of anyone's regular route and is 3 hours away from the nearest technician's home base, and it was December at the time. We didn't want to send him because Canada was experiencing a snow storm.

They insisted I needed to get the tech out there, they'd pay us extra, etc. I tried everything, I asked every question. I asked all the usual "is it turned on? Is it plugged in?" questions and was told "yes, they've tried everything, get someone out there".

It took the tech about 4.5 hours to get there because he literally couldn't see 10 feet in front of his car. He even sent me a picture (I don't have it anymore sorry). It was crazy.

He finally got there and checked the machine over. He called me less than 4 minutes after he arrived and said "I'm done here. They hadn't plugged it back in after they unplugged it to clean it last night."

And that's the story of how that tech got almost $800 to plug in a coffee machine.

Edit: Jesus you guys are critical. *That part of Canada* was experiencing a snow storm. I know Canada is big - we lumped it all together because we only had 4 technicians for all of Canada. So we'd just say "Canada" for anywhere in Canada.

The mystery of the online but nonexistent Windows 2003 web server - /u/chientaylor

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hgzsr/
the_mystery_of_the_online_but_nonexistent_windows/

The other day I posted a story about finding a Dial-Up server hidden in our College department's server room. Today one-ups that by an exponential amount.

I was doing my normal afternoon paperwork when I get an email from a professor (a different one than all my previous posts) telling me that $ghost is down. $Ghost is a server that I knew about because it had a web page, but nothing else. I had always assumed it was a VM.

Oh how wrong I was.

The email is telling me that $ghost was barely responding to web requests about a day ago, and since then it has been agonizingly slow. The pages load, but they take almost a minute to fully download a single page with a picture and five links on it.

My search on our VM servers turned up nothing. The same was true with our inventory. It wasn't a VM, and it wasn't a physical machine. Weird.

I try to ping the DNS name the professor gave me, expecting maybe an issue with a switchport or cable (we just redid some wiring). But there was an NX Domain error, which meant the host name he gave me wasn't in DNS.

$school.edu.

I try it from our local network. I try both our internal and external DNS lookups. I try the school, our ISP, and even Google. Nothing. According to DNS, this server doesn't exist.

So I check the documentation. JK, we don't have any.

At this point, I figure someone must have put the host name in his hosts file to avoid DNS. I check his computer, but no. Nothing.

Checking his DNS servers though reveals he is pointed at the older, abandoned portion of the network. He can ping $ghost, but it is agonizingly slow, so much that I have to extend the timeout to two minutes. I have an IP though.

Which turns out to be a port-forwarding router.

By this point, I'm more in security mode than tech support mode. Checking the website's error pages reveals that it is running IIS on Server 2003. For a Linux shop, this is fairly alarming.

After finally gaining access to the router (abandoned by the department, from an old research project), I find a slew of old docs and a DNS server forwarding to ours. One of the docs was for a device called an ARTiGO A1000 (this is important later on). I shrugged it off and started looking for this device.

This router is virtual, but when looking at the SPAN port on our core switch, I know that the traffic is not going to any of our VM servers. In fact, it's going to our management network. That's as much as I can figure out, since all management devices are hooked up to a dumb switch.

This stumps me for days, going from server to server, checking each IPMI system from several manufacturers. Nothing.

Three days later, I'm working on a separate project when a loud beeping suddenly starts. I hurriedly try and find the beeping server, but the beeping isn't coming from any of our servers. I finally narrow it down to two older servers. One server has front USB ports in a dedicated 5.25" bay, along with a power button. I push the power button, trying to turn off the server, but instead the beeping stops.

When I connect the VGA cable though, the server is still on, running Linux. In fact, the front USB ports don't work at all. I glance at the label, which says "ARTiGO A1000" and look through the docs to see if this is some special module or card.

The ARTiGO A1000 is a full i386 embedded computer that can be placed in a 5.25" CD drive slot.

When I popped open the server, I finally saw that the IPMI card was not an IPMI card. It was instead a throughput to this little evil machine. When I connected video to it, it was Server 2003, proudly displaying that it was $ghost.

computer."

It's still running, only now it's in inventory, and it's somewhat patched (which is why it was so slow).

Sadly, no pictures. The school's logo is on everything, in the least photogenic places.

TL,DR; I had a complaint that a server had slowed down, but according to the network, it didn't exist. I accidentally found the server physically embedded inside another server, like a parasite.

The Wiped Drive - /u/iwriteofdragons

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hgah9/the_wiped_drive/

So this is not a story of my own, but my retired IBM Grandfather told me this one. Cast your mind, way, way back into the early 1980's, when hard drives were still big, round discs that could only hold about 5mb and two hard drives could fill up a back seat.

Grandpa was a troubleshooter for IBM. He went out as support for any company that had a computer and fixed whatever issues they had. He had a co-worker that sometimes went along on the same job, sometimes not. In this particular case, his co-worker was called out to a company because the computer wasn't functioning right. They diagnosed over the phone that it likely needed a re-imaging, so co-worker took two hard drives with him to help with this endeavor.

Players:
G - Grandpa
C - Co-worker
B- Boss, Grandpa's and co-worker's supervisor

(Of course I'm ad-libbing dialogue a little as I heard the story second hand and it's forty years old, but it went something like this.)

Co-worker arrives on scene, calls Grandpa, who's still at the office:

>C: "G, I plugged in one of my spare hard drives but it's not showing there's a single byte of data on it. them?"

correctly?"

>C: "I double checked it all before calling you. This is strange, they're completely wiped. How can they be wiped in between leaving the office and arriving here? There must have been a mixup."

>G: "Well, I suppose its possible, but...how? We only have so many of those things."

shoulder.

>B:"What's wrong? The drives are wiped that C took?"

>G: "That's what he's saying."

>B: "He's driving a 1976 Bug, isn't he?"

>C: (who can hear the boss) "How'd he know?"

>G: "He says he is."

>B: (laughs) "That would do it."

It turns out that in the 70' Bugs, they created enough of a magnetic field in the back seat that it would wipe a

hard drive. Maybe not over short distances, but Co-worker had driven 45 minutes to get to the company, and that was enough to do the trick. Grandpa had to be dispatched with another set of hard drives to do the job while co-worker returned with the wiped drives.

After that, co-worker took precautions and it never happened again. I've always wondered, though, how the Boss knew.

TL/R - A 1970's Bug has enough power in the back seat to wipe the old IBM hard drives.

IVR not working? Don't call the company to tell them, just call the ISP! - /u/devdevo1919

This golden call happened about 3 hours ago. I work as a tier 2 tech support agent. Basically I'm the one front line agents call if they're stumped and don't know what they're doing.

I had an agent, who we'll call N because he was a new guy who called to say that a business' IVR was not working. The business was a pharmacy with an automatic system (the IVR) to refill prescriptions. That wasn't working. So, after doing the standard verification processes, he tells me that a CUSTOMER IS TRYING TO REFILL HER PRESCRIPTION and she is the one calling.

N: So, a customer wants to refill her prescription... it isn't working.

Me: Has she contacted the pharmacy?

N: No, she knew that *ISP* was Pharmacy's ISP, so she figured they supported phone issues too.

Me: Please advise this woman to call the pharmacy directly to tell them that the IVR isn't working. We cannot help her in a situation like this. Especially when *Pharmacy* is part of a much bigger company.

N: Okay, thank you. Have a good day.

My face bounced off my desk after I hung up the call. Not because of the agent, he's new, it's understandable. But, because of the woman calling the ISP for a PHONE issue and not alerting the pharmacy first.

Clicking the Links - /u/_Pebcak_

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hhufm/clicking_the_links/

I'm the "unofficial" tech support in my small department's office. Our whole site has only one, overworked IT person so when it's something minor that I don't need crazy access to change or fix, my coworkers will come to me. Today's players: $Supervisor, $Me

>**$Supervisor**: Hey, $Me, can you please help me with something? I was at home doing training on RandomWebsite and those links were blue, but when I clicked on them, they turned purple and stayed purple. It was great b/c I could keep track of my progress this way. Now when I'm trying to finish at work, they are all blue again. Can you make them turn purple so I know where I was? Why aren't they purple now?

>**$Me**: Must be b/c you were working on this at home and you didn't actually click those links here. Can you click on each link now and see where things stop looking familiar?

>**$Supervisor**: Yes, but I thought you'd know an easier way.

I just smile and nod. It took him 30 minutes but he figured out where he left off. I need more money for this "unofficial" position -_-;

When someone asks for something then keeps interrupting as you try to explain - /u/ superzenki

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hi8ac/ when_someone_asks_for_something_then_keeps/

This started when I received a ticket this week for a faculty member whose Microsoft Office wasn't activated. This happens sometimes during the imaging process, it won't activate during and most techs are bad about checking it afterwards. The fix is to manually make it talk to our KMS server. However, this is the first instance I've seen where it had been working for months, then it just stopped working. So I called the user on his number provided:

>$Me: Hello, this is $Tech from $University. I got your ticket for Microsoft Office.

August.

>$Me: Well that's going to be a problem because I can't activate Office unless you're on Webster's network. Do you have our VPN client installed?

>$FM: No.

>$Me: So the easiest way to do this is to call our Help Desk and they'll give you the form to fill out. Your Chair and Dean are both required to sign off on it, then a ticket will come to us to install the client.

>$FM: Okay I'll do that.

So I wait a couple days and his ticket comes through. The journal notes from $SysAdmin state that he already had a VPN account previously, so all that was needed was the client install. I call him up to take care of everything this afternoon. While the client was installing, I saw him downloading two things from the internet, and suspected he would ask for my help with them. I waited for him to mention it though.

>$FM: When I was over in your area last fall while a tech was re-doing my laptop, him and your supervisor both told me that I could have an admin account and I just needed to fill out a form. They didn't know where to find it though. I even called the Help Desk and they didn't know anything. Do you know where to find this?

>$Me: I've never heard about filling out a form for admin rights (I know some places do so, but not where I work). Ever since we took admin rights away from everybody, in my personal experience I've only ever seen one person get them granted so I'd be surprised if you did get approved.

>$FM: Okay I'll just submit a new ticket.

I walk him through logging into VPN, then I fix the Microsoft issue and verify that it's activated.

>$FM: I need two more things from you before you go. The first thing is that I need my home printer installed. The second thing I need is iTunes for my iPhone.

>$Me: Is iTunes for personal use or University use?

>$FM: For university use.

He went into some long spiel, and he did mention going to an international conference in July for the school, which is believable since we have international campuses. iTunes is an approved software, but only in cases where it's a University device, or they're allowed to use their personal device for work.

>$Me: I can take care of iTunes for you, but we cannot install home printers.

As some of you may know from past tales, home printing is kind of a gray area for us right now. Faculty used to have admin rights and would install their own home printers. When we took away their admin rights, we were told "We never supported them in the first place, and there's nothing we can do." Supposedly, a $SysAdmin pushed out the GPO that would allow standard users to install print drivers, but it didn't work. Enough faculty complained that our Director bought a program that would be installed onto faculty's laptops, that would allow this (and more). We're still in the testing phases of it, and I only know of one faculty member recently who started testing it.

>$FM: You know, I think it's ironic. Last spring, I was on sabbatical and you guys told me that I was approved for home printing but couldn't install it because I didn't have the printer with me. Now I have the printer with me and you won't install it?

>$Me: Do you have a ticket number or email from one of my supervisors with that approval?

>$FM: No, I can just submit a new ticket.

>$Me: Well I can look you up in our ticketing system, I just need a few minutes.

I know I should have let him submit a new ticket but I wanted to entertain this guy and see if he actually got approved for the things he claimed, or was just trying to get me to install what he wanted for him. I found the ticket where his computer had to be re-imaged, but no notes of approval for admin rights/home printing.

>$Me: Is this ticket for your computer being re-imaged the one with the approvals?

>$FM: Yes

>$Me: I'm not seeing any approvals in the journal notes.

>$FM: Well that's fine, I'll just submit a new ticket. I just think it's ironic. To add onto that, I already had VPN access prior to when my laptop was re-imaged, and the client never got put back on there. Then, you told me I had to re-do my access and have my Chair and Dean sign off again. I'm not in town so I had to form.

>$Me: I'm sorry you had to go through all of that trouble to fix this issue, but you never told me that you had VPN access when I brought it up. I only knew because $SysAdmin told me.

>$FM: Well here's the flipside to your argument: why didn't you look me up in the system to see that I already had access?

>$Me: Because I don't have that type of access. I'm desktop support, so I install the software. Networking is the team that can see who has access to what.

$FM is silent for about a minute.

>$FM: Well, I'm just going to submit a new ticket for everything I need.

>$Me: Sounds good.

Now, I paraphrased most of this, but a lot of the conversation in between this was him constantly interrupting me when I tried to apologize for the whole VPN thing. I hate being interrupted, and became extremely rude when I told him I couldn't do what he "needed", so he quickly got on my bad side. Had he allowed me to talk more, I would have told him I'd inquire with my director about him being a tester for our new print-from-home program. I couldn't make any guarantees but I at least would have explored the option for him. But since he wanted to do things his way, I'll leave that up to whatever tech gets his ticket.

The legend of copy and paste - /u/ khan_the_terrible

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hh8a2/ the_legend_of_copy_and_paste/

Characters in this story:

$Me - Me, obviously.

$Exec - The executive

$Boss - My supervisor

Anyway, here goes.

So it was Tuesday, and I was trying to drown my rainy day morning stupor in coffee. Over the weekend, I was tasked with making sure all the computers in the office (not a huge business, but we had a lot of systems) were upgraded with the latest version of Windows 10. Monday was spent fixing small issues, mostly just getting people used to the new system. It was a busy day, and the whole IT team (me, two other guys and our supervisor) had had our hands full.

After a few sips of coffee, my supervisor walked in the door.

> **$Boss**: You need to go help $Exec with his computer. He said he was working on an important document for his board meeting, but he ran into some issues with the file. At least, that's what I was able to make out from the groans of frustration and his yelling at "stupid Windows piece of junk," then something about updates breaking stuff.

> **$Me**: Did he give any more information?

> **$Boss**: Nope.

> **$Me internally**: They never do.

> **$Me**: Okay, I'll take a look at it.

So, as usual, I was forced to leave my coffee to cool in order to resolve some problem that would be fixed in a matter of minutes.

Little did I know...

Once I made it to $Exec's office, he threw open the door as soon as he saw me, hurriedly rattled off some gibberish with tech buzzwords thrown in, and slammed - emphasis on the *slam* - his laptop onto his desk. I asked him to start from the beginning and describe the issue in as much detail as he could.

> **$Exec**: I'm trying to make a copy of $ImportantDocument for the board meeting. I have it in the Documents folder, and I need a copy on my Desktop.

> **$Me**: Okay, show me how you make a copy.

$ImportantDocument.docx.txt

It took all the willpower in my arm to keep it from flying toward my forehead.

I showed him the correct way to make a copy by right clicking and selecting Copy, then going to the Desktop, right clicking and selecting Paste. Which he then did ... six more times.

> **$Me**: Why do you need seven copies of $ImportantDocument on your desktop?

> **$Exec**: Well, I need to print it seven times, obviously!

> **$Me internally**: Don't laugh, don't laugh, don't laugh

It took me another five minutes to explain that you don't need a copy of a document for each time you're going to print it, and then to show him how to print multiple copies from the Print dialog. He printed off the seven copies he needed, wide-eyed the whole time.

I walked back to my desk, sat down, and took a good sip of my not-quite-as-hot coffee. $Boss asked how it went. After he heard the story, we got a good laugh off of it.

TL;DR You can't rename a new file to copy it.

Zero Chronicles: Rebooting The Sun - /u/ grond_master

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6heenh/ zero_chronicles_rebooting_the_sun/

It's my first week at $ZeroCo, where I have been thrust - kicking and screaming, I might add - into the CTO role over & above my actual responsibilities. [We met my boss, $TheSun, yesterday.](https:// %3Agrond_master&sort=new&restrict_sr=on&t=all)

He calls me over to his office, complaining that his laptop's working extremely slow. I check, it is. File Explorer's taking ages to load. He's got 100+ emails open in $Mailbox, so first I close all of them. No response. A senior engineer, $Soap, from our MSP is over on his monthly visit, so I mention it to him to send one of the minions to check.
>**$Soap:** You talking about $TheSun's device?
>**$Me:** Yeah. Running insanely slow. Even Explorer's taking ages to load.
>**$Soap:** Have you rebooted?
>**$Me:** *Can't be that easy, can it?* Not yet.
>**$Soap:** Reboot it. I bet my daily wages the uptime's over a month.
>**$Me:** Ok, I'll get it over.

intercom.
>**$TheSun:** You need to do something about this device, $Grond. It's running slow again.
>**$Me:** Have you rebooted?
>**$TheSun:** No. Should I?
>**$Me:** Don't call me until you've rebooted at least once and the problem still persists. *Yeah, I know, there are issues that don't get solved that easily, but hey, in the 3 years working with $TheSun, 90%+ issues were resolved with a reboot. Go figure.*

Another fortnight later, $TheSun's secretary, $Oddity, reaches out.
>**$Oddity:** Hey $Grond, I needed to check something on $TheSun's laptop, and it's running too slow. What to do?
>**$Me:** Have you rebooted?

Another fortnight later, I overhear $Oddity talking to $TheSun on the phone.
>**$Oddity:** Is it taking too much time to open?
>*...*
>**$Oddity:** Have you rebooted?
>*...*
>**$Oddity:** Ok, I'll wait.
>*...*
>**$Oddity:** No, I'm not calling $Grond over. First you reboot. Remember his instructions?

I couldn't be less proud of her. We'd have our battles throughout our employment, but this...

TL;DR: Have you rebooted?
Edit: I can has speeling and grammer...

I need a smart card! - /u/Darkotik_X

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hchvs/i_need_a_smart_card/

So today gave me the opportunity to finally create a post here! I normally deal with your everyday tier 1 issues in a corporate environment (password resets, software installs, whyismycomputersoslow issues), but **TODAY THOUGH** this caller decided to take "simple" to a whole 'nother level:

> $ME: IT help desk, this is Darkotik.
> $Caller: I cant login to my computer.
> $ME: Oh ok. Do you need a password reset?
> $Caller: NO! I'm not able to log in! I can't enter my username or password!
> $ME: Well, did your computer boot up to the windows login screen?
> $Caller: NO! If it did I would be able to log in!
> $ME: Ok, so what exactly is on your screen?
> $Caller: Just this box that says "insert smart card"!!
> $ME: OHHHH!!! You should be able to click "other user" and it should ask for your credentials.
> $Caller: But there is no other user, just me! I need a smart card!
> $ME: Ma'am we don't use smart cards. That's just there beca-
> $Caller: THEN WHY DOES SAY TO INSERT A SMART CARD?!?
> $ME: The last update just changed the login screen to have the option for a smart card, that's all. To get around it, just click "other user" and you can enter your username and password.
> $Caller: *clicks "other user"* Ok now it allows me to enter my password. So how do I get rid of that smart card thing?
> $Me: You just click other user.
> $Caller: No, I mean I don't want it to come up when I have to log in!
> $Me: There's no way to change it.
> $Caller: This is pretty inconvenient to have to click "other user" each time just to login! Are you *SURE* we don't have smart cards?!?
> $Me: I'm sure.
> $Caller: Ok. I'll ask my colleagues just in case they might have any idea. *click*

She calls again 20 minutes later and asks another tier 1 the **EXACT** same thing she asked me, along with a ticket requesting a smart card, that ends up being one of my tickets. I proceed to email her what I said to her on the phone, and closed the ticket immediately after.

Edit: For clarification, we are on windows 7 and the company implemented a new password reset tool that disables "remember last logon user". With the old one, users were able to just enter their password in.

End task? Forever?? - /u/chrassth_

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hgn78/end_task_forever/

A fun one for you all! I work for a sourcing firm who hires entry level software workers and pairs them with senior analysts to help us build a career. We do QA work for software for a certain company. This coworker and I started at about the same time, went through the same training program, etc etc. This person is also a bit older...not that older people aren't tech savvy, but let's face, it's usually not a good sign.

$me = me

$coworker = coworker

This day begins, I'm acting as a stand-in lead while my actual lead is on vacation. Cue me fixing every problem $coworker has. *Sigh*

>$coworker: Hey, $me, #CommunicationProgram won't let me sign in!

>$me: are you connected to the VPN?

>$coworker: yes. it won't let me sign into #CommunicationProgram.

>$me: it does that sometimes, usually if you turn on the laptop #CommunicationProgram will auto-start and you have to force close it and restart it after connecting to the VPN. Try that.

>$coworker: ok!

proceeds to click the X button then double clicks the #CommunicationProgram.

>$coworker: it didn't work! I will call help desk.

>$me: well wait a second, show me what's going on because mine is working fine.

I mosey over to their desk, $coworker does the same thing as before, not actually force closing the #CommunicationProgram, just closes the window.

>$me: ok, you'll have to fully close it out. open the task manager.

blank stare.

>$me: ???

>$coworker: how?

here.*

>$me: press control alt delete all at once.

begins trying to type this with the keyboard.

>$me: what are you doing?

>$coworker: I'm not sure what you mean so I'm trying to press control alt delete.

>$me: it's the buttons on your keyboard, they literally say each of those phrases, there are three, press them all at once.

>$coworker: ooohhhhh (they say this all the time, it's very long and drawn out and would be very funny if it weren't happening to me)

$coworker manages to open task manager a few grueling seconds later.

>$me: now click on #CommunicationProgram in that popup box and click End Task.

$coworker freezes.

>$me: ...click on #CommunicationProgram in that popup box and click End Task. This is a way to force quit so you can reopen it and access the chat and call services. When you first turn on your computer you're not connected to the VPN but #CommunicationProgram still auto-starts, it just results in an error.

>$coworker: are you sure it won't delete #CommunicationProgram off my computer?

Ultimately we got #CommunicationProgram open for $coworker. Not sure how I ended up as help desk for a few days while my lead was on vacation, but I've never been more happy to see him return.

Edit: Added a bit of info about my work, for context.

Give Him Some Time - /u/saiyanslayerz

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hg1u8/give_him_some_time/

Long time listener, first time poster.

In the mid 2000s, I worked at a call centre for tech support for an ISP in an neighboring country. An ISP pretty-much loathed by all. While we did all we could to provide good service, management had ways of undermining us.

One day, a coworker was asked to sit in on a fresh trainee's calls and help evaluate him. This trainee was an immigrant: had spend 3-4 weeks in training and had arrived to our country another 4 weeks before that. This floor.

When a call came in, the trainee would ask for the 10-digit phone number on the account, then fat-finger a 11-13 digit number into the search parameters. Both the trainee and caller would get frustrated when the account couldn't be found. Out of the seven calls the trainee took on his first day, three of the callers hung-up and four requested a supervisor.

By lunchtime, coworker took his concerns to management saying that this trainee did not have what it took to work there yet. Management's response?

"Let's give him a week to improve."

Wait, that's all it was? - /u/chip3690

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hddew/wait_thats_all_it_was/

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software.

Legacy in this case means: it was written about 20 years ago in Visual Basic 6 something that Microsoft has not released an update for in 19 years and stopped supporting altogether some 10 years ago.

Since I started with the company I have been begging them to let me write new code, but there is never any time and it works so why mess with it? and when it doesn't work a new chunk of code is added, or deleted. None of the commenting is useful and none of the variable names have any meaning and .. I could fume for days about ever having to look through the pile of crap.

Also since I started here one of the programs has had an issue, where it would take a bunch of data and plot it into Excel, then save it into a report. The issue was the plotted data would come out in these postage stamp sized plots and there was no option to resize, everything was locked out. Everyone assumed it was an issue computer.

The accepted work around since I started was to let the program do it's work, then save the file to the network, open the plot on a different computer, then copy the plot into the report. This worked, and this is what the workers had been doing for at least the 2 years I've been here if not longer.

Today I had an issue where I couldn't open Excel on my office computer, so I decided to spend some time fixing the issue in the lab. The 'equipment manager' (who wrote all the 'legacy software') was sure the issue was with Excel, so he had purchased a brand new copy of the Microsoft suite to update that one computer.

Installed new Excel, nope same problem.

Checked VB6 code, from what I could make out it seemed reasonable.

Checked all the option settings, advanced settings, user settings in Excel.. nothing.

Had previously tried to change the chart size, or properties, make new charts, open new files.. all the same issue, or that particular option was locked out.

After about an hour I clicked on the page layout, certain that the issue had something to do with the Excel template, and realized that there was no A4 size to choose from, every size option was 'label' or some fraction of a label size.

It took another 10 minutes and some google to find the solution, clicked on 'Print'..

Someone more than 2 years ago had printed to a label maker, and the option was never reverted back to a printer that takes A4 paper, so Excel decided not to provide it as an option and scaled all of the plots accordingly.

I guess I get where your coming from - /u/ gamageeknerd

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hdf86/
i_guess_i_get_where_your_coming_from/

Here's a simple one. Short and not so sweet.

It's a decently busy day in the repair shop when a man walks in and approaches our cashier.

Man: hey this is a repair store right? Do y'all fix vapes to?

Cashier: I'm sorry what was that?

drag)

Cashier: sir please don't. And no we don't fix those maybe the vape store down the street can help you.

Man:(after a minute of deep thought) ok...

And he left, simple as that. It took me a second to realize what just happened and I honestly did a check to see if I was still in a repair store and not in some random vape store.

How to convert a .pub file to a .pdf file - /u/ MachtigJen

I was helping an older gentlemen today and one of the things he wanted to do was add a clickable link into an email he was working on with my jobs software. I told him sure thing we just needed to know what type of file it was because our software only uses certain file types and if it wasn't one of them we would need to convert it to one. He then tells me it's a publisher file so I then got ready to explain to him where to go to convert the file. But he told me he was already on top of it though it would take a minute or two and he would call back because it took him so long. He then told me how he was converting the file, first printing it off and then scanning it with his scanner and converting it to a pdf from there. I didn't have the heart to tell him that was kinda silly so I let him go on his mary way.

The Mystery of the Dead Outlet - /u/graysonneal14

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ha24b/the_mystery_of_the_dead_outlet/

So I work Tech Support for a large craft retail chain, and we do a LOT of work related to registers. Our registers are powered through APC 650 battery backups, really standard, and they die a lot. We sent a store a replacement for one that had died, they installed it and called us to let us know it was beeping. Not the dead battery scream that they give off, but the short set of beeps they give off every 30 seconds or so, like they'll do after a power outage to let you know they aren't receiving power. The battery backups sometimes ship out with one battery cable disconnected, so we check that, no issue, same beeps. We figure at this point it's a faulty unit, but to make sure, we swap outlets. Same thing. So either the outlet is dead or the brand new backup. I have the user grab a battery backup from another register and have her try it. Same thing, telling us the outlet is dead. I direct her to call our facilities department and send her on her way. A couple hours later, she calls back and says that facilities sent out an electrician and saw no issues. At this point we're astonished, because we can't just have two battery backups that died in that convenient of timing.

It is at this point, approximately 3 hours into dealing with this, between multiple departments, that the user realizes that she has plugged not one, but BOTH battery backups...into themselves.

Tl;dr: User tried to generate infinite electricity

Fixing it was easy. Understanding it... less so. - /u/Geoffistopheles

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h9276/
fixing_it_was_easy_understanding_it_less_so/

I wanted to post something a bit more positive from tech support. This is a story from several years ago. I worked in a healthcare company, and one of my roles was managing the automated file transfers to, from, really.

One of the services offered was PGP keys, for either legacy connections left untouched or peace of mind in case SSH isn't enough for your liking. Either way, it was effectively a formality - no one really knew anything about the keys. It took far longer than I care to admit to remember you zip up in public and unzip in private. While we had multiple keys and would adhere to any security documents the client gave, we had one default key that expired 50 years later because, and I stress this again, we really didn't care.

I'm helping set up a new client, trying to turn this around as quickly as I can. Enter $clientIT emailing me that the key doesn't work. From the confines of my office, I don't even try to *hide* my frustration. The majority of my client errors can be boiled down to "It doesn't work and I can't be bothered to do any checks on my side." After a few grunts of mental pain that surely sounded like I was trying to reposition the stick up my ass, I opened the email.

>$clientIT: Hey, sorry to bother you, but the PGP key is coming back as invalid. Weird thing is, I've opened it up in Notepad++; it *looks* valid.

That second sentence was the exact moment I sat up straighter and put some brainpower to this. This person had a problem, but tried to resolve it himself first? That alone was a huge deal to me then. This was an Actual Problem.

I absolutely **love** Actual Problems. The sort of challenges that crop up out of nowhere that people look at and say, "...*huh*." The ones that keep you coming back because they can't be fixed by a quick search. The ones that make you feel brilliant when you crack that shell and fill the problem void with knowledge.

And to top it all off, I had backup in the form of $clientIT who was clearly thinking the same way. We were both confused because the problem persisted even after we fixed it; it was just that the fix *did not make sense*. One key would fail, another key would pass, both would pass on my system, and nothing about either key would be off.

This went on for a day or two; neither of us had the explicit time to devote resources to fixing a problem with a simple workaround that was already in place. That hardly stopped us from pinging back with test files and ideas. What program was being used? Was it a possible bug between standards? What if we made a stronger key? Weaker key? Which variable was the one throwing it off?

That's when I experienced the closest thing to euphoria: a Eureka moment of a sudden recollection of Wikipedia binging years prior. I immediately generated two keys and sent them to him:

> ShouldWork.pgp - expires 2038-01-01

> ShouldFail.pgp - expires 2038-02-01

I got a response back within a minute - my hypothesis was correct! The problem was that the program they were using for PGP encryption was using [a 32-bit datetime](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Year_2038_problem). Our default key would fail because the key wouldn't expire until the 2060s, and the program wasn't designed to fail gracefully with that in mind.

As mentioned, in retrospect, this wasn't even a problem, as it only came up because we took standard PGP conventions like "replace them often" and decided to hell with that. But, for a few brief, shining days, it united two people who didn't want to know *how* to fix it, but wanted to know *why* the fix worked. To this day, it's my fondest IT memory and one I remind myself of when I get frustrated or disillusioned. Those moments truly make it for me.

The Telegran or: Don't use Play Store, I don't trust Google - /u/AndroidScript

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h6o1c/
the_telegran_or_dont_use_play_store_i_dont_trust/

So this actually happened yesterday, I went to the hardware labs to fix my PC and someone else came in, no one of the staff knew what she wanted, so I (who had worked there before) helped the customer.

She was an elderly woman, but one of these sweet and lovable grandma types, you know the ones, you just can't get mad at them. Let's call her **$gran** for the purpose of this tale. I will be *$as*.

$gran: I want to have Telegram on my phone, because it's secure and my kids also use it.
$as: Sure, no problem. Have you tried downloading it from the Play Store?
$gran: No, I don't trust Google. I don't want them knowing that I use Telegram.
$as: Well, you're entire Android Phone is controlled by Google. They will know either way. I wouldn't worry though, Google uses their collected data to train their artificial intelligences (I am referring to Neural Net Training). There's really nothing to worry about.
$gran: Yes, you may be right, but I still don't want Telegram through the Play Store.
$as: *Gets Telegram APK via APKmirror and installs it* There you go. Anything else I can help with?
$gran: *Cue standard* ***How do I set this up*** *banter*
$as: *after setting Telegram up* All set. Have a good day.

$gran leaves happy and probably uses telegram now... but the level of ignorance astounds me. You don't want to use a controlled and secure store to download your app, but a third-party website that could potentially harm your device? Not to mention that you won't get updates.

Tale of the timezones - /u/JimmyReagan

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hanx6/tale_of_the_timezones/

So I do classes for Cognos, teaching users everything from the basics to advanced concepts. After this email thread: I had no confidence this bank will ever be able to learn it.

To set the scene, our automated elearning system sends out an email listing the class start time. I send an email with the materials and also listing the start time. We always list classes in Central Time. This class was being done over the internet with our client in the Eastern timezone. Their class starts at 8:30 Central time. This is the email thread:

>$Client: Hi, some of the folks in the office are a bit confused by what time classes start. We're in the Eastern time zone. Can you confirm our class start time?

>$me: Hi, no problem, we start at 8:30am Central Time, so that would be 9:30am Eastern time.

>$client: Hi, but the elearning email said "Central Standard Time", and your email said "Central Time". We're on Eastern Daylight Time, does that mean we start at 10:30?

>$me: No, its currently Daylight Savings Time, and you are one hour ahead of us, since our classes start at 8:30 Central, your local start time would be 9:30 Eastern. Our elearning system must have had an error, I'll see that its corrected to display the correct status of Daylight Savings.

>$client: so 10:30 Eastern Daylight, since 9:30 is standard

>$me: no, Eastern Standard Time would actually be 8:30, not 10:30, but just be ready for class when it is 9:30 where you are. 9:30 Eastern Daylight Time.

>$client: Okay, see you at 7:30 Central Standard Time.

I was so confused at this point & halfway wondered if I was being trolled. I had to spend 10 minutes researching if this particular city where the client was located didn't observe daylight savings or something... Almost fired off another message before I figured out that technically speaking, 7:30 Standard Time today would be 8:30 daylight time. So I just settled on that.

They still didn't show up on time. Nor could they grasp Cognos.

ftp vs wget vs browser vs attachment vs eyes - /u/meatb4ll

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hd6je/
ftp_vs_wget_vs_browser_vs_attachment_vs_eyes/

Hej

I'm the junior server tech at a v small tech company. We're a vendor to a bunch of hardware companies, and as server support, my job is basically to keep you running. Since we want to have a good reputation, we will go above and beyond. You're a sysadmin who can't get pip to work? We'll first suggest you talk to your IT guys. Then when you're it for your company, we'll try to help. (as somebody fresh out of college without clients.

We're currently getting a new integration between jira and our software set up, and for the foreseeable future, I'm taking point because I'm the only one who has gotten it to work with any consistency. Once it settles down, I'll be writing up better documentation for troubleshooting.

Finally it's stable enough to deploy, and we're talking about getting the prep done. I'm going to be poking around their servers for a while to get things set up well, so let's get as much else working first.

But there's this plugin to install into Jira, so I send over a URL to it's location on the ftp server. Doesn't work. Why? I done fucked up: ftp//ftp.url.com/path/to/location has a pretty dumb typo.

So I fix it up and ask them to try again. Can't get it with ftp.

reconfigured)

And then I ask them to try pasting the url in the browser's address bar. Doesn't work. All three of these things I could do on my personal laptop at home. Including noticing the missing colon once I actually looked at the URL.

BUT! It's just ~200KB, so I attached it to the last email! Didn't see it.

Eventually a different sysadmin chimes in with:
> I got it. cp it out of /location/on/network/drive

This is gonna be a fun one, I can tell. This person is bad at checking email too.

"Calls drop after 15 minutes...but only to the #Spider Conferences!" - /u/minesguy82

First off, I'm an AV control systems programmer. No, not antivirus, AudioVisual. I program Crestron and AMX control systems to control your presentation systems. This tale comes from last year.

The company I worked for had installed about 150 rooms for a large insurance firm (#Snoopy) in my local area. 80 of those rooms had a DSP that was equipped with a VoIP interface to allow for making conference calls using microphones on the table. This company had contracted with a large ISP (#MaBell) to handle their network configuration, as well as what the #MaBell was calling UCaaS (Unified Communications as a Service). What this really meant was that the insurance company didn't need to have their own instance of a VoIP gateway/call manager in their network. They paid the ISP to manage all of that and just set their phones and other devices up to communicate to the ISP's gateway. This included the DSP's in each room.

The insurance company was a heavy user of a certain, well-known conferencing service I'll call #SpiderCo for now. This incident happened after they had finished rolling out the service to all of their 3000 (I think it was that many, may have been less) or so employees at this site. The #Snoopy help desk started getting reports of calls to #SpiderCo conferences from some of the conference rooms using the DSP dropping after 15 minutes. The users would call back in, and some times it would keep working past 15 minutes, but then the call would drop after 45 minutes. The failure time was always after a multiple of 15 minutes, and only issue.

So I jumped in and started investigating. I tried making multiple calls to my own company's #SpiderCo number while sniffing the SIP traffic. I came in on the weekend and made multiple calls to the conferencing service, both mine and #Snoopy's. I couldn't get a call to fail. Finally, I got in touch with the #MaBell VoIP engineers and the #Snoopy help desk and made arrangements to have the help desk notify the #MaBell guys when a call failed. The #MaBell guys would then immediately pull their SIP logs for the time when the call failed and send them to me. It then fell to me to pore through the logs and figure out what was going on.

It took a few days, but it finally happened, and I had logs from when the call failed. After looking through the logs and pulling out all the relevant parts (I ended up with 2 text files totaling about 18 KB out of a zip file that was around 140 MB), I discovered what the issue was and the simple fix.

Before I tell you the issue, I must digress to explain a little bit about how SIP works. I'm not an expert, for sure, so this is all based on research I did when I was trying to figure out this problem. In SIP world, there are a few timers that you have to worry about. The first is the Session Timer. This is a way for systems to determine if a call has dropped or an endpoint has otherwise gone offline. Depending on configuration, the endpoint or the call manager will attempt to renew the session once the actual session timer is half over. In this case the session timer was set to 30 minutes, and set to renew from the DSP. As half of 30 is 15, this was part of the problem that was causing the dropped calls. The second timer is the one that is called the T1 timer in SIP land. This is the timer that controls how long the endpoint will wait for a response from the other end. This is usually tuned for network latency. Many times, this timer defaults to 500 ms, which it was in our case.

Ok, now that you know that, here's what was happening: The DSP was attempting to renew the session. When the DSP attempted this, the call manager had to go to the far end and do a renewal. I don't know for

sure, but my guess is that because of the heavy use of #SpiderCo there was some latency involved in getting a response to the session renewal request, which is why I never had any trouble on weekends. Because of this delay in getting a response from the far end, the call manager told the DSP 'Hey, I'm trying, hang out for a sec.' Unfortunately, the DSP thought 'Screw you,' and didn't acknowledge the call manager's request. Then the response from the far end finally came back, and so the call manager told the DSP 'We're all good to go'. This response came just outside of that 500 ms timeout. This time the DSP did acknowledge the request, but not correctly. It was still thinking 'Screw you.' The DSP immediately tried to renew the timer again, but without acknowledging the initial response from the call manager correctly. Having a second request come in while the initial request is still open caused the call manager to freak out and drop the call.

After going through all this and discovering this issue, the solution was to turn off the session timer on all of the DSPs and rely on the call manager to handle all that. I can only assume that it was a bug in the implementation of the VoIP stack in the DSP, but I never was able to get the DSP manufacturer to look.

TLDR: Don't let your DSP's keep time.

It's right there... - /u/Why_Is_This_NSFW

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h8qt5/its_right_there/

LTLFTP etc...

me = me

user = user

With new hires, we setup everything they need. We put icons and instructions right on their desktop for VPN/ Polycom phone setup/Cell phone email setup so there's no question how to do anything. As soon as they start their computer everything they need is right on their desktop.

Ticket: "*Hi, I can't get my phone to work*"

My voicemail doesn't work and I can't seem to make or receive calls

New user, maybe he needs some help. Our phone system doesn't require us to dial a number (like **9**) to access an outside line, maybe he's used to that or something.

I go over personally to assist.

knock knock

me: hey I'm $me are you having phone issues?

user: Yes, I can't get my phone to work, I can't call anyone and I can't get voicemail.

me: Ok no problem

I work through the troubleshooting, his voicemail works fine, it just wasn't setup. I show him the doc on his desktop and ask where the sheet is that was left on his desk, pointing him to the doc on his desktop. He never got that, apparently. My coworker set him up and he's *very* ~~anal retentve~~ thorough so I know he left it there.

Test call, fine. Interoffice call, fine. Called his VM from my cell, all fine.

user: Oh while you're here can you help me setup email on my phone

me: I have a doc I can send you.

5 min later at my desk

EMAIL:

Subject: *Android email setup*

Hi $user, attached are instructions on how to setup email on your phone. Your password is PASSWORD. Let me know if you have any issues

REPLY:

Hi $me, thanks for your help, what is my password?

Calendar reminder: Stop by the liquor store on the way home

No sir, I can't show you how to commit a federal crime - /u/gigabyte898

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h03os/
no_sir_i_cant_show_you_how_to_commit_a_federal/

The repair company I work at is a small business and has two locations, one of which is in an interesting area. As such, we get a lot of interesting people. This guy came in yesterday.

$User: "Hi, can you show me how to access someone's text messages? I found some tutorials on YouTube but they didn't work"
I assume he wants to backup the messages so I start walking him through how to sync his phone
$User: "No no no, I want someone else's messages"
$Me: "Wait, this isn't a device you own?"
$User: "No"
$Me: "Do you have consent from the owner to read their messages?"
$User: "No, that's why I need you to show me how to see them"
$Me: "Sir, if you don't have permission from the other person to read their messages it's illegal to access them. I can't show you how to do that here"
$User: "Well do you know anywhere else that can"
$Me: "No sir, I'm not aware of any other repair shops that can help you do that, it's a federal crime. I can pull up the relevant laws regarding unauthorized access to someone's personal devices if you'd like"

Cue standard rant of "you guys are supposed to be the experts" as I stare blankly into the distance losing more faith in humanity

How do i screenshot? - /u/ AtheistCreationist

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h684g/how_do_i_screenshot/

Im not really a tech support, in fact im just an office lacky who was meant to be making a website but thats a different story. In this scene we have $Kim who is the proverbial damsel in distress, whether thats how do i do this chart or how do i save this. This one is even more painful

$Kim
$AC = me

>$Kim: Hey $AC how do i screenshot?
>$AC: *slight sigh of despair* Press the printscreen button
several seconds
>$Kim: Where is it?
>$AC: *further sigh* Its on the top right
several seconds no clicking
>$AC: of the keyboard
>$Kim: Oh oka...
>$AC: *i interject* actually just use snipping tool, its better, go to the bottom left and click on it (indicating the windows button)
see her head look down and her hand hover around the lower left of the keyboard
>$Kim: Where is it?
kill me
>$AC: of your screen, the windows button
>$Kim: Can you show me?
Proceed to roll my chair around to her computer and show her, then add it to the taskbar
>$Kim aww thanks

How are these people functioning?

Your Silence Shouts Warnings - /u/ PoglaTheGrate

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h58gb/ your_silence_shouts_warnings/

Morning spent altering text files on a Linux Server.

Nothing fascinating, but I'm only just getting into the Linux side of things, so not as boring as it could be.

>I just ran a Secure Shell command from the jump box to give me access to the node of a weblogic server.

Heh! I could write the technobabble on Star Trek now. Too advanced for CSI, however.

I get an email from LinkedIn. Apparently I still have my profile as 'interested in other employment'.

Hmm. Data Warehouse developer required. Twelve month contract at a government agency. Twelve freakin' months! Twelve months in a government contract gives me visions of diving into a money pit a-la Scrooge McDuck.

I'm intrigued, but it sounds too good to be true. Doing a roll out of a SQL Server 2005 environment, something I've done before but...

Wait...

record scratch

months?

That is going to take a minimum of another year to implement?

I ask for clarification, stating that I don't feel comfortable applying for a job implementing a software package that is out of support.

He says, yeah, SQL Server 2005, but it could be a typo from the Department.

I'm adamant that I won't touch anything SQL Server 2005.

No response as yet.

That was last week.

Zero Chronicles: Meeting The Sun - /u/ grond_master

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h59ob/ zero_chronicles_meeting_the_sun/

Hello All. I must apologise for not entertaining you with more stories since [my last one](https:// www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/search/?q=author %3Agrond_master&sort=new&restrict_sr=on&t=all) but life intervened.

in any case, moving on. I'll return to stories starring $Dad, $PP, or any of my other non-IT-but-technical friends as and when I remember the anecdotes. We now arrive to a time when I reached a stage where I am company.

I'm a communications guy. Ask me to create a media release, develop a crisis outreach plan, speak to the press, write your life story to put up on the website: I'm your guy. Just because I can touch-type does not mean I can IT as well. Unless you're my boss at $ZeroCo, aka $TheSun.

> *Side Note: I've not called him $TheSun randomly. He's a guy who understands that the universe doesn't revolve around him, unlike many of our (l)users. The solar system will suffice, thank you very much.*

I've been hired at $ZeroCo, a sub-50 employees company, as their Mktg/Comms guy. There are two levels of employees: professionals, who do the actual business, and admin/staff, who play more supportive roles. Their IT needs are taken care of by an MSP, and there's an in-house admin guy who holds the passwords and controls inventory. There is no need for anyone else to look at IT, but $TheSun thinks that a professional level team member overseeing IT will help. A sorta-kinda CTO, perhaps. Guess who got sandbagged with the role the first day he joined! Victory points to you if you said $Grond!

The day after I was announced as the IT *ahem* in-charge, the guy who previously sat in the role, $OtherName, took me aside during a smoke break. He related an anecdote that would define the PICNIC horrors I'd face in the days to come...

$OtherName**.

>*It's been a long day, and I've been working on a 100 slide pitch presentation for the last few days. It's finally complete, and I've shown it to my boss & $TheSun that evening. There are some updates, and $TheSun wants to make some changes. Putting in the updates takes me to 9 PM before I can email the final file to him and leave for home. I get a call from $TheSun around 11:30, saying that he's unable to view all of his files on his desktop. He's already made changes to the presentation and saved them, when the system asked for a reboot, as part of a mandatory antivirus check process. He logged in post the reboot and wham - no files visible at all. I rush to his place, reaching around 1 AM. I'm worried about my presentation, his updated copy is the only version that everyone will agree should be shown to the prospective client.*

>**$OtherName:** Okay, tell me what happened.

>**$TheSun:** I was checking emails when the antivirus kicked in - it had just completed a scan, and nothing.

>**$OtherName:** *Wait what? Even $Mailbox is gone? How?* Okay, let me check.

Side note: $OtherName isn't IT-savvy, he's just a smart end-user, with some Google-fu skills. He got latched on to my role because he resolved an issue someone had by googling the answer.

>**$OtherName:** I can see the files in File Explorer - I just searched for the presentation I sent you, and I can **see** your version of it, just can't open it. Let's search for any other files.

>**$TheSun:** Okay, hunt for $RandomFileName.

>**$OtherName:** It's there, in $RandomFolder.

>**$TheSun:** Open it.

>**$OtherName:** Can't. Permission denied. *Wait what just happened? File found but permission denied? How?*

>**$TheSun:** Oh. It's not encrypted, but if it asked for a password, it should be...

>**$OtherName:** Stop. I don't want to know any of your passwords. And it didn't ask for one. It just said permission denied and didn't even open the file.

>*We ended up spending close to 3 hours in trying to google an answer to what was happening. Frustratingly, nothing came up. Finally, I closed all the windows and was about to shut down. I planned to send the laptop to the MSP in the moning, when I noticed something. During the evening meeting, $TheSun had a desktop wallpaper of $FamousCityLandmark. This one showed a OS default wallpaper.*

>**$OtherName:** Uh... did you change your wallpaper?

>**$TheSun:** Nope. It should be $FamousCityLandmark. Why, it's not there anymore?

>**$OtherName:** No.

>*Which is when it struck me to check the user photo & login details, and voila! $TheSun had somehow, instead of logging on to his domain-connected user account, had logged in to the local guest account. That one, having no admin privileges, could not open any files that belonged to a password-controlled user account. I logged out of the guest account, and made $TheSun log in to the correct account. Showed him how to select the right account when logging in. All files present and accounted for, opening perfectly, as they should. $Mailbox correctly configured. But $TheSun wasn't satisfied. At 4 AM, he spent another hour checking everything out, logging out, logging in, testing, retesting. While I am trying to stay awake in my CEO's house, trying to stifle my yawns. Finally, I begged off and left, telling him we'll address any issues later in the day with the MSP staff.*

I'm standing agape, wondering what horrors will I face if even the CEO is such an ID-10T, as $OtherName altogether.

It would take me 3 years to be able to walk away myself. And the events that took place in between would form what I've named **Zero Chronicles**. Enjoy your popcorn.

Edit: *I can format, really. It's just that Reddit's submit page has a very small textbox, while the edit page has a big one.*

No, I can not fix some random coffee shop's internet for you - /u/harrywwc

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h3nwt/
no_i_can_not_fix_some_random_coffee_shops/

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tl;dr - fellow office worker in random coffee shop broke the internet (good news though, only for them)

{sigh} - just got off the phone.

Some background - I am (now) a Project Manager, but as the only IT savvy (been in the industry since the early '80s) person in the office, I get all the "Level 0" helpdesk calls.

About 10mins ago a phone rings, and as the only one in the office I answer and give $standard-greeting

person on the other end is one of my fellow office dwellers, off-site at some random coffee shop

>(fod)"The internet is broken"

>(me)"well, as we are currently talking on the (VoIP) phone, it quite obviously _is_ working, else we wouldn't be having this conversation."

>(fod)"well, it wasn't working this morning"

>(me)"..."

>(fod)"and it's not working now"

>(me)"yes, yes it is"

(this could easily have escalated to "yes it is" / "no it isn't" repeated *ad infinitum* ;)

>(fod)"well, I'm not getting connected to $cloud-file-service. it's telling me it can't connect to the internet"

>(me)"ok. that would be because you're not connected to the internet at the coffee-shop."

>(fod)"well, you need to fix it."

>(me)"um, no. you need to ask someone at the coffee shop how you connect to the internet."

>(fod)"I connected to their wifi"

>(me)"and did you follow the instructions to connect to the internet?"

(these places usually have a web landing page that asks for a code printed on your receipt to give you x-minutes of internet access)

>(fod)"no."

>(me)"I suggest you talk to the coffee shop staff and get them to help you get on to the internet" (hopefully it's not "Luke's" ;)

>(fod)"I gotta go" (obviously unhappy at my inability to magically tell her how random coffee shop's internet works) {click}

{sigh}

"Where's the desktop button...?" - /u/ Shroom-Cat

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h2ddr/ wheres_the_desktop_button/

I work in the IT Academic Support sector at my university. I was working the Library shift when a newly high school graduate/college freshman approached me.

We're doing a refresh project where we're swapping out all the university computers for new ones, so some library desks are empty without computers. Then this little gem happened:

>$User: Hi! I just got admitted to University of University, and I was wondering how to log into my account!

>$Me: Welcome to University of University! I'd be happy to assist you. Please sit at any of the available desktop computers and I'll be right there to assist you!

>$User: -sits at an empty desk and looks confused- U-Ummm... excuse me? Where's the power button for this desktop?

>$Me: -sees that he's at an empty desk, trying to find a button on the actual desk- OH! No no! These are the desktop computers -aids him to an actual computer-

>$User: Oh sorry! I don't think I know what a desktop is... I couldn't find a button on the desk and I thought it'd open up as a computer.....

While that'd be an incredibly awesome idea, I'm still in shock that a college freshman doesn't know what a desktop is...

Old story. The mobile server van. Yup. - /u/ TheLightningCount1

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h2fw7/old_story_the_mobile_server_van_yup/

Was talking with a few co-workers at lunch today and realized that one of my co-workers used to work at the same place as me.

This place was eh... lets not focus too much on this place. They were ran by a felon and had a ton of felons working in their sales department. So I will let you decide how scummy this place was.

Although when we both realized we worked for the same place, we started sharing wild stories about this place. This led us to the moment where myself, and one of my coworkers had our drink shoot from our noses as he mentioned one of the dumber projects.

I bring you the mobile server van. Yup you heard right. The mobile server van.

It was 2009 and win 7 had just been released. We were busy ALL day long as we had been building units to sit on a shelf while we waited for the win 7 discs to come in the mail. They arrived and we were spending the entire day imaging systems. Eventually we got it in our heads that we could image a system, do a sysprep, and save that new image onto a 1tb drive.

Back then 1tb drives were pretty new and very expensive so we were confident this would be large enough. Almost all systems we shipped out were 250gb or 500gb drives. We used norton ghost with UBCD to make the disc image and basically went around with a hard drive in hand deploying the image.

This gave the owner an idea. He was watching us for a while making us nervous as we worked. I guess he saw what we were doing and got the idea to take this idea mobile cause he left.

At 4 PM that day as we were getting ready to leave, the owner had us all sit down at the table and discussed his new business proposal. I will never forget his words.

> $OWN = Owner

> $MGR = Manager

> $ME = Me (Too lazy for sarcastic name)

> $FR = Friend

So the owner had us all sit at our break table at the back of the room.

> $OWN - I was watching all of you deploy those 7 machine today. It inspired me in a way that none of you will ever imagine. I saw the way you guys take a difficult task (not difficult just tedious) and make it look very easy. *Few seconds of silence as he lets his statements hang.* I want to take what you guys did, and make it mobile.

> $MGR - How would you like us to accomplish this?

> $OWN - With the unused company van.

Confused looks from all of us

> $OWN - You all are going to build me a server rack in the back of the van, load up the server with various images, and deploy them on the road live to customers.

> $MGR - Oooookaaaaaaay?

> $OWN - Anyone have any criticisms or suggestions for this project?

dead quiet

> $OWN - I promise as long as you are respectful you will not piss me off with valid criticism.

> $ME - *Lifted my head up to speak but was quick kicked in the foot by my manager.*

> $OWN - *Turns to me.* Got something?

> $ME - No no. I had a question about power issues but answered it as I was about to ask.

> $FR - I gotta ask, who would we sell this to?

> $OWN - *Looks offended* That is for me to worry about. You all have your orders. Build me a 4u data storage server in the back of that van by the end of the week.

The meeting ended and everyone in the company was pulled off to clean out that van. The problems started immediately as the van had been used for the failed bounce house company. First we had to pull out the old bounce houses in there and clean them up.

They had been in there for so long that spiders and roaches had pretty much made a colony. Our manager, being the responsible person he was, decided to buy a raid bug bomb and set it off inside. Yup.

So we dealt with the fallout and the cleanup from that and found our next problem. No server rack, from our vendors at least, would fit inside of that van. Our owners solution to this dilemma was to buy a bunch of 3/16th inch metal brackets and rails. Then he pulled out a mig welder from the back.

My friend got to work constructing the rack for the server. Everyone else got to work getting the required XP, VISTA and 7 images that would be required for this venture. Also grabbed some server standard and server 2008 images.

plan.

> $Me - Thats a 3U server.

> $OWN - Yeah. The 4U drive bay server was double the price.

xeons.

I walked outside to inform my friend, who was welding the rack, of the change in server dimensions. His reponse was to look up at me with the welding helmet on and simply grab the rubber mallet. I walked away to the sounds of a rubber mallet and later an angle grinder.

I went back in and started wiring up the 3u storage server with my manager. Took about 2 hours to fully wire up the drives, load them with images, and deploy the server standard image on the server itself. We did not build an array with the drives. It was determined to be more of a liability so we set everything up JBOD

under $MGR's direction.

The challenging part was getting it into the custom built server case, but my manager had the best worst suggestion to help with that. Velcro strips. Yup.

We wrestled that into place and made sure it was secure. We can to two conclusions at that point. We would need at least 2 car batteries to power this server, and that none of us knew how to do that.

We were told to "figure it out" so we started googling. We later determined that 2 batteries would not be enough. We built a bank of 4 car batteries and ordered some high capacity capacitors from ebay. (Amazon was very new at this point in time) We wired them up and jury rigged them all into a wooden case with the batteries, separated by wood of course, and the capacitors in a wooden box we built. We covered the box with felt and hooked up a small 19 inch square lcd to the server.

One of the shipping guys showed us how to wire it up to the van's electrical system. We could not figure it out so we told him we would buy him dinner if he got it working for us.

We hooked up a network port to the van and made a 400 foot crossover cable, cause you needed those for direct unit to unit connections back then, so that we could deploy the image from the server itself.

possible.

It would be 2 months before we got a customer for this van. When we arrived, we found out that their units did not support network imaging so we simply pulled the drives and did the imaging manually with ghost.

The second customer loved us as we were able to image all of their systems in a few hours. Although what we actually did was ran the image file through their network and ran each image from their in house server.

We never got a third customer as when the owner was going to have the van repainted, he got into a car accident. Ran a red light and got t-boned right where the server was. Completely destroyed the server and most of the electrical wiring we did. We could save nothing from that server.

We never spoke of it again.

"Oh, I just rebooted the server, is that a problem?" - /u/Aqueously90

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h39m8/
oh_i_just_rebooted_the_server_is_that_a_problem/

Finally got a chance to post something - throughout my normal day-to-day dealings with incompetency, this one took the cake.

Backstory: two Exchange 2013 servers in a DAG, one in primary site failed a couple of weeks ago when trying to apply a security patch. Patched manually, restarted all Exchange and IIS services, carried out database checks, all fine. Back into production it went with no further problems.

Exchange server in secondary site had same patch applied last week, same failure. Ran through same steps, but server was not playing ball at all - opted for restore from backup, prior to patch installation. Removed from DAG, binned database copies, re-added to DAG, re-seeded the smallest database from the primary site, left over the weekend to complete. All users were working off the server in the primary site, so no huge impact other than a bit of a performance hit.

Over the weekend, the secondary server somehow dropped off the domain and failed the re-seed - not the end of the world, re-domained and started it again. Confirmed test database had re-seeded correctly and could auto-failover between hosts, so started re-seeding the others.

User on-site reports slow Outlook performance to local IT guy, who goes auto-pilot/rogue and decides to reboot the Exchange server in the primary site - during the re-seed to the secondary site. Although a VM, server also decides to apply pending patches and takes 45 minutes to restart - very odd, spec of the hypervisor is pretty good, shouldn't take that long...

Failed disk in the hypervisor's RAID5 array - which holds the Exchange server's OS and database VHDs. Server is out-of-warranty and has no care-pack, cue argument with accounts & sales as to whether we should absorb the cost or try to quote the client for a replacement.

Force reboot also corrupted one of the mailbox databases, so had to perform an eseutil, which took a million years due to the failed disk massively degrading the performance of the array - cue Exchange complaining about I/O performance. Managed to get the database in clean shutdown, brought it back online, and began re-seeding back to the secondary.
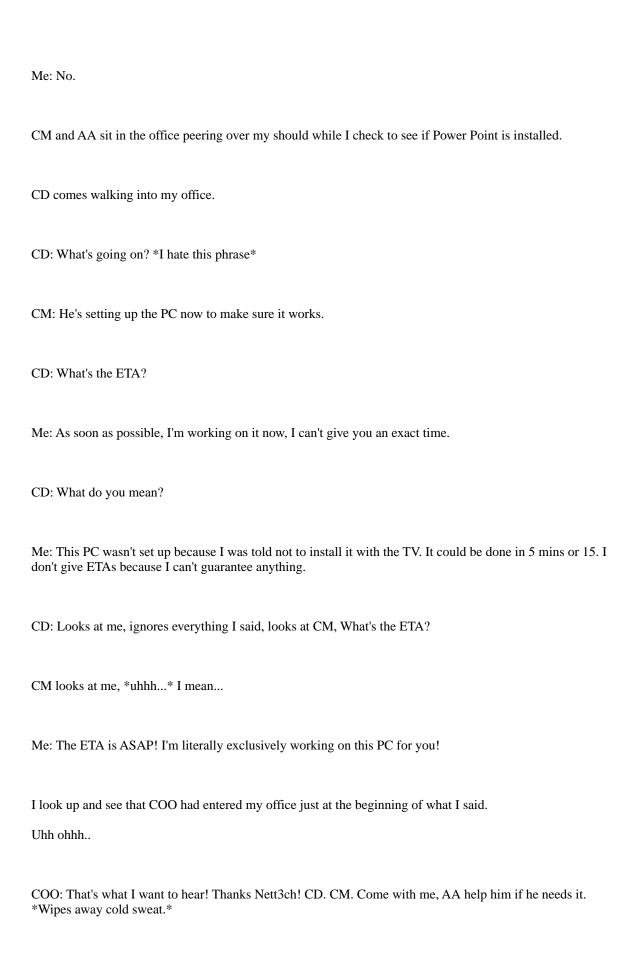
Case is still on-going, but the last two days have been a real "slam my face into the desk" saga. Also, make phone :)

EDIT: Customer quoted for a replacement drive and 3-year carepack, signed off instantly, currently awaiting replacement drive being shipped to site.

No we don't need one - /u/NetT3ch

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h2afq/no_we_dont_need_one/

AA = Admin assistant

CM = Call center manager

CD = Call Center Director

COO= Chief operating officer.

I'm the on site IT admin for our corporate office. I got an email two weeks ago to install a TV in a call center by a certain date. I replied telling them to put in the check request, get it approved and I'd install our standard outfit when it gets here. Sure enough they follow through but I was not told it had arrived. I completely forgot about the project.

Skip ahead to the date they needed it installed. I was on a conference call 30 mins away when I got a text at 10:30, Hey we need that TV wall mounted before 12 as there is a large meeting with investors and a bank. Start sweating here as the meeting had every position that started with a "C" in it.

Hop off conference call, drive to site. It is now 11. Start putting up the wall mount/TV while their admin assistant was hurrying around setting cookies, drinks, etc.

I start connecting a compact PC to the TV when admin snaps at me, "What are you doing!?"

Me: I'm connecting a PC to the TV as most of these meetings COO want's a PC available on screen.

AA: Well Call Center Director said they are bringing their own laptop and to just have a HDMI cable available for them!

Me: Okay, I'm connecting this PC with a VGA cable so you don't have to worry about the HDMI port

AA: No no no no! We don't need it! It will just add to the confusion by having two PCs!

Me: I... uhh... Okay...

I test everything, HDMI cable, TV, remote, etc. All test out good. Mount is secure. Easy day. I walk over to another office to reply to some emails before I head back to corporate. It's 11:50

As I'm putting my laptop away admin assitant busts into the office

Her: I need you're help! Fast!

Me: Yeah what's up?

Her: They only brought a flash drive!

Me:....

Her: We need a PC ASAP. The presentation is starting in 5 mins!

Me: No it's not lol

I grab the PC I was trying to set up earlier, stupid me hadn't even logged into it yet, start to login to check everything out before I have to set it up in front of owners of the company.

Call center manager appears.

CM: Hey what's going on?

AA: He's working on getting the PC ready for the presentation.

CM: Okay is there anything we can do to make this go faster?

Me: No.

CM and AA sit in the office peering over my should while I check to see if Power Point is installed.

CD comes walking into my office.

CD: What's going on? *I hate this phrase*

CM: He's setting up the PC now to make sure it works.

CD: What's the ETA?

Me: As soon as possible, I'm working on it now, I can't give you an exact time.

CD: What do you mean?

Me: This PC wasn't set up because I was told not to install it with the TV. It could be done in 5 mins or 15. I don't give ETAs because I can't guarantee anything.

CD: Looks at me, ignores everything I said, looks at CM, What's the ETA?

CM looks at me, *uhhh...* I mean...

Me: The ETA is ASAP! I'm literally exclusively working on this PC for you!

I look up and see that COO had entered my office just at the beginning of what I said.

Uhh ohhh..

COO: That's what I want to hear! Thanks Nett3ch! CD. CM. Come with me, AA help him if he needs it. *Wipes away cold sweat.*

It took me less than 10 mins to power on, login, check PP, logoff, then set up in the meeting room. The presentation actually started at 12:30 though because everyone was mingling anyway.

I messed with CM and CD afterwards about how having more people staring over my shoulder wouldn't make it go any faster, they apologized, I apologized for the snap at him, we all laugh. Now I sit and wait, for one day, it will happen again.

Printing at the library - /u/jix1125

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h1q0j/printing_at_the_library/

I work in a library. I was helping some patrons one night, and they wanted a copy of a document that I was showing them. There is a printing utility right on the document that I used, but my device didn't recognize any printers. I asked my coworker in the back to pull up the document and print it for them.

He pulled it up, and as I watched with mouth agape, he **took a screenshot of it and pasted it into a Word document**. In portrait orientation! (The original was in landscape, of course.)

I was almost too stunned that anyone would choose this as a method to say anything at first. What came out of the printer was no use to anyone (it was an old document with small florid writing that would have been challenging to read even in landscape). I showed it to him, then just did it myself on another computer.

Ma'am. I know this sounds crazy but bear with me. - /u/Morphuess

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gtp8n/
maam_i_know_this_sounds_crazy_but_bear_with_me/

This isn't my story. It was told to me by a friend of mine who worked in tech support 15 or so years ago.

> **$Sasquash**. My friend is a big hairy fellow. I can imagine blurry images taken of him in the woods used to further the belief in these *majestic* creatures. He looks more at home wrestling alligators or being a lumberjack than sitting behind a desk.

> **$Customer**. A customer who recently purchased a PC at the shop.

$Sasquash worked for a small computer repair shop. They also sold used computers and provided support for a few months. $Sasquash answered the phone, ran the cash register, and solved basic computer issues (is $Manager.

A phone call from $Customer comes in. As is usual for tech issues, she sounds upset and frustrated.

$Customer – My computer is broken!

$Sasquash – I'm sorry to hear that ma'am. Can you tell me what your problem is?

equipment?

please?

$Customer – Oh fine! My son gave me a music CD and it won't play in the computer.

$Sasquash – Can you describe any error messages or windows that pop up when the CD is loaded?

$Customer – The CD won't go in at all. As soon as I put the CD in and close the door it just falls right off! I told you this darn computer is defective! I want a refund!

At this point I'm a bit confused. All CD drives have a catch basin to hold the CD in place. Then a horrible thought comes to me. The problem of course is how to relay this to the customer.

$Sasquash – Ma'am. I think I have an idea that can fix your problem. It is going to sound a bit strange but please bear with me.

My manager hears this and wanders over in curiosity. I put the phone on speakerphone.

$Customer – What? Ok fine but this better work.

$Sasquash – Yes ma'am. OK, turn off the computer and unplug all the cords from it…. Ok you've done that. Great. Ok. Now I know this sounds a bit odd but please bear with me. Pick up the computer and turn it upside down.

My manager looks at me strangely. I motion for him to keep quiet.

$Customer – ….What! I want to speak to your manager.

$Sasquash – Please ma'am. I know it sounds strange. I promise I'll get my manager right after this.

$Customer – Fine. What kind of business do you run there?

I hear some huffing and grumbling as she complies with my request.

$Sasquash – Ok. Plug all the cables back in and turn it on. Great. Ok, now try using putting that CD back into the player.

$Customer – I demand to speak after your manager for this waste of my time. I can't put a CD into the player upside down!

There's a long pause. Then much more politely, $Customer speaks again.

$Customer – That worked perfectly young man. Thank you so much.

$Sasquash – You are quite welcome. Have a great day!

$Manager walks away without saying a word, shaking his head.

> $TLDR, Customer set up her PC upside down, then complained that her CD drive was broken.

edit: fixing formatting, words, tldr

All IT Nerds Look the Same - /u/ i_downvote_your_mum

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gw25y/ all_it_nerds_look_the_same/

Hello TFTS. I had an interesting and mildly distressing experience today that you may or may not be interested in, so I figured I would share.

A little backstory; I work for a prison telecom company. I handle hardware support for a particular facility, and often need a deputy with me to access some of our infrastructure. I'm pretty easily distinguishable since my company name is plastered on the front and back of my shirt. Today I was on my way to the public visitation center to replace a component while it was closed for the day, ergo, I needed a deputy to unlock the doors for me. Not seeing a deputy nearby, I ask one of the other building staff members if they could radio for someone to come let me in. She agrees and grabs her radio to call for an escort for me.

>**Staff Member:** Can someone come over to let Blaize [one of the sheriff's office IS personnel] into the visitation center?

She was doing me a favor, and I didn't know her all that well, so I chose not to correct her. I just brushed it off and waited for someone with the key to arrive. As I stood there, a different staff member comes up to me.

>**Staff Member 2:**Hi Blaize, glad I caught you. I was wondering if you could take a look at moving these two computers in my office since such and such is no longer with us and we don't really have the need for them. You see, they are getting in the way and I could really use the...

>**Me:** M'am, I'm truly sorry to interrupt you, but I'm not Blaize, I work with [my company], so I can't really do anything with your systems.

>**Staff Member 2:** Oh, I'm sorry. Have a good one!

Now I was becoming a little bothered, as I am familiar with Blaize, and while we are both computer guys with facial hair, the similarities end there. He has much darker hair and different style in both the way he cuts his and grooms his facial hair. You would think they would be able to see the difference between me, a comparative greenhorn for their facility to a guy that has been on their IS staff for some years now. I wish I could say there was some merit to the mistaken identity, but I would be hard pressed to agree. Regardless, I finished up my work and let myself out. On the way back to my vehicle I can hear someone calling from across the parking lot.

>**Random Security Person:** Have a good one Blaize!

I guess we all look alike...

Who knew induction cooktops make magnetic fields? - /u/Treereme

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gvcry/
who_knew_induction_cooktops_make_magnetic_fields/

As requested in[this thread](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6grrex/
the_haunted_user/dit5sk8/?context=3), here's the full story of a user who had the "death touch" for laptops.

 This was many years ago, and my small college was pushing a new initiative - a laptop for every incoming
student! I was also a student and part of the "student tech liaison" team in my college, who were the first line
of defense for the actual (tiny) IT department. Mostly my job consisted of replacing paper in the dorm lab
printer when it ran low, and fielding basic tech support questions after hours or whenever I was in my dorm
room. We also ended up being called in to help with bigger issues, as in the time when a student didn't like
the network cable handing out of the port on the wall and plugged the loose end into the second port, causing
a loopback and basically shutting down the network for two days. There was also the insane virus storm that
happened the second fall of the program, when hundreds of non-updated, infected laptops came back to
campus after the summer and plugged into the network, grinding it to a halt for weeks (tale for another day).

In this case, I was working with a student who seemed to have persistent hardware failures. They would
come to me every few weeks with random issues that usually pointed to hardware failure or drive corruption.
We'd replace the laptop and everything would be fine for a few weeks, and then they'd be back with another
odd issue. Everything from sound ports failing to screens/video cards going wonky, to OS corruption.

After a number of replacements, we started to try and figure out what the student might be doing. Grilled
them on how they transported the computer, where they used it, what were they doing when they noticed it
breaking, etc. I couldn't find a single link, until they casually mentioned they needed their laptop fixed in a
hurry so they could go cook for their grandparents tonight. I asked why they needed the laptop, and they said
they used it to lookup/display recipes to cook and freeze so the grandparents would have good meals to eat
throughout the week. With some probing questions, I learned they would set the laptop up near or even on
the range while cooking. They said it was great, since the new range the grandparents had didn't get hot on
top and only made the pans hot, so they didn't have to worry about melting the laptop.

Turns out, grandparents had a new induction cooktop, which use strong magnetic fields to induce an eddy
current in the metal of the cooking pan which creates heat. Putting a running laptop (probably even an
unpowered one) near these fields can cause all sorts of havoc. I'm honestly surprised more data wasn't lost
from the hard drives, I think that may have clued me into the magnetic field thing faster if so. Instead, the
fields would burn out components on the various boards inside, causing the random failures.

Explaining this to the student it was clear they didn't "get it". They kept arguing that since it didn't get hot it
couldn't be the problem. No amount of explaining seemed to make the concept click, so I just told them to
keep it at least 3 feet away from the stove. I also told them that they'd be responsible for any more hardware
failures and would have to pay the insurance deductible if anything came back with similar damage to
before. Think they listened?

Of course not! However, once mom and dad had to pay for a couple of insurance deductibles in a row (I
think it was $200), the message finally got through. After that the student never asked me for help again, and
as far as I know they had no more hardware failures.

TL;DR – Cooking laptops with magnetic flux is fun!

Well, what else could it mean? - /u/Beanzii

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gw9cm/
well_what_else_could_it_mean/

G'Morning TFTS. Long time no post.

This one just happened this morning. Don't you love when you get a super rude user who asks for your help then doesn't accept it and argues against it.

$me = me

$user = user

ring ring

ring ring

>$me: *COMPANY* this is Beanzii.

INTERRUPTIONS

This is 8:30 in the morning, I don't need this in my ears.

>$me: What exactly is the issue?

>$user: There is a redlight and an error saying 'Mismatch Tray'.

Wow, a user actually gave a coherent problem in a concise way. This is new.

>$me: That means you are either using the wrong paper or printing the wrong size.

>$user: This is the same paper I have always used, this is broken you need to fix it.

>$me: Are you printing to the same size?

>$user: Yes I am! I AM NOT AN IDIOT FIX THIS NOW.

>$me: Those are the only two issues it could be, can you check to make sure these two things are correct.

>$user: I AM NOT AN IDIOT, WHAT ELSE COULD IT BE? I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS.

>$me: I cannot give you another answer, it is what it is. Could you please make sure you are printing to A4 and not to A3.

>$user: I PRINT THESE THINGS EVERYDAY AND NEVER HAVE THIS ISSUE WHAT ELSE COULD IT BE?

At this point I am skeptical so I start checking the printer's web console and start the process of logging onto

the users computer, we are about 2 minutes into the call at this point.

>$me: I will log onto your computer to have a look.

>$user: Oh, I just found that the document I was sent was in A3, I have fixed it now. Bye.

click

Get this person calling a few times a week with similar attitudes and similar issues. Love it.

I need my LMS credentials...and I need to know what LMS is? - /u/SteeleGamer

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gvr5f/
i_need_my_lms_credentialsand_i_need_to_know_what/

I work for a consulting company that supports a Hospital system, among other clients. I only support said hospital. Some information to know before you read:
job.
I am NOT allowed to have an end user's password, unless I am giving them one after I reset it, which they are supposed to change immediately.

>EU = The End User, Me = A Stressed Out Second Shift Help Desk Worker who is happily in a relationship, so I wouldn't ask some random nurse for their number so that I can make the occasional booty call.

>EU: I NEED MY LMS PASSWORD AND USER NAME!!!!

>Me: Okay, may I get a few details before we go into that?

>EU: Yep

>Me: May I have your name?

>EU: NO!

>Me: ...Uhm...

>EU: Yeah sure it's XXXXX Smith. Smith is spelled S as in Smith, I as in Eye, like the organ, M as in Mary, T, H

>Me: Okay and where are you located?

>EU: At my desk...

>Me: and what hospital?

>EU: Gets

>Me: As in Gettysburg?

>EU: Yea

>Me: And a number for me to contact you back just in case we get disconnected?

>EU: Okay, that was very forward. I'm in a relationship, but I guess I can give it to you. (XXX) XXX-XXXX

>Me: Okay, and how can I help you?

>EU: I need my LMS login Username and I think I might need a password, so could you give me that too?

>Me: Okay, it's just your regular credentials, so are you at the LMS Screen?

>EU: What's LMS? I am not computer literate

>EU: She starts talking about what she does to log into her work system, which includes:

>She is a vegan

>She has a husband she refers to as Poppy

>She thinks computers are Satanic

>Me: Okay, can I re--

>EU I am just going to ask my supervisor tomorrow. She might know, I don't know what LMS is or how it pertains to my issue, so you're wrong.

Tech Support in the Swamp - Diesel - /u/ UrchinJoe

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gv48g/
tech_support_in_the_swamp_diesel/

>"Hey, **UrchinJoe [$me]**, you're going to have to turn around".

>"Sure thing, **Project Manager [$PM]**. What's up?"

>**$PM:** "We've got a problem with one of the 4x4s. Oh, and some of our former staff down by the coast have threatened to kidnap expats in the area".

>**$Me:** "Who else is down there?"

>**$PM:** "Just you and Sam. And they like Sam".

I'll back up. A few years ago, before I lived in the swamp, I worked for a small British medical charity with projects in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Haiti. For about six months my job was pretty terrible: I'd fly in to struggling programmes to close bases. That meant emptying warehouses, donating assets to other local organisations, and documenting everything in excruciating detail. I didn't have to fire anyone - there was usually a project manager on site, and by the time I arrived most of the local staff had usually started to move on to other opportunities. Except in Small West African Country. We'd run a programme there for over a decade and there weren't many other organisations in the country.

So, it was a pretty tense environment, limited time and money, and lot of skill gaps. It's not surprising that the country management team hadn't really been thinking about tech support while the projects closed around them, but a little understanding of tech went a long way.

When I first arrived **$PM** told me pretty much straight away that one of the 4x4s was seriously faulty. After about a decade rattling around some of the worst roads on the planet, it had started drinking up a lot more fuel than it used to. That's a problem, because we hope to donate the vehicle to the ministry of health.

>**$Me:** "How much more fuel?"

He's not sure. OK, easy to find out. Check the odometer, compare that to the vehicle logbook. The numbers match, so at least I know that the mileage has been recorded. Every journey for the last ten years should be on file, but I only need a couple of months for now. Now check the fuel slips. I can see that the vehicle has been refueled a lot over the past couple of months. Really, a lot. Much more than you'd need to cover the kind of distance that it's done. I do not know off the top of my head what distance that model of 4x4 is supposed to get to the gallon, but Google does. Even taking into account the age of the vehicle and the bad roads, it's doing poorly. Something like ten times the fuel consumption you'd expect.

I'm sure there's an engine fault that can cause that level of fuel consumption, but I start by checking the two most obvious problems.

1) Is there a big hole in the fuel tank or fuel lines? Visual check, looking for holes or puddles of diesel under the vehicle. There is nothing.

2) Theft. I sit down with the drivers and tell them I know one of them is stealing fuel. If they stop, I won't investigate any further. If they continue, someone's going to get fired early.

$PM and I talk about it, and he agrees to keep an eye on the consumption (and the drivers), but I have to leave the capital and close one of the smaller bases. Not much tech support happens. I find a box containing over thirty damaged VHF radios under a desk, which we need to 'decommission' (smash) to ensure local militia can't acquire them and use them to listen in on anyone else's travel plans. I nearly lost a hand when a generator fell on me while we dragged it out of the base (we were giving it to a hospital. Oh, the irony).

Back a the capital, I check the fuel consumption. According to the logbook and fuel slips it is now completely normal.

$Me: "I've found the fault. It's not in the engine, one of your drivers is stealing fuel. Or actually maybe more than one".

$PM: "How can you tell?"

I explain, and show my calculations. We then walked over the the fuel store.

$Me: "Didn't you have eleven drums before?"

$PM: "... yes."

There are ten drums in the fuel store. Whoever was stealing, they've stopped being clever about it and gone mystery.

The solution comes quickly. We don't have CCTV but we do have contracted security guards. One of them saw a driver taking a drum out last week, after hours. The guards are there more to keep danger out than to keep assets in, plus, the drivers often transport stock. Normally with a gate pass, but things are getting sloppy as the project winds down.

How he got the drum out turned out to have a simple answer: The store is a cage built of chicken wire and wooden poles, and the door lifts straight out at the hinge.

Problem solved: fire that guy. I'll head south; we have a warehouse down there to empty, and it's a 4 day round trip.

Of course, I don't make it. **$PM** calls me half way with a credible kidnapping threat - but what could this new problem with the 4x4 be?

It's gone.

There's not much I can do to fix that. What had happened was, HR hadn't fired the driver straight away, but just paired all the drivers up with security guards until the end of the programme. Our enterprising fuel-thief had tricked the guard into getting out of the 4x4, and taken the logical next step: high-tailed it to Guinea, or one of the other neighbouring countries, in a slightly worse-for-wear but actually perfectly functional 4x4.

We didn't recover it. I spent a week in an Interpol office, and the insurer's office, then had to go home disappointed. About three weeks later the Ebola outbreak hit the region, so the team we had left in-country were obviously kind of busy.

I've realised at the end of this that I never really fixed anything; the tech support was mostly just in diagnosing the *lack of* a tech problem. I hope it fits here, anyway!

I've got inboxes and outboxes and all the boxes! - /u/ChoppingOnionsForYou

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gv2no/
ive_got_inboxes_and_outboxes_and_all_the_boxes/

It was 16:25. And since I was on earlies, it was 5 minutes until home time. Just 5 minutes - I should have gone to the loo!

The phone rang. And EVERYONE else was busy, dammit! So I picked it up.

>Me: Good afternoon, MSP Support, this is Choppy, how can I help?

>User (angry!): Hello, put me through to my account manager! I called this morning, and no one's called me back since then!

Aha! My colleague had asked me to call this guy earlier, but I'd been unable to get through because the phone was constantly busy. "He's got some problem with GoToMyPC." he said.

>Me (perhaps a bit over-enthusiastic): Oh hello! Is that USER? I've been trying to get through to you all afternoon (well, a little artistic licence is OK) - I gather you've been having trouble with GoToMyPC?

>User (slightly mollified): Oh, have you, well my wife...

And he proceeded to tell me that his wife had probably been using the phone when I'd been attempting to call him back. I started taking down information about the problem.

>Me: So you've got GoToMyPC on your iPad? As an app, or do you use Safari to access it?

>User: It's an app. I have an icon on the screen that I touch, and it gets me in and I can see all my stuff.

>Me (a little sceptically): So when you've opened that app, you can see your work desktop, just the same as when you use GoToMyPC on your PC at home? Can you describe it to me?

>User: Yes, exactly like that. I've got Inboxes, and Outboxes and all the boxes I usually have!

>Me (puzzled): Um... Can you go out of that app again for me, and tell me the name of the app before you tap it to start it again?

>User (a little impatient): Mail. It's called Mail!

The penny having dropped, I was finally able to help him get hold of his mails. It turned out that recent changes at the company had denied some people the ability to hold mail locally on their PCs, so I pointed him in the direction of the Office 365 website. I've no idea how he got the idea it was GoToMyPC.

Still, I did head him off from making a complaint to the account manager!

The night i reinstalled a w98 over the phone. - /u/Brandynette

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gvqga/
the_night_i_reinstalled_a_w98_over_the_phone/

I was a techie at a really small firm in Paraguay S.A., only 3+ supervisors. We were open until 20. We sold computers and repaired hardware but not operating systems. Pre-installed, what is that? Please refer to Microsoft. Google? LOL!

It was a long time ago, so please imagine the small details. Paraguay has a humidity of 80% and 32°C in the shadows at 10 in summer. Air-conditioning is a luxury and we have stand ventilators. But one summer night, around 18-19 or so...

|J:caller B:me

 Call comes in

>J: My name is "J", I'm this old and have a problem.

>B: Hello, you are talking to "B". How can I be of assistance?

>J: My computer is giving me an error. I bought it last year at your firm.

>B: Please describe me the error or tell me the color of the screen?

>J: The screen goes blue with an error code. This is the code

Ohh crap ... blue screen of death! Either reboot or call Microsoft, if it isn't a hardware error

>B: this error code refers to an OS error. I'm sorry but you must call Microsoft to fix this!

>J: I know, I called. They closed at 18.

Supervisor comes up cause we need to have our meeting. Bah, we live in Paraguay. He wants to close early, since no one ever needed anything after 18. The only reason why we closed at 20 was because it was the owners idea to be special.

>B: The only thing I can do is pick up the pc and reinstall as a service. We will fix it in 2 days.

(Rant in 3... 2... 1...!!!) J was actually clear, calm and serious.

>J: I really need this computer to work today because of a serious reason...

(can't remember, if it was work or family but it was the best reason one could have given me at that time)

>B: I am not really sure how I could help you since it's an OS error. This is normal, we've had several

complaints about this version

Supervisior yells my name...

mute mic

yell back give me 10 min, I'll close up!

>J: To be honest you are my last hope, I need it to work! Could you help me reinstall it?

>J: I have never done it and I'm afraid, besides they said that an idiot could install it. I'm not an idiot, they are idiots for making a crappy product.

Triggered my revolutionary anti-Microsoft, open source spark... lel I have never had a support call like this, I'm intrigued.

>B: Ok, to reinstall it, you will need a copy, do you have one?

>J: yes

>B: Place it into the CD-drive and reboot.

>J: Nothing happens and it goes back to the blue screen of death...

Cd-rom is not selected as first boot device... gotta get into the bios.

>B: Ok, stay calm, this is going to be tricky. Once you reboot, immediately start pressing DEL repeatedly. A hidden menu will appear. That is called the bios.*

>J repeats instructions... bip... keyboard hitting sounds

>J: it is back at the BSoD

>B: Then you missed it, start hitting and then reboot!

>J keybord hitting... bip... keyboard hitting...

>J:There is a green screen menu*

Supervisior comes and tells me to stop the call, since it's over the time...

>B: overtime my ass, we're open until 20!

(boss knows me and I'm safe!)

I just showed a noob the first secret of them all! I'm not ending this now besides I already have the key, since I'm the one who is going to open! Corrupt bastard, admin type who once in his life reinstalled something, your fat wife is the bosses sister SOB... is what I wanted to say... However, J is still waiting at the entrance to the Matrix!

>B: With the key buttons, move to the last tab of the menu. There will be a boot option. This boot option has to say CD-Rom.

>J: Yeah, I figured out that by reading. What else is here, what can I do with this menu??? WOW!

>B: J, seriously please don't touch anything else here or we could damage your pc and then we WILL need to get it fixed at our service!

(Yep, overclock that thing and bye bye, no safety rom in a class C electronics of S.A.)

>J: OK, understood. Now what...???? (J exited the bios, I could tell)

>B: go to the last tab, save and exit. enter

>J: BIP... it is loading something at the top

>B: EXCELLENT! Now it is a step by step easy setup, Win98 will guide you through the rest...

>J: no it wont, I have this x version.

programmer???

>J: Microsoft, you know....

>B: i knooowww!!!

>J: Could you help me step by step?*

I'm like I can but seriously don't want to, this would take 3 hours at least. Maaaaaann universe you had to pick me today? out of my head

>B: ok but you owe me dinner! laugh

>J: laughs! DEAL!

>B: ok but you gotta give me a little time to get the manual for this.

Couldn't find it, someone must be using it at home... crap. Only option is to install it by guiding J step by step... Im using linux, no pc at the firm has an W... Linux + Windows. AAAAAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAAHHA, one has to die! Google? LOL. Couldn't find his version of Win98, but I do have a similar one... it'll have to do. Time to unearth another pc to use. search mainboard + proc ... harddrive... mem... video card (cus GPUs were something new, rofl) hotwire that thing to a keyboard a mouse and a screen all in 20min or less...

>J: plays elevator music

>B: WTF? J ARE YOU THERE???

>J: Yeah I'm here, I just felt it was appropriate while I waited...

OMG, who the fuck is this guy??? Is he trolling me???? BIP... Mine boots up and loads...

>B: Are you still waiting at the first Win98 install screen?

>J: Of course.

>B: great... Do this... and that

>J: Ok ok ok ok ok

*and so on and so forth, UNTIL!!! until I realized I fucked up! There was one different setting and yeah the universe praised me with a second try!
J was cool about it, he said we are human we make mistakes, hence Microsoft... we realized we were of similar minds and even as we had a hard battle with our machines, we had a strange but fun game night.

While I was still there the in morning, the lovely supervisor cames in again.

*Eventually, it worked out J was out of his mind, couldn't believe he managed to do it, neither was I!
 I was expecting a third or fourth try, ending in me marrying his sister in law... hahaha*

call ends

Supervisor asked me WTH is going on... phone rings! Not me, I dont care, not my call, I'm done for the week!

>X: I want to talk to the supervisor... I have something to report

>**HEAVY RANTING!!!**
one could hear her screaming

>S: Yes ma'am, what can I help you with?
HEAVY RANTING!!!
one could hear her screaming even louder

10 min pass, supervisor hangs up.

Cheese white, silently talks to me. Come with me, I'll drive you to get you some breakfast. Where would you like to go?
paraguay
I never took his job, but the supervisor became my B****

Had 2 great years until the company shut down, I would have loved to own that place!
 SNAP!
I'm still friends with J!

Btw, the key word to the error puzzle is **"MILENIUM"**

Thank you very much for reading this very very very long call.
Want a techie potato? Google it! hahahaha

Kudos from Brandynette

> 4 Users have helped me to edit and update! Thank you very much <3

>$TDLR Customer wanted a step by step walk trough of an OS installation.

The problem profile and printer - /u/ superzenki

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gvf4g/
the_problem_profile_and_printer/

It all started when my director asked me to look at a faculty member's laptop. This faculty member, who we'll call $FM, was known as a problem among many techs. He was a Mac user, but he always managed to break things in weird ways that only made it harder for us to fix them. He was known as bad luck around computers, because even giving him brand new computers, they would somehow end up breaking. $FM was very friendly and I don't think he intentionally sabotaged any of his machines. He was just very tech-illiterate and ignorant when it came to things, and I don't think anyone ever had the patience to sit down with him and show him how to use it properly because he would become super-reliant on certain techs and get the expectation that we'd provide training whenever he needed it. Many times he would drop by our office expecting help immediately, because of course he needed to work and teach, regardless of how many times we told him to at least place a ticket first if he was going to do that (luckily we moved to a secure building where only IT can get in, but this was before then). Anyway, onto the story:

>$Director: Can you look at $FM's laptop? Apparently he called our vendor because he couldn't print, and they told him they couldn't do anything.

>$Me: Yeah, I'll take a look. That's interesting, because I had a ticket for him awhile back for the same thing. I could only get one printer working, and before I could troubleshoot the others he said it was fine.

While I should have fixed the others, $FM can be very pushy and I'm sure had some "important work" to do, as he would often say. I did some research on how to reset the Printers on a Mac, and set up a time to look at his laptop again.

When I went up there, I noticed he had his personal printer from home hooked up for home printing. Here's the thing about working at university: our current policy on that is if people can get it working, we're not going to stop them. But there's limited support for what we can do if it doesn't work. So I showed him what I was doing beforehand, and explained that it would clear all the printers out and give it a fresh start. He didn't bring up the home printer as a concern, I figured that he would be able to do it again if he did it once (this assumption was the snowball that started this whole thing), and sometimes there would be old printers on people's machines that they didn't care about.

After resetting that, I was able to get all the printers in his area working. That's when he asked about his home printer.

>$FM: Will I be able to get my home printer on there?

>$Me: Do you remember how you set it up last time?

>$FM: No.

>$Me: It's most likely a USB cable going from your printer to the computer. I'd recommend plugging it in and see if it recognizes it. There may also be a disc you need to install the drivers/software for it with before plugging it in.

>$FM: Okay, I'll try that when I get home.

I go back to my desk and finish off my day, thinking nothing of that ticket. The next day, I get a call from his cell phone almost as soon as I start for the day.

>$FM: You've gotta help me. I tried plugging in the printer to my laptop and I don't see it with the other printers. I don't have any discs for this computer.

>$Me: Unfortunately, our scope of home printers is limited to a best effort support.

printing.

>$Me: Right. I worked on it to get your work printers working (as requested). Let me talk to my supervisor and see what I can do.

At that point I get my Operations Manager involved, who also did some tech work. He was on my side, that we should not be liable for this because he set it up on his own and not through us. He then went to our Assistant Director, who did not feel the same.

>$AD: A component he needed for work was working and now it's not after you worked on it. You should have been more clear when resetting it and made sure he'd be able to set up his home printer on his own.

>$Me: I showed him exactly what I was doing and explained what I would do. He just didn't realize it would clear his home printer and I didn't think I needed to clarify that.

>$AD: Well you should have. Please work with $OM on fixing this.

So I talk to $FM again, who agrees to bring his home printer for us to troubleshoot. I go back up to his office again when he gets there and troubleshoot. I try all of the basics, even downloading the software for this printer doesn't get it to recognize anything is plugged in. So I talk to my $OM and he suggests we get him a loaner, then bring the laptop and printer to our office for further testing (we should have just tested the printer on the loaner laptop).

I watch my $OM work his magic and try to follow him, and he knows a lot more about Macs than I did at the time. He finds a bunch of old software that looks like it was migrated from previous images, even though he has a newer computer. I'm talking old programs like NetScape (most didn't work because PowerPC, but they were still there).

He decides the best thing to do is to put a clean image on it, but use Migration Assistant to migrate his data/ profile rather than migrate it manually. This is where the problem came in, and part of the reason we no longer use Migration Assistant at work. Even with a new image on it, the printer still wasn't coming up. $OM then tries the printer on another Mac next to it with the same image, and it works fine. $OM then decides to create a new profile for $FM (we hadn't tried it in an admin account, foolishly). Of course it works, and we realized that we had just wasted about a day's worth of work troubleshooting, for something that could have been fixed within an hour. A learning experience for both of us.

We decide to tell him that his image had been corrupted from previous migrations and that he just needed a fresh image, and we even showed him in the office that it was working. We got all of his data transferred to his new profile, and put his software back on there, then returned his equipment to him.

The next day, $AD asked us what the problem was.

>$Me: Yeah, all it took was a re-imaging it and re-creating his profile to get it working.

>$AD: Why did you do all of that for a printer? You know what? Nevermind.

And she walked off before I could even explain our troubleshooting order. While $FM had some minor

problems after that, I luckily never heard about printers again from him. He's retired now but this story will always stick with me.

"We support Dial-Up?!" - /u/chientaylor

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6goyha/we_support_dialup/

This ones a doozy.

I'm the brand new sysadmin for a department, working alone, with just myself for support over the summer.

We get periodic alerts from an external entity that scans our systems for security vulnerabilities. We also have internal scanning tools that (sometimes) work. I say sometimes because this story has me questioning why we even bothered.

so.

"I can't dial in to the network!"

FYI, These are old CS professors who still teach COBOL, FORTRAN, C, C++, and Java, but not Python, Ruby, or R, which are our three biggest requests.

"What do you mean 'dial in'? You mean SSH?"

"No, my modem won't dial into $voice (the name of the server)! It keeps saying 'line disconnected'!"

Now I'm confused. On our network, $voice is the VoIP server, which is connected to about twenty POTS lines. This might make sense, but there are only two IP phones; the one on my desk and the one in a lab made from an old payphone.

"Are you having trouble using your phone?"

"Yeah, my modem can't dial the dial-up server."

I must have sat in shocked silence for so long he started saying "hello? Anyone there?"

"Sorry sir, when was the last time you used our dial up server?" I knew that we had had one in the nineties, so I thought maybe he was trying to connect to it from memory and it was gone now.

"Oh, sometime yesterday before the blackout."

Hearing this, I go into full panic lockdown mode. Start the internal scanners, check Nagios, turn on our backup honeypots, everything I can do that doesn't involve a full network shutdown. But nothing comes up. Nothing.

I chat with the guy for a bit, asking him questions, but nothing comes up. He knows he connected to it, he knows the number, he can even tell me his IP address, which is not in our assigned space, but is only a single subnet below our lowest used one.

I point out scanners at the range, but find nothing. Realizing whatever it was probably went down after the power loss, I call our external scanner to see if they cover that range.

"Oh yeah, that one is usually flooded with red (serious issues). No ones told us who it belongs to though, and it's not on the list you send us."

After two days of scanning, digging through non-existent documentation (the docs for the old dial-up server literally say "Docs? Yeah right...") I decide that I'll start in the server room and trace the phone lines to the $voice server to see if any go to a strange server.

After lifting up the floor panels and following the cables, I found a small bundle that seemed to go to the opposite end of the server room, away from the racks. Pulling up the last panel, I found a short telecom rack parallel.

There may have been a moment of staring in fascinated horror. After that, I grabbed a monitor and plugged it in, and was greeted by a BIOS error. Grabbing a PS2 keyboard (no USB hot-plug!) I finally managed to boot the system.

FreeBSD 5. An operating system so old I found its install disk on a floppy.

Booting it revealed that it had the same name as $voice. $voice was named after it, which is ironic since the old $voice server nearly outlived the new $voice server.

The server is now in the great server rack in the sky, but not without being able to say that it lived in a server room for almost a decade without being detected.

So no, we do not support dial-up anymore.

TL,DR; found an old dial-up server hiding under the floor of the server room which no one had touched for almost a decade. It still worked until a power outage messed with the BIOS.

I swear my email are vanishing on their own. - /u/Gravel090

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gtvmu/
i_swear_my_email_are_vanishing_on_their_own/

Hello TFTS, it has been a bit since I had an incident worth posting about. Today that changed, one of my clients had been having an issue for a while and she used to live near my company headquarters and had been working with them about this issue and she had got nowhere with them because her issue was frankly weird. So when she moved north near my location and started coming to us she brought the same issue. Me=Gravel, DEL= Deleted Email Lady, CO=Coworker.

So DEL came in to our store one day having managed to acquire a boot lock from a browser redirect scammer she had decided to call and listen to. She did this despite having used our services for all her computer needs up till now. Once we resolved her boot lock she started coming in complaining of emails being deleted and wondering how that could happen. I did my best to inform her that emails don't just delete themselves and that she would have had to change a setting or been doing it herself. Unsurprisingly this was the same answer the other location had given her.

Unfortunately this answer upset her because she took it as if we had called her crazy, because after all, her emails had been going missing or getting deleted. So a few weeks after I gave her this answer she came back in and our conversation went something like this.

>DEL: "Look! Look! I have proof my emails are getting deleted."

Intrigued I come over and have a look. She proceeds to show me an email that is in the trash

>DEL: "See? That email was in my inbox this morning and now its not."

there."

>DEL: "Well I know I didn't deleted it, would $emailprovider have deleted it?"

>ME: "Why would they? Most providers don't really worry about how many emails someone has anymore. The only time it will auto delete emails is if they had been put in the trash."

>DEL: "Well I didn't put it in the trash, how could that happen?"

>ME: It doesn't..."

>DEL: "Ok then, I guess I will just watch and see when it happens"

DEL then left rather annoyed that again my answer was "that is not how that works at all." Several weeks later she comes back, this time with her husband in tow.

>DEL: "I think I figured out what is happening to my emails!"

CO decided to take the lead on this one and went to work with her.

>CO: "Ok, so what is happening with them?"

>DEL: "My husband hardly uses email, but he has been deleting emails he doesn't need and its deleting them on my email too."

>CO: "So he uses the same email address as you?"

>DEL: "Yes but he is on a different computer and he doesn't get many emails. How can we stop the emails from being deleted?"

>CO: "Stop using the same email."

>DEL: But he doesn't get that many emails so I just tell him when he gets on."

>CO: "Ok... the only thing I can think to do is change your profiles on $3rdpartyemailapps from POP3 to IMAP to prevent it from sending changes to the sever like that. It might help but I strongly advise you simply don't use the same email."

So CO spends the next hour or so going through every single device they own and changing their account settings. Several password resets are required along the way as they don't always know them. Once he is done they leave happy and CO goes back to his day a tad bit more annoyed.

Today, a few months later I end up talking to DEL on the phone because she answered the phone (we had her husbands computer in the store for a repair). After I go through letting her know the machine is done she drops this ball on me.

>DEL: "My emails are getting deleted again! I know that you guys changed some settings and they should not be deleted, but its happening again."

>ME: "While yes we did change some settings, the only way I can 100% say your emails will not be deleted is to simply not use the same account as your husband."

>DEL: "But he hardly uses email, and you changed the settings but the emails are still being deleted. Why did the settings get changed."

>ME: "Odds are, they didn't. The only way to guarantee your husband doesn't delete emails is to simply not have him on your account."

>DEL: "Well why is he deleted the emails?"

>ME: "I have no idea, I don't really know the guy. The only way to stop it would be to tell him not to delete things or to remove him from the account, at this point there is no other way."

>DEL "Can't you make him stop?"

FFS lady its your husband why not ask him

>ME: "I have no way to stop it. You would have to ask him or remove him from the account, there is no way to control another human to that extent."

>DEL: "But he keeps deleted the emails..."

>ME: "I know that, tell him to stop or get him his own email, there is no other options at this point."

I will spare you the rest but it went around a few more time exactly like that. I still am not sure she understands even remotely why I can't solve her problem magically. But she will be in tomorrow (my day off this week haha!) to collect her husbands machine and I am sure CO will get the same ear full from her again.

So we will see what solution he can come up with, or it might simply be down to telling them that their email is now "out of scope" for us and they will have to deal with $emailprovider directly to solve this. Who knows? All I know is that what should have been a 1 minute phone call turned into a 15 minute exit less roundabout, a ride I desperately wanted off.

TL;DR: My client has an issue with vanishing emails, turns out the culprit is her husband who uses the same account. Using separate emails like normal people is too unreasonable or difficult for some reason and she insists we prevent him from deleting emails. Faces are palmed, heads are desked and no one is made happy by the results.

Where is Marge? Or: The day I lost a Sun - /u/roflcopter-pilot

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gr7nq/
where_is_marge_or_the_day_i_lost_a_sun/

This is a tale from my very early days of working in IT, about 15 years ago. I had an internship at a big company that, among other things, made certain hardware (can't go into much detail for anonymity reasons) which was supported for use with a massive amount of systems: Windows, Mac, Linux, DOS, Solaris, HP/ UX, even VMS... you imagine it, they very likely supported it. For a lover of more exotic OSes and hardware, as I was (and still am), their testing center was heaven! Luckily I was allowed to spend a week there during my internship.

So there I was, at the second day of said week, happily working. I had been tasked with reconfiguring Sun machines in preparation for a new testing procedure. Having never worked with Solaris before this was a challenge, but with some help I got it mostly done - when lunch time came around, I had already finished 4 of the 5 needed machines and was mostly finished with the last one, just in time to hand it over to a senior engineer who was eager to launch the first test with them in the lab.

When I returned from lunch however, I was in for a shock: Marge was gone!

Marge was the name of the fifth and last [little SPARCstation](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/ commons/thumb/e/ed/Sun_SPARCstation_5.JPG/1024px-Sun_SPARCstation_5.JPG) I had to work on - all machines of a kind followed a certain naming convention: All running Windows were named after alcoholic beverages (yes, seriously. wonder why), all running Linux after flowers, all Macs after characters from the Sesame Street, etc. All Suns were named after characters from the Simpsons. Earlier I had finished work on Homer, Lisa, Barney and Apu... but where Marge had previously been all that remained were dangling cables and a startled CRT complaining "NO INPUT".

Great, so what do I do now? Can't just confess to my boss that I literally *lost* a machine, can I? Someone must've mistakenly thought it was not used anymore, I guessed, because I had powered it down for lunch break and this desk was usually unused. So I went around looking, asked people, but with no luck. Nobody had seen anything, thanks to lunch time. After an hour of frantic searching I decided to ask the nearest admin for help. Through a ping he was able to see that, weirdly enough, Marge was up and running! It took quite some time to convince him that I was not mixing up names and to get him to help me find out where Marge now was. As it turned out, according to the MAC address tables of the switches Marge had taken a trip across the whole site of the company's campus. Off we go!

OK, off *I* go, disappointingly the admin wasn't too keen on the whole detective work thing. He did give me the number of the room the switch port from which Marge was online was patched to, though.

In the other building it only took me twenty minutes to find the room (should've given me a building map, too - totally nonsensical room numbering and confusing corridor layout don't mix) which happened to be an office next door to a storage room. In said office I surprisingly ran into another wide-eyed intern... and he had Marge sitting on a table, next to a pile of other PCs, laptops and some odd printers. As it turned out he was hired as an intern by the site's IT department and tasked with locating, collecting and testing unused equipment that was supposed to be in storage according to their inventory system. Apparently Marge had been incorrectly flagged as in storage. Fed up with convincing people I decided to power Marge down under protest of the other intern, grabbed it under my arm and marched off. I had a deadline to meet!

Luckily the other intern hadn't messed with the setup on Marge, so I could finish its configuration and deliver all 5 SPARCstations to the senior engineer in time.

TL;DR: Company pits interns in a fight, unknown to each other. Sun stolen and returned in the process.

The haunted user - /u/EpicLPer

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6grrex/the_haunted_user/

Okay, I'll try to keep this story as short as possible but I'm not sure if it'll work out. Please bear in mind that some details may not be 100% correct anymore since it was kinda a long time ago, sorry for that. Also excuse my sometimes a bit wonky English.

We have quite a tech-savvy user here (I'll just call him *&savvyuser* from now on) in our company which knows how to fix most of the problems he encounters himself and so on. Occasionally he stumbles across something, calls us and we fix it in a few minutes but apart from that this user seems to be haunted by a *non-tech-liking-ghost* or whatever...

We're starting in Early-Mid 2013 with *&savvyuser*'s **Laptop Nr. 1** which at the time was working without any problems. However add a year and a few months and his laptop decided to act up, not sure what exactly happened but he ended up loosing all of his data on that laptop due to the encryption which shit itself after that. We gave him a new hard drive, set Laptop Nr. 1 up again and voila, worked for some time again... until it screwed itself, happily user learned his lesson from failure Nr. 1 and saved all his important data on our backed up network drives so no big loss there. A service technician ended up replacing the Mainboard but the laptop ended up not working again and was then out of warranty.

We decided to give him a more modern (but not brand new) **Laptop Nr. 2** and this time not encrypt it in case something goes wrong again. The important data was saved on our network drives anyways which aren't connected as long as he hasn't entered his password specifically. A few months (almost a year) go by again and guess what... Laptop Nr. 2 starts to fail too. It's around Mid 2014 now. He got random bluescreens which weren't track-able to anything in particular other than some, as it seemed, hardware failure. Now some other IT staff had the exact same models so we knew that these wouldn't act up on their own (except hardware defects etc.) so we swapped the HDDs out and gave him one of ours and reinstalled it, both worked fine without any problem for a few months or so... then his laptop started to act up, again... We reinstalled Windows and everything but still, nothing we could fix anymore. Now we know that *&savvyuser* isn't someone who tinkers around or experiments since he's quite a "high head" here in the company, plus he has no admin rights anyways. However he agreed on us monitoring that laptop a bit to detect anything early if possible... Well that ended up being a complete fail. The laptop decided to die again, technician came and replaced the motherboard of Laptop Nr. 2, laptop died once more a few months later... Support replaced the board again but it died AGAIN after around 2 months... Then the laptop was out of warranty again, great...

So we're at *&savvyuser*'s **Laptop Nr. 3** which was a Surface Pro 3. We're at around Mid 2015 now, since the other laptop died already anyways he said he'll buy one for us to set up. We did so but... I'll make it short, that Surface ended up crashing and Bluescreening all over the place from the beginning on. It may was the fault of Windows 8 but he decided to keep using it for over year in this state despite it crashing almost once a week and we offering him to try and repair it. A few updates were released and eventually we installed Windows 10 on it in 2016 but it didn't help much, Bluescreens were less frequent but still occurring sometimes. I'm surprised the file system didn't corrupt itself completely... I was using that Surface for a few weeks just to see if it was indeed that thing or the user, it ended up being a faulty Surface but Microsoft said "Nah, not our problem" and denied repairing it... Great...

Anyways, we're at around Mid-End 2016 now. He got a brand new **Laptop Nr. 4** from us which we used

for a month just to make sure that nothing but ABSOLUTELY NOTHING can go wrong this time... yeah, you know the outcome. He was using it for under half a year until Early 2017 when he said that the laptop won't boot up anymore all of the sudden. Ended up being a bad mainboard which the technician replaced, but the new board was faulty too. He had to get a new one which took around 2 days, replaced it aaaaaand... keyboard backlight doesn't work. Technician came in again with the third "new" board (he admitted they aren't new but refurbished ones...) and the backlight worked again.

And here we are today... So far it works but I can already guarantee you that his laptop will die somewhere in the next few months again. He's not abusing these laptops as they're all treated very well, none of them had any visible abuse marks other than the usual "business usage" marks (occasional scratches, worn touchpad and keys etc.). Plus he has no admin rights so he can't modify anything critical and he's tech savvy enough to him)...

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tl;dr - User goes through 4 laptops until this day which all end up failing somehow without any obvious reason why.

PS.: Sorry if anything "in the timeline" here is a bit messed up or not working out, I've tried my best to keep the times in order and as correct as possible but yeah, try yourself to remember each detail of the last ~5 years and you'll know how hard that is ;)

What do you mean Windows XP hardware can't run Windows 10??? - /u/ultrasuperman1001

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gmk6i/what_do_you_mean_windows_xp_hardware_cant_run/

I run my own business so I'm used to random questions but this one made me shake my head, this happened last night. I got a call from a guy, sounded like he was in his 20's, he had a pretty good Windows 7 desktop that died (we tried to troubleshoot but it sounded like the mobo got his with a surge) but his very generous friend gave him his old XP computer but it was giving beep codes. We eventually got XP booting (bad RAM) but then he starts asking "why doesn't it have wifi?" "why can't I play Steam games?" "why do the macro keys on my keyboard not work?" and so on. I had to keep saying it's at least 15 years old and everything you have is between 1-5 years old. He then asked "if I put 12gb ram into it could I run Windows 10?" I then had to explain why that wouldn't work and how even though he saw people running W10 on XP hardware it's not as easy as plugging in a usb stick. In the end I don't think he fully knew why he couldn't install W10 but we at least got ethranet working so he could browse the web.

edit: because people keep saying you can install it from a usb I should clarify. The guy didn't understand why he couldn't put more than 3gb of ram in it, it had a Pentium 4 which he thought 4 was quad-core, and he wanted it to run just like it would on an i5 with 6gb ram. He wanted the Aero theme, all the animations, etc.

My computer isn't working - /u/Fields47

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gkgmo/
my_computer_isnt_working/

Standard disclaimer: Long time lurker, first time poster. Didn't happen today, happened in 2014.

This involved me, a **$user** very near her eol (retirement), and our clunky **$helpdesk** software.

So back in 2014 I was working in IT support for a huge IT services provider in France as part of a 2 year apprenticeship in order to get a degree for stuff I already knew... as you do. This one afternoon i'm keeping desk.

Rather than spend the 10 minutes assigning myself the ticket, adding the right codes and sending some standard troubleshooting steps, I decided I would just go to the person directly and see for myself (it gets me out of the office for 10 minutes).

I arrive at our client support callroom and one of the ladies is pacing around her desk looking at every cable sticking out of her computer and very perplexed, with no hesitation I assume this is **$user** and make my way over to politely ask what the problem is exactly.

The **$user** kindly explains that she just got back from lunch and that her computer won't turn on. This is strange and instantly my brain goes into turbo churning out the troubleshooting steps to the most complex and extravagant computer problems i'd seen as we techies do.

I stop myself and remember an important fact, I'm in IT support and I should follow protocol to save myself a lot of time and bother.

~~1. Have you tried turning it off and on again~~
2. Can you show me exactly what you did?

So the **$user** sits back down at her desk and promptly pushes the button to turn the computer on, looks up at me and says "you see, it just doesn't work".

I let out a little giggle before informing her that she is pressing the CD drive button and indicate to her the location of the power button for the machine. She presses it and the computer springs to life.

We have a laugh and a little chat before I set off back to my office to spend 20 minutes following the procedure to assign, resolve and archive the ticket. (Yes I know that no **$helpdesk** software should be that long)

Hope you enjoyed.

Setting up a modem - /u/DesignatedDec0y

This is the a story my Father told me when he was working as techsupport. It started off with a lady asking why her brand new Modem wasnt working.

Dad: Hi thank you for contacting us, how can I help

Lady: Hi I just bought your new wireless modem and it seems to be broken.

Dad: Im sorry to hear that, how soon did it break on you?

Lady: It never turned on the moment I took it out of the box

Dad: Thats odd, let me walk you through step by step and lets see if we can find out the problem, first I want you to disconnect all the wires

Lady: The wires that came in the box?

Dad: Yes those wires

Lady: I threw them out

Dad (Now confused): You threw them away mam?

Lady: Yea I bought your modem because it said it was *wireless*

Dad: Mam you still have to plug it into the wall

Lady: But it's a wireless modem, why do I have to do that?

He told me he had her dig through the trash to get the wires back and set up her internet properly

You would like us to do what now? - /u/ lazlowoodbine

Okay, this is a very old tale from back in the heady days of 2009. I (**$Me** in this recounting) work at **$BespokeSoftwareCompany** where we supply and support **$Product**.

$Customer had called and reported that a hardware fault had killed one of the old PCs at one of the work.

>**$Me** Welcome to **$BespokeSoftwareCompany**, **$LazloWoodbine** speaking, how can I help?

>**$Customer** Yes, one of our machines died yesterday and we need a new one setting up so we can use **$Product**

First things first, lets establish that they have a machine capable of running our software. Joy of joys they have had the brain power to buy a suitable box with all the right stuff needed.

>**$Me** Right, we need you to install VNC which we use in order to carry out the install remotely. Can you open a browser window and type this address in?

A simple enough request met with a fairly standard response but this doesn't bode well for the future.

>**$Customer** What's a browser?

>**$Me** Well, you've used Internet Explorer before, right? That's a browser.

Back then IE was the only real browser anyone really used so don't judge me, luckily yes, they have used it before. These days I simply use the phrase "Open the Internet" and most people seem to understand that.

>**$Me** So can you open the browser please?

>**$Customer** Not at the moment, no.

Okay, maybe they haven't got an internet connection. Lets test that.

>**$Me** Are you on the internet there?

>**$Customer** Yes, we can all get on the internet, I'm on it now, that's how I got your number.

>**$Me** Ah, okay, *we're getting somewhere at last* Can you type this address into your address bar?

>**$Customer** I don't need it installing on this machine, it's on the new machine.

*This is starting to get a bit odd now and a little bit frustrating but I am a calm and patient member of the **$SupportTeam** so I can do this.*

>**$Me** Okay, can you move over to the new machine and open a browser for me?

And this, dear reader, is where the whole reason they couldn't do this in the first place becomes *very* clear.

>**$Customer** Well, we haven't unpacked it yet.

>**$Me** It's still in the box?

>**$Customer** Yes, it only arrived half an hour ago.

>**$Me** Riiiiiight....

>**$Customer** I thought you could do all this remotely? *For some reason the customer sounds baffled*

>**$Me** Well we can, but it does kind of depend on the PC being switched on.

Oddly the customer seemed to think that we could assemble, plug in, turn on and install software onto a computer... over the phone.

I think the customer was on hold for 5 minutes (in reality probably a fraction of that) until the entire office, who had been listening to the whole conversation stopped laughing.

The customer was politely asked to get the PC plugged in and connected to the internet before calling us back. He called back two days later and we managed to successfully remote in and set everything back up.

I really don't think they needed to write a letter of complaint saying how unhelpful we'd been. I think that went home with the manager to be framed.

Edit: Trying to sort fomatting

TL:DR - Customer thinks we can assemble a computer remotely.

The tale of broken pagers - /u/ BushKush273

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gij1j/ the_tale_of_broken_pagers/

Hello! First time posting here as I finally remember this subreddit after dealing with a rather interesting customer. This little story just happened as I'm working the Saturday evening shift as a solo help desk person at a healthcare network.

Unfortunately, we still have a good amount of pagers that we utilize for many important roles in the hospital. Half of them don't work and at each hospital we have an area where hospital staff can swap out their pager if their current one stops working. The people who are in charge of those pagers (normally Security) tend to not care much for them and don't keep track of which ones work and which ones don't so often times when employees get a new pager, it ends up being broken as well.

Well now I have a nursing supervisor who says her pager completely died on her so she went and got a new one. Easy call. I swap the number to the new pager, send a test page, and tell her to wait 15-30 minutes for the change to go through. An hour goes by..she calls back and still no test page. After some basic troubleshooting I just came to the conclusion that she got a spare bunk pager and she had to get a new one.

On to the second spare! She calls back after getting the second spare pager and I perform the same swap. This one was a little funky so I had to call the paging company to do it for me. Normally this means that it's done right so I'm pretty confident this will work. Another hour goes by.. I receive another call from the nursing supervisor that the pager still isn't working! I made sure she did all the basic troubleshooting and I call the paging company back to have them check the pager. Everything looks good. This is where I find the culprit of our problem...

I call the nursing supervisor back. At this point it just passed 7pm and she is getting ready to leave and the evening supervisor is taking over. The evening supervisor picks up and immediately goes:

>"Oh..Day Supervisor, the pager is off. That would explain why no pages are coming through. You gotta make sure it's on."

30 second pause...BEEP BEEP. The pager is ringing!

>"Yeah seems like its working. Thanks!"

I blame myself for not making sure that the pager was actually turned on but over the phone and considering she was working with me to take batteries out and back in and was able to notice her first pager died, I thought she knew how a pager that was ON looked like.

I shall also take this time to let all of my fellow help desk workers out there know this... don't no call no show on a weekend leaving your coworker alone :(

You can do that? - /u/BearCavalryCorpral

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ghx9w/you_can_do_that/

Got a short one today.

Recently, my mother had to submit an essay to advance ranks in a club she's in. Since she's not a native English speaker, she asked me to look over her work, and add a closing sentience or two using my superior English skills.

As I'm typing, I notice that while the rest of the essay is double-spaced, my lines are coming out single spaced. No biggie. Ctrl+A - double space. And to my surprise, the rest of the essay suddenly became quadruple spaced. I revert to the former settings, and simply double-space what I wrote.

When I go down to tell her that I'm done, I also ask whether she manually went through the essay and hit enter between every line

> Her: Yes!

> Me: Why would you do something like that?

> Her: That was on the requirements!

> Me: There's a way to automatically set that...

> Her: Really? I didn't know that!

I think it might have something to do with me being a millennial, but I cannot fathom how someone could not know of such a basic function. Third graders know how to do it!

Edit for superior typoing skills

MY PRINTER IS BROKEN!! - /u/ BustaYoAss

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gft84/my_printer_is_broken/

Worked tech support a few years ago. One of my favorite calls went like this.

Caller: MY PRINTER IS BROKEN!!

Me: Ok, is anyone able to print right now?

Caller: No, it's broken for everyone (said very snarky).

Me: Ok, let me reset your print spooler and clear any stuck print jobs, one moment.

*Found zero stuck jobs, but reset the spooler. Had the user reboot the printer. I watched it fall offline and come back up. I printed a test page and I can hear it printing.

Me: Ok, can I get you to try and print again for me please?

Caller: (Immediately) IT'S STILL NOT WORKING!!

*Printed another test page, rebooted the user's thin client. Started getting yelled at about this being unacceptable, etc. She turned into a total bich.

This went on for some time before I found the user was referring to the keyboard as her printer. She unplugged it herself to plug in something else to USB. I often wonder what she must have thought when I was printing test pages and she was retrieving them confirming they were there.

I got out of Tech Support after about 8 years. That was enough for me.

Races, loops, and $250,000 - /u/ Richardscoat83

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ggbf1/
races_loops_and_250000/

I used to work networking/help desk for a racetrack that hosted all kinds of national and international events. Classic car races, Les Mans endurance racing, and MotoGP to name a few.

The contracts for these events are pretty straightforward; vendors, race teams, and racing governing bodies would purchase services from the racetrack (in my particular case, internet connectivity) and expect them for the duration of the event. However, what was slightly more extreme were the penalties for breaking one of $250,000.

You see, and if you've worked at a racetrack you will understand, when a racing governing body such as AMR or DORNA comes to your site, it becomes their site. They own it and you. One such event I was issued a new set of credentials since my own IT "I can go anywhere" badge wouldn't get me into the restroom, let blink.

To understand the eventual problem, you have to understand what a cluster this site was for networking. There was a basic infrastructure across the facility, with phone, Ethernet, and fiber connecting to key IDFs across a few square miles. These lines ran through dirt, asphalt, and pipe. Little was done in the way of weather proofing. From these IDFs we would run miles of cable for each event to correspond to the site plans that changed from event to event. The week following each event we ripped out those miles of cable and relaid it all over again. I probably could have paid for college by recycling all the copper, but I was young, stupid, and too busy ogling the cars, motorcycles, and girls that came along with the races.

It was always a challenge meeting all of the planning department's site layouts, especially if there was a miscommunication. In this instance the miscommunication was that our souvenir/track merchandise booth was in fact 10 feet further away from its IDF than our printout specified. This was a problem, as there was no way to get a line strung up across a pole, over a pathway used by pedestrians and trucks during off time. Normally this store would have 5 Ethernet with 3 additional spares if something were to go down. For safety they wouldn't allow a line on a pole, nor would they allow cables in armored trays as they were considered a tripping hazard.

Never fear though, we had a secret weapon in old Cisco dsl technology. I can't remember exactly what it was called, but imagine a slow but steady connection over a two wire pone line. Because the tent was sitting next to an old phone junction terminal (those green/gray rectangular boxes out in front of your house on the street corner) we could use a bunch of the 24 line block for our two wire dsl. Suddenly we had enough connections with extra to spare. These connections were brought into the tent, connected to a switch and bridged to allow for higher throughput for the store registers.

One important thing to note is where these dsl connections terminated in the back end. They didn't go to one switch, they actually terminated to multiple different switches on our network (controllers really, but similar idea.) These controllers existed on multiple different vlans and in some cases entirely different IDFs. So we had a store, with what appeared to be single ingress, but whose connections actually came from multiple locations on our network. Can you venture a guess as to what we were about to encounter? If I had, I would have left for the year...

So we've got a moved store, a poorly designed backend, and a racing body with the power of Caesar. It's going to be a wonderful day.

Let's set the mood for the final day of the event, 30 minutes prior to the final and most important championship race. It's hot, sunny, and despite the normal service calls for cut lines or phone block re-punches. All seems well and we are enjoying the view from our IT office. Then we get the call, internet is down for the racing body. Well heck, but we have redundancies. I get in my golf cart and drive away to take a look. Then another call comes in on the radio just moments after the first call, internet is down for the media center (where all the reporters hang out with supplied internet in dual terminated biscuit boxes. This is very important). "That's odd," I think, and my counterpart gets dispatched to it. Then another call, souvenir tent/store connections are down. Oh dear. Total site failure 30 minutes before the end, we don't restore services, we get fined $250,000 by the racing body.

I race back to the office and we all start printing out copies of our resumes while trying to figure out the problem. All signs point to a network loop, but we have no idea how, since we have stp on all core switches. Our head network guy starts reviewing his logs while we are dispatched to try and find the problem. While the racing body called us first, it turns out that it was in fact the media center that lost connectivity first, they just hadn't had a sec to call us apparently until multiple reporters started complaining. The network guys logs show failure starting in the media center, then the racing bodies location, then the souvenir store/tent. We rush into the media center and start looking over every wired connection and what do we find? A reporter plugged one end of their patch cable into their connection, and the other end into the one next to them. This was done because they wanted to "make it look neater."

After this, switches start to come back online, services are restored, and we start breathing again, just 15 minutes before the final race. Easily the most stressful tech emergency of my life.

So what happened?
1. Souvenir store/tent was moved, our old plan to wire it was thrown out the window.
2. We reworked our connections to the store, but these connections went to multiple different switches on our network, some of which were NOT core switches. This meant the store had bridged connections to multiple switches on which stp was not enabled.
3. In an attempt to be neater, a reporter inadvertently loops the network in the media center which causes a cascading failure across the entire site through the souvenir tent connections.

We got good and drunk that night. 10ft almost cost us $250,000

Woman angry that her new computer is broken - /u/tommygun641

A few years ago I was working at a computer repair place as work experience for my IT class at high school.

Im in the back room with one of the co workers who's repairing a computer and teaching me what's wrong with it when the manager comes in laughing. We ask what's wrong and he says I need to help this woman out the front because it would be "great experience" for me.

I walk out and theres a woman standing there looking very upset with two laptops in front of her.

Me: hello, what seems to be the problem?

here.

Me: alright so what's wrong with it exactly?

Her: it wont copy anything

Me: alright I'll give it a look.

So I go to the back and get a spare usb stick and am about to stick it in when she stops me.

Her: what are you doing?

Me: copying from your computer

Her: that's not what you do.

I look a little puzzled and I look over to where the manager is and he's trying not to laugh so I turn to the lady and ask her to show me how to copy stuff.

She pulls a usb mouse out of her pocket and plugs it into her old computer. She left clicks on a bunch of stuff and clicks "copy". She then unplugs the mouse and plugs it into the new one, left clicks and up comes the sidebar with no "paste" option. She then turns to me and says "see"

So then I just explained to her that she's doing it wrong and how you are supposed to do it and even ended up selling her a portable 2tb hard drive. But the second she left the store I laughed me head off.

"You should have told me these things needed power" - /u/BootyStanks

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So a little background i work for a POS company and i had a remote appointment to set up this guys EMV pin pads. The chip card readers. He had already had them plugged in and ready to go by the time i called. I got logged into his PCs and installed all the necessary programs.

Me= me   Cx=client

Me: is the pin pad saying anything now?

Cx: nope its not saying anything

30 min go by of trouble shooting
i reinstalled everything

Me: now?

Cx: nope, nothing

have cx recheck all wires, check damn near every device in the store

Me: now?

Cx: not a thing

Me: ....what exactly is on the screen. Be VERY specific

Cx: im saying their is nothing on them. They arent even lighting up

Fury begins to rise

Me: is the power cord plugged in?

Cx: i dont think they came with any

Me: please check, sir

10 min of waiting

Cx: huh, i guess they did

plugs them in, all pin pads are working and taking credit cards

Cx: well, you should have told me these things needed power. I dont have time to waste on these things.

i did'nt know what to say

Me: ill be sure to check, next time *click*

A Sappy Story - /u/Killanos

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gbkix/a_sappy_story/

Hi guys,
I'm going, to be honest, and say this is not my main account because I want to remain anonymous

This story happened about 1 ½ years ago. (winter of 2015)

I was working for a cell phone and phone subscription provider at the time. It was quite stressful because of how telesales worked

back then. I had little to no nice people there because most wanted either a free phone, a free subscription or a just rant.

But this lady melted my heart. WARNING: SAPPY STORY

**\$ME: me
\$Cx: the lovely young lady
X: the company \$ME worked for
\$TL: team leader that was on the shift**

>**\$ME**: -Thank you for calling **X**. My name is **\$ME**. How can I help you with?
\$Cx: - Hi there. I wanted to ask for an upgrade
\$ME: -Sure. Can you provide me with a phone number?
\$Cx: - Yeah. It's ____
\$ME: Great. *the owner is a male based on the name*. Can you confirm the email address, the name of the account and the pin/password?

rule of thumb = if she can authenticate and tell me all the details she is good to go
>**\$Cx**: Sure. *provides* **\$ME** *the details*
\$ME: Alright. *checks the account. Old flip phone from `08. Husband has an iPhone 6S*
\$ME: May I ask why haven't you upgraded sooner?
\$Cx: I have epilepsy. Using it while I was on the treatment would've worsened the treatment. I already had a stroke a day

trynototcry.jpeg
Context: **\$ME** *was diagnosed with mild epilepsy and noticed the effects that have on people \$ME's age. I was lucky that I can still live a normal life without sacrificing a lot.*

>**\$ME**: When.. were you first diagnosed?
\$Cx: By the end of 2007. But I'm doing alright now

stilltrynottocry.gif
The treatment is rough. The medicine is not your usual "take it 3 times a day and when you are better you administered.
>**\$ME**: How are you doing now?

$Cx: I'm actually blessed that I can go out without any wheelchair.
$ME: Wheelchair?
stuff.

$ME *gave up on holding back the tears. Luckily there were only 3 more people*
>**$ME**: *speechless for a solid minute*
$Cx: Are you still there?
$ME: Yeah, I'm sorry. I know that what I'm going to say is going to sound like a lie, but I have been diagnosed with mild epilepsy about 2 years ago.
$Cx: *voice cracking* Really? Please don't just say that just to get me to buy the [amazing] tablet.

X *had a promotion for a [wonderful] tablet*
>**$ME**: I promise this is not at all my intention.
$ME: I still have the random spasms once a week and I get terrified.
$Cx: Pfff. You should see me. You can't tell whether I'm having a spasm or a new breakdance move.

Both laughing on it. First time I really felt connected to a different level with a person. Hot [fabulous] mess I was
We talk for a solid 15 min regarding our issue, the "Jump Time" effect that we feel, the spasms, the dreams we have in regards to the illness
>**$ME**: Oh right. I forgot about your phone.
$Cx: Right, the reason I called.

Bussiness as usual, with the only difference that she had to pay the upgrade fee. I waived it so she doesn't have to pay anything with me
>**$ME**: It's all set. I hope you will get better and enjoy your smartphone.
$Cx: Take care. And try not to surprise your friends with random break dance moves. And thank you for not making me pay the [great] upgrade fee.

she knew about the fee and reminded **$ME** *that my crying session is not over*
>**$ME**:**it started to rain** Will do. Take care and wish you all the best. ***$ME* *hanged up and went for a smoke*
$TL**: *WTFjusthappened.png*

Edit: Edit
bastards

An interesting interview - /u/superzenki

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gbg8b/
an_interesting_interview/

I went for an interview today with a company that's 100% Macs. I previously had a phone interview with them that went pretty well, so they called me in person. I was doing this on my lunch break from my regular, so I already felt rushed, although nothing they did made me feel that way. They were really laid back about everything. I went into the room with two Macs sitting on the table. In this story we have $Interviewer1, $Interviewer2, & $Me.

$I1: We want you to diagnose these and see if you can fix them. This first one doesn't connect to our network.

I open it up, and I can see it connected to their guest network, but no browser will load a webpage. Eventually, Chrome loads up with a DNS error so that points me in the right direction. I turn the wireless off and back on, but that changes nothing. I go to the Network Preferences from the top menu bar, but it's a gray Preferences.

>$Me: I'm supposed to be trying to connect to the guest wireless, right?

>$I2: Maybe...(he says as to not give the answer away).

I try their regular network, but it asks for a username and password. Knowing it can't be that simple, I don't bother to ask for a username/password.

>$Me: Well, when I try to go to Network Preferences, nothing loads.

>$I1: Show us.

So I show them, and of course after closing everything out and re-opening it, Network Preferences loads. I then go through all of the Advanced settings, and everything looks normal. I can't think of what else to try, so I do a Renew DHCP Lease. I try re-loading a webpage again, but it doesn't load. So I'm ready to tell them that I'm stumped, and it loads while they're standing over me.

$I2: Hey, good job! I modified the DNS to make it off by one number. Here's the second laptop, go ahead and try to open Chrome on it.

I do, and it says "You do not have permission to open Google Chrome." Strange. I look in the Applications folder and there's no icon, I figured it may be a corrupted installation or something. So I go out and hint.

>$I2: You can use the other one for Google if you need to.

So I decide to start trying to fix the original copy by Googling, and find something that points me in the right direction. After a couple more minutes, he comes over and looks at my shoulder to give me more hints.

>$Me: Well, I actually downloaded a fresh copy of Chrome to use, now I'm just trying to figure out what's going on with this one.

>$I2: Hey, I like your out of the box thinking. Get it up and running first, then fix the root problem later. Well I'll tell you how I thought we were going to fix it, right-click and select Get Info on the original Chrome.

I do and see that No Access is selected for Chrome. I chuckled at how I overlooked something that simple, but I don't see that often and I wasn't even expecting this type of interview so I think I did pretty well for not being fully prepared.

$I1 showed me around and it seemed like a really laid-back environment. Pretty much everyone wearing jeans, some people working in bean bags on their laptop. Their break room had a bunch of games in it, and I got free food leftover from breakfast. Overall, a good learning experience whether or not I get the job.

What do I know? They're the engineers... - /u/Hokulewa

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g9ql0/
what_do_i_know_theyre_the_engineers/

So, I'm not working in tech support... I'm writing operator documentation for new mission systems which will be going into a military aircraft: start-up and shut-down checklists, testing procedures, and how to simply use the equipment in flight.

But the engineers keep redesigning stuff because it's not working right or not meeting the functional requirements, which makes it rather hard to write the documentation. So, I'm spending time in the development lab while they hammer on the systems, keeping notes and being generally bored to tears since it's a secure facility, so I can't bring in my phone and the computers are air-gapped from the internet.

I'm not an engineer. I'm a former technician with 20 years of experience with these types of systems on this type of aircraft. I don't know how to design this kind of equipment, but I sure know how to troubleshoot problems. That's why they have me writing the documentation.

Anyway, they've got this airborne surveillance camera system which feeds video to an onboard operator station. And there's a delay in the feed the engineers can't figure out.

They're pointing the dismounted camera at the display monitor, with a high-precision clock beside it, so the monitor shows the clock and what *was* on the monitor just a moment ago... a slightly older picture of the clock. The difference between the two times indicates how much the video feed is delayed. They are freeze-framing the video to see how many milliseconds apart the two times are.

They started out with a huge delay, like 600 milliseconds, which they have worked out and fixed. Now they've got a 40 msec delay left and can't figure it out.

So, I ask, "What's the input lag for that LCD panel?"

They reply that it's a 60 Hz panel.

"No," I say, "the display itself has a natural latency unrelated to the refresh rate that creates a delay between the signal arrival and time it's displayed." They are using a cheap off-brand PC monitor in the lab, not the ridiculously expensive one that will be on the plane. "A run-of-the-mill PC monitor can easily have a 30-40 msec input lag which would create exactly the problem that you're seeing here," I say.

The other engineer pipes up with "I think it's 120 Hz, actually. That's not the problem." They turn slightly away from me and keep staring at the 40 msec difference in the times displayed.

I just shrug my shoulders and say "Ok. I'm going to lunch."

lag.

I CAN'T ACCESS NONE OF IT! - /u/ ApocalypseNowInAMin

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g8d02/ i_cant_access_none_of_it/

Hi all, its been a long time since my last post, so how about a short and funny (to me, at least) one to get back into the swing of things.

Characters in this tale from tech support:
$ANIM: The hero of the story; the hardworking senior technician of the team, fuelled by coffee and very little sleep.
$USER: Probably has a certificate of computer proficiency.

It was another sunny day glaring into the high-rise office. Things were unnaturally quiet but that's okay, I have plenty of project work to keep me busy. Just as I sip on my latest (6th) cup of coffee for the day $USER storms into the office.

$USER had recently been given their first laptop with the company as they had taken up a new role meaning this.

$USER: *slams laptop down on desk and makes a gesture befitting the assistant from "The Price is Right"*

>$USER: "I can't access none of it!"

$USER is gesturing towards their mapped network drives, each with a big red 'X' on them.

I take one look at the machine, and without missing a beat respond.

>$ANIM: That's because you're on aeroplane mode.

"This printer is supposed to be Plug-and-Play!" - /u/BakaDango

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There is an eighth dimension beyond that which is known to man. It is a stupidity as vast as space and as timeless as infinity. It is the middle ground between $user and $tech, between computer science and superstition, and it lies between the pit of man's fears and the summit of his knowledge-base. This is the dimension of imagination. It is an area which we call the Family Tech Support Zone.

Everyone here has experienced (at least) one PC that becomes the bane of their existence; you know, the one that always malfunctions no matter how many parts are replaced or attempts are made to resuscitate it. For me, this is my Grandmother's computer. Between faulty ram, a corrupted HDD, and bad cables, every few months I am required to perform maintenance on her draconian machine. After replacing every component besides the power supply and motherboard in her PC and reinstalling her 3 greeting card creation applications, I prayed that this would finally allow me freedom from her long-winded calls and having to deal with my hot-headed uncle as the middleman IT guy. I would usually relay instructions to him as he, unlike my grandmother is able to use websites besides [email.com].

But then my uncle *had* to buy them a printer.

Cast:

$me = guy trying to enjoy his day off

$unc = uncle = $user

>$unc: "So I'm trying to get this damn new printer to work but Windows won't recognize it. I **bleeping** hate Windows **bleeping** 10!

>$me: "Don't worry, I'm already logging into her computer remotely, give me a minute"

>$unc: "This **bleeping** thing is supposed to be plug-and-play! I bet if you didn't upgrade her to 10 it would have worked fine! 7 was fine!

>>*Author's Note: I did not upgrade her computer to 10, it did so automatically when I wasn't there.*

I check device manager and the printer isn't showing up. Download and install the drivers and still nothing.

>$me: "Okay, I need you to make sure all of the cables are plugged in properly, nice and snug"

>$unc: "I did that already, but I'll do it again. I restarted it too, before you ask"

>>$internally: *they're learning*

>$unc: "Okay, printer is plugged in."

>$me: "Hm, I still don't see anything. How about this, try plugging it into a different USB port."

>$unc: "I don't know which USB is which USB so I'm going to unplug them all and put them all into different ports"

>$me: "That seems unnecessary and could cause more issues, just foll-

>$unc: "Okay, I did it."

I see the keyboard and mouse reinitialize, but no printer. I start to think... how many USB ports could that PC have? I'm fairly sure it has 4 total, and if I do my math right, you can't re-arrange 3 USBs (mouse, keyboard, & printer) into 3 different ports.

>$me: "How many USB cables are plugged in?"

>$unc: "There's two"

>$me: "So that's the mouse and the keyboard, what about the printer?"

>$unc: "There's no printer cable! I already told you, this is supposed to be plug-and-play! I plugged it in, but the computer can't see it!"

>$me: *facepalming into oblivion* "No, it's plug-into-the-computer and play! Not power-and-play! Plug in the cable please!"

>$unc: "But the printer is across the room!"

I'll spare you the details, but I walked my uncle through configuring the printer to the network and was able to connect to the printer afterwards with ease. This was the most incredible interpretation of plug-and-play I've heard to date; never underestimate the mind of a $user.

TL;DR: Windows 10 is a terrible operating system.

Ring of wire - /u/Chilled_IT

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g9opq/ring_of_wire/

This happened about a week ago. A new intern was tasked to check where all the computers and printers are on two of our departments. The departments moved to different floors and were told to just move themselves over and let everything else stay at their place.

Buuuuuuut as you can maybe guess, they cut the cable ties, unplugged computer/keyboard/mouse/phone and moved into their new floor. My boss was enraged, called the bosses of those departments and quoted the content of the email again followed by *is that so hard to understand? Now go and put everything back where you took it from, my men wont do that!!!*

This is when new intern was given the task to go and check. Each computer and printer has a sticker on them with a number. He was given a layout of the floors and which computer and printer needed to be in which room. He was not told to move them to their correct place, just list where they are now. We would do the rest if necessary.

So far so good, he gets going and we go on with our usual daily routines. Suddenly the phone rings....

Players:

$CIT - Dumbfounded me

$TNI - The New Intern

$Boss - Well my boss...

>$CIT: Hello, you are speaking with $CIT, how can I help you?

>$TNI: Hey it's me, there is a printer and it doesn't have a sticker on it. How do I get the IP of it?

>$CIT: Use the interface on it, it has to say "Network Settings" or so somewhere around those options. Just click your way through it.

>$TNI: Nope, tried that already. The interface isn't doing anything.

>$CIT: Did you turn it off and on again? *I hate to ask that*

>$TNI: Tried that too, same result.

>$CIT: Is the ethernet-cable plugged in?

>$TNI: Yes.

>$CIT: I will scan the subnet of the floor, screenshot the result of active devices and then you unplug it and we scan again.

Said and done, both scans show same result.

>$CIT: Ok, I'm coming over.

I walk down 3 floors, through a long hallway and up 2 two floors to arrive at sight. $TNI shows me the printer and I verify that it is really not doing a thing. I try the reboot too...nada. I start the computer that is in the same room as the printer to check if I can get something out of that with the COM-port that is for some reason still attached although it is on ethernet.

Note: Don't try to make sense of it, there is a bottomless list of things that shouldn't be there, but are there, because of frequent staff-changes and nobody knowing what the previous person did.

I try to log in to my account...nada. No connection to the domain. I check the cables, all plugged in. I log in as the local admin and check the network-settings....all good.

>$CIT: Look, you stay here, I go back and check the patch panel and switches in our server room. *makes mental note of patch panel number I have to check*

2 floors down, long hallway, 3 floors up....

The server room is can only be accessed through the office of $Boss. As I enter our department, I hear that all my coworkers are on the phone, which is odd. Usually quiet at our department. I walk in $Boss' office, go to the server room and check the patch panel....all good. Checking all switches...all good.

Rather confused I go out of the server room, trying to approach $Boss to tell him about the issue. I see the other ones have arrived in his office too.

>$Boss: $CIT, tell me what you did in the server room. We cannot connect to any of those devices on those two floors.

>$CIT: Um...I just checked the patch panels and switches. All goody, it seems. *explain to him to the rest of the story*

>$Boss: Gotta be something $TNI did...*waves at the other ones to follow him*...$CIT, you stay here, we go check out what the issue is.

>$CIT: But how can he mess something up by just documenting things?

>$Boss (while walking out of the office): Don't know, but we will find out.

While I wait for one of them to return, I get several more calls about them not getting any network-connection. Frustrated and angry callers. I just give them the info that it is being worked on and hang up.

Finally one of them comes back, just shaking his head and reports to me that $TNI did unplug some cables and supposedly plugged them right back in after he found out where they lead. That wasn't a part of his given job. He managed to create a ring between two switches that are on their floor, so the switches were playing an awesome game of data-ping-pong.
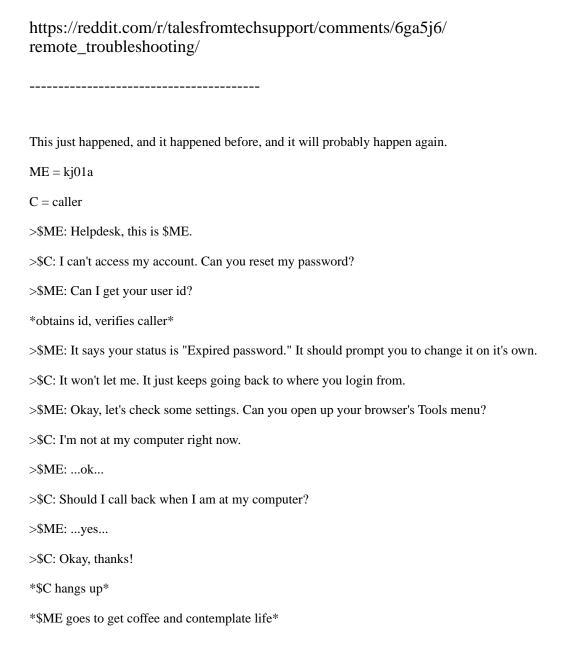
Just How? and Why? were the things I was wondering about...

TL;DR: Intern is supposed to document which pc/printer is in which room of two departments. Manages to unplug cables for no good reason and create a ring while plugging it back in.

Yes, this intern is still around will be for about another half a year.

Yes, he has done more things that made us facepalm.

Remote Troubleshooting - /u/kj01a

This just happened, and it happened before, and it will probably happen again.

ME = kj01a

C = caller

>$ME: Helpdesk, this is $ME.

>$C: I can't access my account. Can you reset my password?

>$ME: Can I get your user id?

obtains id, verifies caller

>$ME: It says your status is "Expired password." It should prompt you to change it on it's own.

>$C: It won't let me. It just keeps going back to where you login from.

>$ME: Okay, let's check some settings. Can you open up your browser's Tools menu?

>$C: I'm not at my computer right now.

>$ME: ...ok...

>$C: Should I call back when I am at my computer?

>$ME: ...yes...

>$C: Okay, thanks!

$C hangs up

$ME goes to get coffee and contemplate life

University Helldesk: Helicopter Parent Season - /u/TedTheViking

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g4p1u/
university_helldesk_helicopter_parent_season/

I posted an abbreviated version of this story elsewhere and it was well received, so I decided I'd post it here as well.

A few years ago, I worked at the IT helpdesk for a public university. We'd get a huge influx of new students every fall, and many of them would inevitably need help with account creation, forgotten passwords, and the like. To us, the late summer months were known as "Helicopter Parent Season," as we'd frequently get calls from parents who were trying to micromanage every detail of their children's' lives. Unfortunately, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) has rules against advanced meddling.

This particular story takes place in the dead of summer. I was sitting in a second-hand leather office chair with a pant leg full of crotch sweat and a pounding headache. I had just dealt with a call from an irritated parent, and was fantasizing about working somewhere that was cool, dark, and quiet all the time.

The phone rang, making me wince. I turned the ringer volume down before hitting the button on my headset.

>**Me**: $University IT support, how can I help you?

>**BaritoneDad (BD)**: Hi, I need to set up my son's account and register him for classes, but I don't have the password any more.

>**Me**: I can help with a password reset, but I will need to speak with the account holder.

>**BD**: Yeah, I'm having trouble getting him to do it. Could you just help me reset the password?

>**Me**: Unfortunately, I can't. FERPA prevents me from making account changes unless I have the account owner on the line.

>**BD**: But he wants me to do it.

>**Me**: I'm sorry sir, but I'll have to speak with him. What you're asking would be illegal.

I braced myself for an angry, self-righteous tirade.

>**BD**: Oh. Well, I guess he doesn't really want to go to college then. Maybe he'll actually listen when I tell him next year.

flabbergasted.

I wanted to send the man flowers.

If there's nothing on the monitor then it must be broken - /u/CanadianAlbanian

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g7vfv/
if_theres_nothing_on_the_monitor_then_it_must_be/

I've been in help desk support for a few years but constantly forget the most important rule: don't listen to the user when they try to troubleshoot and tell you what the problem is.

My colleague sent me a message to go swap monitors for this user whose monitors were dead. I was ready to head over but had a feeling I should just call the user and confirm first.

He was a friendly intern who said he was working and the monitors just went black all of a sudden. He said he had confirmed all the cables were plugged in and in the right spots as well. He had even switched the cables and monitors with each other, and tried plugging them into different ports on the PC. I thought wow I like this kid; it sounds like he knows his troubleshooting. He said he thought the monitors had short-circuited or gone dead or something.

Still, I had that feeling. I asked him "Do you see any lights on the power button on the monitors?" He said "Yes, but there's nothing on the screen".   That was my first red flag.....clearly they were getting power....

I tried pinging the PC.....no response.......

"Is your computer on?" I said.

"Umm no....ok let me try turning it on....ah great now the monitors are working!"

................lol

The Inheritance - The Beta Site part 3 - /u/ ginger_housecat

It's now 2AM. I'm still at Beta site after the [shennanigans of part 2](https://www.reddit.com/r/ talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fzh3o/the_inheritance_the_beta_site_part_2/). My Colleague JarJar (named because he has more than a passing resemblance to the Star Wars character of the same name) has arrived with a shit-ton of kit that we might need. Meanwhile, I've been checking logs on the server and finding a nearby supply of coffee. The Golden Arches place around the corner was open 24 hours, so that worked for us.

>JarJar: What happened here?

>Me: I connected the switches and couldn't ping out from the sales office. No network drive.

>JarJar: You checked the config?

>Me: Yeah, config is good. I even loaded the old one and re-connected the cat-5 but that didn't work. What happened at Central?

>Jarjar: Central, North and West all went down at the same time. The servers are working, but there's no connectivity. I can't understand how re-routing traffic along the fibre here, would stop connectivity at the other sites.

>Me: It doesn't. I think the switch is a red herring. What else do the sites have in common?

At the same time we both say...

> SAN

I go to the server cabinet, a small room in the basement with two racks and a hideously over-rated air con unit. JarJar is making enquiries of his own and has called the other IT member Basil (because he looks like TV character Basil Fawlty) in to Central to see if he can make sense of what's happening there.

I bring up the server console and discover that the SAN has no config, no allocated storage, nothing. My turn to swear. I call JarJar

>Me: Tell Basil to check the SAN config.

>JarJar: It's gone, hasn't it.

>Me: Yes.

The guys who set this network up in the first place (who left no documentation for anything) routed all data traffic through the Beta site. VPNs, Internet gateway, Mail, everything was in that cabinet. The blade chassis that everything was crammed into, was showing more lights than a proverbial christmas tree, and

none of them were green. I did a mental calculation of everything on there and died a little inside. It was going to be a long day.

3AM. I'm sat in the Beta Site directors office with Jarjar and FinMan. The company can still produce, it can still schedule deliveries, but there is nothing else. We're discussing steps.

>FinMan: Root Cause?

>JarJar: The Blade Chassis had a brain fart. It has a major component failure that's taken it offline. The worst part of this is that the SAN has somehow also detected this failure and lost it's disks. It probably attempts to re-confirm its config from the domain controller in the blade chassis and was part-way through when the chassis went down.

>FinMan: And this affects North because...

>Me: The SAN at North replicates config and some data at around 9PM, so my guess is that it picked up the corrupted config and did the same. This was all set up way in advance of us starting here, so to get it working quickly I'd need to speak to the people who configured it in the first place.

>FinMan: Well, one of them is in prison, and you'd need a oujia board for the other. Do what you can, we need this data back as soon as possible.

5AM. I've managed to jury-rig an internet connection, find a config for the SAN here and edited it to suit our needs. It's applied to the SAN and the device is restarted. I start to rebuild the arrays from scratch but I can only allocate storage space. I persist the best I can.

11AM. All of the staff have been told of the issue and only essential staff are in. The drives have rebuilt, but the data is badly mangled or outright missing. The backup tapes are required.

Midnight. All Backups are restored. As the full backups run at 1AM, We're now down 1 days transactions, so I reach for the hourly incrementals.

6AM. Incrementals are on. I advise FinMan that staff can now start to come in but only from midday today. I go for buckets of coffee and breakfast.

8AM. JarJar has finished talking Basil through what I have done. He has reached the same stage as us, but is waiting for replication.

10:30AM. Supplier arrives on site and looks at the blade chassis. He verifies that it's one of the controller modules but has brought the wrong one because their admin transposed two numbers on the model.

1:30PM. Supplier arrives back on site with the correct component and replaces it.

3PM. Words cannot explain how tired I am. I've been drinking coffee like it was water and FinMan has been sending staff on coffee runs every hour for us. Both myself and JarJar have now been awake for over 2 whole days. The SAN is up and running without error. The Chassis is up, and I'm starting to bring up servers. Data at the Beta site is good, and a handfull of selected users are logging in and starting to work.

5PM. Local BDC is up and running. I turn my attention to the other less important servers.

8Pm. The IIS, Proxy and print servers are now running so we have internet access. A lot of that I have had replication.

10PM. Coffee is my friend. I love coffee. I want to make babies with coffee.... ok, maybe not, but I've had so much coffee that I'm starting to see in slow motion. Oh, I also have a working SAN data replication config. JarJar agrees that it's ok and that we have backups. I apply the config.

Midnight. Who'd have thought that data replication over a WAN would take this long.

8AM. Basil confirms that the data replication is good. He has full visibility at his end, and we have full visibility at our end. We end the call and find FinMan.

>JarJar: It's all working now. We may have some data loss, but nothing that we can't handle later.

>FinMan: Good work guys. I've instructed Payroll to pay you a little bonus for this. CEO is very happy that it's been handled so quickly. We've booked you into <posh hotel down the road that charges £350 a night> where you have an executive room each. Today is Thursday, you check out tomorrow morning and I don't expect to see you at work until Monday Morning.

On the way to the Hotel, I got a call from Basil.

>Me: What? I'm tired and grumpy and heading for a nice cosy bed.

>Basil: Angry Lady dropped by. She wonders when you're going to bring back the only car she'll drive?

>Me: The BMW? FinMan said I'm not back until Monday. She can have it then.

Power Button? - /u/jrusnak

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g8ezc/power_button/

$JR = $jrusnak, your ever-optimistic university tech support employee

$CU = $ClassicUser, you'd be surprised just how many people make it to near-adulthood with negative to zero computer experience.

This story about the importance of asking ALL the questions before diving in comes from my 1st tech support job as a student at a large university working student tech support. We provided on-site support to phone & laptop wielding college first-years to seniors and lived in the dorms with them (as we were all college students at the time). As we lived in the dorms with them, and people knew where we stayed, people just "dropped by" our dorm/office all the time.

Around 11pm/Midnight and a young woman knocks on my door with a panicked look and a Macbook in her had. At this point I'm in my pajamas and half-asleep.. but there's no rest for the (1) Weary (2) Wicked ~or~ (3) On-site tech support so...

>$JR: (in a sleep-haze) Good evening! Hi! Yes, what's up?
>$CU: (in panic) Hey! My computer is frozen!

Now this is pretty common, we see students writing papers and not saving them until they're 6 hours in at which point their laptop crashes and they lose everything, I go into hero-mode

>$JR: Oh! Oh no! Bring it in, let's see what we can do!

experience*

>$JR: (Trying Cmd/Opt/Esc, checking key responsiveness, trying to move anything) Err.... It looks completely frozen...
>$CU: Yes! I know! It's been like this for an hour!!
>$JR: (Quickly realizing this is not a salvageable situation) Okay, well, it looks like it's crashed, and that's bad. Before I try restarting it, what data are you going to lose if we have to restart it?
>$CU: (confused) Data... loss?
>$JR: Ah, my bad, I mean like.. what were you doing before it crashed? How far were you into your paper? Were you working on a powerpoint? I see excel is open?
>$CU: Oh, erm... well I was on the internet...
>$JR: Okay! So you were researching, that's good, we might be able to recover your sources from your history and...
>$CU: Oh, eh, no, no research, just browsing the internet. Like.. facebook and stuff.
>$JR: (My turn to be confused) Oh! I see.. so.. you don't need anything saved?
>$CU: Saved?
>$JR: I mean have you tried to restart your computer?
>$CU: Restart it? What do... how do you do that!?

*slowly realizing this is one of *those* customers*

$JR: Well, you hold the power button down... and... that turns it off.
>$CU: Power button? Where is that?
(gentle smile, holding back the "you called me in the middle of the night for this" line of questioning)

>$JR: Right here, if you hold a power button down on most electronics they'll just turn off.

Computer shuts down, comes back up again fine

>$JR: Right, well.. there you go.
>$CU: (Flabbergasted at the physical computer hardware interaction steps she's just learned) Thank you!

$CU trots off into the night, and I, $JR, learn the importance of clarifying ALL options the customer is open to before starting to troubleshoot.

Always ask 2 clarifying questions. - /u/ Zestee911

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g8xpe/
always_ask_2_clarifying_questions/

Hi Guys, been lurking for several months since I became IT Manager at a local, not-so-small warehouse. year.

Got stopped in the parking lot Thursday at 5:01pm. One of the shipping guys says there is a loud beeping coming from the data cabinet mounted above his station. Said "I'll check it first thing in the A.M." and promptly forget about it.

Friday morning 7:55am, no sooner than my ass hit the chair, I get a call from the department lead asking when I'm going to come fix this issue, I can hear the beep faintly in the background during our conversation, it's constant, and unwavering. I know he won't let this go for long, so I drag my caffeine deprived behind out to the department. The noise is so high pitched that I can't exactly pinpoint the direction it's coming from. I heads.

At this point, I now realize I should have asked 2 more questions, maybe even looked around the area… But instead, I walked to the other side of the warehouse, jumped on the scissor lift and slowly made my way back space.

After finagling this over-sized scissor lift through a door 6 inches taller than this lift at it's lowest, and then into the corner where the data cabinet was mounted, I raised up so that I can see inside the cabinet, then open the door. No sound escapes the cabinet, save for the quiet hum of a HP ProCurve switch. Thinking I might be losing my senses, I raise myself up to the top of the cabinet so I can put my ear close to the security alarm box that is mounted nearby. Nothing… Only now do I realize it's not coming from anywhere up here.

After a quietly berating myself for a quick second I drop down, and stick my head under his desk. There is a small package scale tucked way back in a corner with a fading blue light emitting a shrill tone. I hand him the scale, still beeping, and proceed to slowly drive my oversize lift out of their work area, and back to it's charging location so I can continue to look busy until lunch.

TL;DR: Switch cabinet beeping in warehouse, failed to consider alternative options. Find package scale under desk with a dying battery…

My Dad's Fight Against the Log Files from Hell - /u/Poo-et

My dad recently got a 3 month secondment at his workplace to move to the safety analytics department at a major air traffic control company. The problem is that the department doesn't get access to any of the programs to actually test - all they get are the log files that the programs generate. Usually this isn't a problem, as some creative filtering later and only the useful information is left. This time, however, it was not to be.

In air traffic control, controllers have to manage airstrips and organise planes to avoid collisions. This is usually done by way of a touchscreen interface to improve workflow. The program the department would be analysing was responsible for managing this GUI. The only problem was that every single time the screen was touched, the program would dump EVERYTHING about the screen to the log file. We're talking fonts, styling, positions, the lot. Important information such as how long it took a controller to perform a certain action was very difficult to find as a result.

And these log files were MASSIVE. We're talking 200Mb of text. This would usually be a pain, but not quite a disaster. The only problem was that it was a CSV of XML files. Spreadsheets would choke on the 30kb XML values, text editors on the 200Mb of other worthless data, and XML editors would nope out at the sight of the CSV extension. Mind you, all this processing is being done on a farm of a couple hundred processors, interfaced with remote desktops to process the raw amount of data they are given. After a while spent wrangling unsuccessfully, he called it a morning and went to lunch, closing the remote session. After he returned, he tried again to reopen the session, but nothing happened. He phoned tech support, and while he was waiting he clicked the button to open the session a couple dozen times out of boredom and mild frustration. While he was on the phone trying to troubleshoot, his screen went blank. A few minutes of Success!

He managed to get on to the server, and get back to log file wrangling, and the problem was solved.

Or so he thought. A few minutes later, his screen once again went blank. Thinking it would go away again and was a product of him doing something client sided, he left the computer to go make some tea. He returned to a login screen.

It turns out that EVERY SINGLE TIME he clicked the 'start session' button, the server would create a new session. The reason that it took forever to load was that it was trying to resume what he was working on previously - loading these evil log files into a text editor and CSV editor. So now, there were 30 sessions, all of which were in the process of loading a 200mb CSV, twice. And this server held the infrastructure for several other departments as well, so a total restart was not an option either if the company didn't want to loaded.

TL;DR: Big server loaded a 200mb CSV into two different editors, on 30 different sessions, all at once.

But, it is the same... it's Windows 10... - /u/sc_emixam

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g6w1n/but_it_is_the_same_its_windows_10/

Hey TFTS! I am on this sub for a month now and I love it so I trough I can contribute.
This story is about a month old.

Context : I work in the IT service for a professional school (where you learn your "future" job, usually students are around 20yrs old). I do everything from a forgotten password to dev the webapp for teachers to use (instead of those Excel sheets).

At the time, I was editing things on the deployment server for this summer break where we are (IT team) deploying *Windows 10* on the PC's. I was trying to skip the PxE "Press F12 to enter PxE" part on remote because it's incredibly boring to press F12 or changes the BOIS setting on 400+ PC's.
I thought, with my settings, only the IT PC's in <MY VLAN> will be affected, I was wrong...

Note that, at this point you steel need to go through several steps to complete an install.

Usually teachers are really clueless and call for nothing like "screen not working!!!" when the screen is just OFF or thing like that.

As I said, i change something in one server that every PC will now boot on PxE and ask for credentials (Admin domain) and, of course, a PC booted at that same time...

teacher.

>$ME: Hello, IT desk, it's $Me, how can I help you today?

>$T: Hi, it is $T from class $NbClass and I have a problem with the computer. It already took an hour to start it and I my students need to work!

>$Me *internally*: an hour? What?

After some basics and useless troubleshooting I decided to go take a look.

As I walk in the classroom, my brain crash. **Windows 10?!?**

I immediately thought that this teacher got the credentials of the domain admin (Which will get him fired for using them and not reporting the problem) but the nice person I am simply asked what did he do:

>$Me: What did you do when the PC started? Did you log in as usual?

>$T: Yes, with <insert basic login for teachers here> and then it said "wait a moment" or something like that.

>$Me *internally*: What? Did I accidentally disable admin only right for the PxE?

Well, I already reversed the modifications so it's fine.

>$Me: But did the login screen looked a bit odd?

>$T: Yeah, it was a low quality screen...

>$Me (remember, we are in front of young people that are probably all better than him with computers): So usually you call because your screen is literally OFF but log in on a weird looking screen, go through several unknown step and wait an hour for calling us?

Soft laugh from the students

>$T: Yeah... I'm sorry, but when will the PC usable?

>$Me: Right now, it's already ready but you will have to deal with Windows 10

>$T: Oh, ok fine, good day.

>$Me: Good day.

About an hour later, my coworker come in (from a classroom with a problem) and it goes like:

>$Cw: You remember the teacher that installed *Windows 10* this morning?

>$Me: Yeah, why?

>$Cw: He called because he need help understanding "the new PC" and when I tried to explain he said: *Pff... I don't understand a thing! It's ok, i'll use my notebook.*

>**Pull out a FREAKING SURFACE PRO WITH WINDOWS 10!!!**

We burst out laughing and didn't hear anything again from him. Later that day I reinstalled *Windows 7* for avoiding more problems (it was *my* fault on start after all).

Oh boys, next year is going to be fun with *Windows 10*.

TL;DR: **Teacher** that usually call for little things reinstalled a PC (from W7 to W10) because **I** failed something and then, complain he don't understand the new one, pull out a **surface pro** with **Windows 10** on it.

Edit: Formatting

Thanks but no thanks for helping - /u/ beeradvocate12

This is a fun tale of a phone system install gone wrong. Let me give you a little back story. I run a small MSP handling IT for a vast range of industries. The company I'm going to be talking about is a doctors office that I have worked with off and on for 7 years. The reason I say off and on is because they fired me 7 months ago for no reason went to the biggest MSP in town realized it was costing them 4 times what I charged them and hired me back 3 months ago. During my absence they decided it was time replace their failing phone system and when I say they I mean one of the 3 docs that are partners in the practice. The above doc happens to also co-own a EMR company with his brother. Him and his brother are both from India and most of the EMR company is either based in India or from India (this has relevance to the story). So well I was gone the choice was made without talking to any other vendors that we are going to get a Sangoma Freepbx Phone System 60 and 35 Sangoma S500 phones. And when I started back with them I told them I deploy and managed Freepbx but not with those phones but I could help with minor things if needed. Lets fast forward to a month before we are suppose to go live on the system. The EMR company setting up this phone system for us is 5 hours away and person doing the config is refusing to come onsite for any of it and wants to do everything remotely. They shipped the system and all the phones to the doc office and I had to bring them all to my office so I could setup them all up on their new switches get them configured on the VLAN and let him start programming everything. I brought the phones back to the doc office a week and half prior to going live so he could get the PRI running and test everything. I forgot to add we told him 3 months prior and several times after that the exact config they wanted for the phone system. We went live on the phone system Monday and 80% of it wasn't working or was configured wrong. I went back and forth on the phone with him and get it to 50% working. Then spent the past 4 days trying to get things setup how they needed it and the more and more time I spend on this I see everything is getting lost in translation. For example we asked that the indicator light on the phones lights up red when the phone has a voicemail like the manual said it would. He took that as disable the indicator light completely. We also asked him to create buttons for parking spots when you park a call on each phone he completely ignored it. And here is the best part so we noticed yesterday when he started to create templates for the phone configs and in doing so removed the DND button from the phones he pushed that config to. I sent him an e-mail yesterday saying when you configure the rest of the phones with the template make sure DND doesn't get removed because that's going to cause problems. Then yesterday afternoon they put a bunch of phones on DND because they were short staffed and wanted the queue to work correctly. He pushed the config to all the phones late last night and sent me e-mail and one of the items he said was don't worry the DND button is still there. I get a call this morning there is no DND button and no one can take their phones off DND so they only have 3 working phones to answer all their calls. That was 4 hours ago and he still can't get the button back and they still can't answer phone calls. There is a massive laundry list of issues going on with this system and I suggested to the office manager we bring one of my sub-contractors well versed in Freepbx. When we talked to doc leading this project he said I will make a phone call and take care of this. After I left he went upstairs well he had patients downstairs waiting for procedures and said I'm going to ask each person what they want the phones to do and what the issues are. And when they said I was already working on those items and we had a massive list he said throw away the list I don't care about the problems and I want you guys to tell me what you want. They have no idea what these phones can do or what to ask for. And there are still 20+ problems that haven't been resolved. I'm just waiting to see this whole system fail. Especially since the doc leading this phone system project is the one that decided to fire me with out asking for input from anyone else and that when he re-hired almost fired me again because I raised my rate

when I came back. In the 4 days they have been live they have gotten several complaints from patients calling and had to cut the phones over to their answering service 30% of the time they were open this week.

Just making a small change... - /u/ noother10

I work internal IT for a large company, but due to only having 5 of us to support 1500 staff, we overlap on a lot of roles. This means we often work together on projects or need help from each other a lot of the time.

$me - I, myself, me.

$na - Network Admin.

$man - IT Manager/CIO.

One of the exceptions from the above was $na. He would do whatever he could to get out of doing any work and refused to document or plan anything. When he did do work, he'd do it on his own and keep everything to himself. He'd also deflect blame for any of the systems he maintains. In his infamous words "I can ping it, thus it isn't a network problem!".

We were at the tail end of a core switch/firewall/vpn replacement project. Our previous core switches in our two data centres (Primary and DR) both failed within weeks of each other, and a work around was put in place. They were end of life, had no warranty and weren't in a high availability setup.

We were trying to get the project wrapped up as it had been going on for more then 6 months, did I mention $na was also slow to get things done? Anyway, we were at the point where $na said that only the mail server and wireless were running through the old firewall.

>$na: We need to move the mail server to the new firewall.

>$man: So what else is still running on the old firewall?

>$na: Just the mail server and the wireless. Everything else is on the new firewall.

>$man: Ok, have $me help you with the mail server.

>$na: We'll have a planned outage tonight to get it moved over, it should not be down more then an hour.

$man handing $na a laptop

>$man: Use this to test the wireless as well once its changed over.

>$na: I'll do that after the mail server move.

Trusting $na not to plan or document anything, I had a chat with him about what needed changing, how long, when and what I need to do. I then sent an email to $na and $man with those details, along with my own testing and any changes to other systems I maintain. With that we had a plan in place and steps to reference to ensure we were prepared.

I went home and VPN'd in (partially to test the VPN) while $na stayed at the office. He gave me a call and we got started.

>$na: So I'll be changing the settings on the firewall. Once done this should force the mail server to the new firewall and you can test.

services.

I waited patiently and was told after a few minutes that it was done and to test. I did my tests and everything was working as expected, but then I noticed some other problems...

>$me: My work PC lost internet (I was RDP'd into my workstation at the office)...

>$na: Let me check something on the firewall

>$me (investigating further): All of the servers have lost internet access as well

>$na: Oh yeah I removed a lot of them from special internet access, tell me which ones need it and we can get them going.

I rattle off a long list of servers and he gets them sorted, everything else seems fine. $na says he'll check some other stuff and finish up everything else and he should be fine without me. I hang up and logoff. Based on prior experiences though, I suspect issues with something in the morning.

I drive in to work, walk in and see the level 1 already on the phone. He puts it on hold and tells me that there are a lot of problems. I walk over to my computer, login and check my email for more details and find... $na is sick and won't be in or reachable... FML.

I go through all the issues and likely causes, and then find what had happened. $na had changed the route of last resort from the old firewall to the new firewall. Since the majority of our routing wasn't statically set in the routing table, this changed the routing for every network device from the old firewall to the new one. So his comment about nothing running on the old one was an outright lie. $man comes in so I tell him the news...

>$me: Most things are offline but I'm fixing them as we speak. I've narrowed down the cause, $na changed our core switch routing that was pointing to the old firewall to the new one, this changed all servers over.

>$man: So everything was still on the old firewall before?

>$me: Yes. When it changed over, about 1/3 of the configuration wasn't copied from the old firewall to the new one, so most things broke.

expletives*.

them.

Looking through the rules, policies, NAT and IPs setup on the new firewall, I found that $na had only managed to replicate about 2/3's of them, thus leading to issues with everything else. So I set about fixing everything, notifying third party services of external IP changes and getting everything to work internally. I also found the wireless had broken completely, there was no configuration on the new firewall. When looking at the old firewall, I'd found that despite $na's protesting about security (as a way to get out of implementing things), he'd allowed the guest SSID full access to our internal network. I cringed and facepalmed my way through it and set about fixing it with the correct configuration.

It took me most of the day to get mostly everything working. Some third party systems were delayed due to timezone and procedures on their side. Needless to say, most people weren't happy, but were please with my quick response in fixing everything.

TL:DR - Network admin made a little change overnight he said would only affect 2 services, but took out everything and called in sick the next morning, leaving me to cleanup the mess.

Turn around $user! - /u/Dark_Devin

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g4eh7/turn_around_user/

Background: I am $IT for a non-IT company that provides information to the masses in my town, as the only IT person I end up being asked to help with many non computer based problems.

Story:
$user comes into our office

>**$user**: **$IT** can you come help me?

>**$IT**: Sure, **$user**, what's going on?

>**$user**:Well, I've gone up and down the elevator 3 times now and the doors won't open on the 2nd floor

>**$IT**: That's weird, let's check it out

I follow her to the elevators, we get in while making idle chit-chat

Now some info here, our elevators have 2 sets of doors since the second floor is on one side (which you can see from the first floor because of building layout) and the entrance on the 1st floor is on the other.

>**$IT**: Ok, so show me exactly what's happening please.

$user presses the button for level 2, doors close in front of her, we stop at the second floor, still staring at those doors.

>**$user**: See **$IT**, it's not working!

>**$IT**: **$User**, turn around!

$user turns around to see the elevator doors behind her wide open onto the second floor.

>**$user**: oh...

This person was getting on the elevator and expecting the wrong doors to open up to a brick wall, never even thinking about orientation of the building.

I keep this story in mind with me now to remind me that ask even the most obvious questions to users, you never know how intelligent they may be.

Your webmail got me fired - /u/ FlexMoneyBiceps

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fzgx7/ your_webmail_got_me_fired/

$FMB = $FlexMoneyBiceps, this handsome hunk of flesh, not a robot, you can't prove it, and working L1 ISP support during this time

works

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So this is a story from when I used to work at $RelativelyMediumSizedISP. $RMSISP, like all ISPs stuck in the 90s, provided (and still provides, though I think they're trying to get away from that) email addresses for all of their customers, with webmail to come with it. I'm abbreviating the story a bit and cutting out the filler- it's been a while, and I can't exactly remember the exact words.

Phone rings.

-

$FMB: Hi, this is $ISP tech support, how can I help you?

$CC: You [fantastic people] got me [fantastically] fired! I can't even access my webmail, you [amazing people]! I just wanted you to move it from my home computer to my work computer!

$FMB: I'm sorry to hear that- but it's webmail, you can access it from any computer just by going to (webmail address) and putting in your username and password.

$CC: Yeah but it's on my [fantastic] work computer now! I want it on my home computer! You guys need to stop doing such a [swell] job and do your [goshdarn fantastic] job!

$FMB: Is it not showing up in your webmail? Do you have a client that you have, that's set to POP3?

wages!

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Obviously, this isn't how webmail works. She doesn't want to hear it, though. I am curious at this point how the 'fired' bit is going to come in- I know it will somewhere along the line.

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$FMB: Okay, I can definitely help you with accessing your webmail. Let's get a browser window open- whichever you prefer, IE, Firefox, Chrome... (I always listed these just in case they didn't know what a browser actually was.)

$CC: No! Your tech came out here, moved my webmail from my home computer to my work computer, and then my job [fantastically] fired me for it! You need to send someone back out here to fix your [swell] job, you [fantastically amazing people]!

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Checking her records, she hadn't had a tech out since installation. What?

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$FMB: Ma'am, we haven't sent anyone out to your location since you got your internet installed. Who did you have come out?

$CC: One of your techs! I told you! I'm going to quit my service you [goshdarn swell...bags]! I demand you reimburse me!

$FMB: Did you call in for tech support first? (She doesn't have any recent calls logged either.)

$CC: No, [smart donkey], I went to craigslist and just had one of your internet people come out!

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what.
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$FMB: ...Ma'am, let me get this straight. You went to Craigslist and hired someone to move your webmail, which is on our servers, from your home computer, to your work computer?

$CC: Yes! How is that so hard to understand? I hired one of your internet people, and now my job has fired me because they said something about 'unauthorized access' and 'tampering with company equipment'! What did your [amazing, fun-loving] tech do?!

Craigslist.

$CC: It's on the internet! You're the internet company! I want you to come back out here, get my webmail off my old work computer, and I want you to pay me for the job you made me lose! Now!

$FMB: ...I can help you with getting your webmail, ma'am, if you're willing to troubleshoot and work with me here, but we will not be reimbursing you for your job.

$CC: Then I don't want to talk to you, you [fun-loving amazing swell bag]! Get me your supervisor!

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So I escalated it up. While I had the lady on hold, and was explaining the situation to the L2 who had to deal with her, I legitimately had a hard time explaining it because I was laughing so hard. I loved these kinds of calls- we can't help you, we won't help you, you won't let us help you, and you're nuclear fire mad. It's the best. Then I got promoted a week later and my job ended up consisting almost entirely of these types of calls.

-

End of the story- she didn't let the L2 show her how to get into webmail, she threatened to sue about the reimbursement, and then she got stonewalled right to legal after making that threat. I don't think she called in ever again.

I reject your solution and substitute my own! - /u/PairOfParedPears

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Hi, everyone! Although I don't actually work in IT, I do play tech support for my elderly relatives and now, for the first (and likely last) time, my roommate. A little background on her: she is a super sweet person who is very knowledgeable in her particular field of study, but fairly clueless about pretty much everything else (including computers). This exchange just happened earlier today.

Scene: We're both sitting at the dining room table; I'm eating my breakfast of waffles with peanut butter, and she's trying to bake muffins using a recipe she found online. All seems to be going well, until:

Roommate: Aaargh, my computer is being so slow! I can't even load the website!

Me: Huh, that's weird. Are you getting any sort of error message or anything?
(I know I probably should have just left her to her own devices, but morbid curiosity got the better of me.)

Roommate: No...Well I did get a pop-up earlier that said "Your disc is almost full"

Me: Oh, that just means your hard drive is running out of space. You should be able to just delete some old files or transfer them to an external drive and your computer will be fine.

Roommate: No, I don't think that's it. I think I just have too many things open in [Browser]. I'm going to close some of these tabs and see if that helps.

Me: …

Roommate: Hmm, it's still slow. I bet I have to restart my computer for the changes to take effect. I'm going to do that now.

Me: …

Roommate: Aaaargh, why is the website still not loading right? It must be a problem with the internet.

Me : You know, when my grandma was having a similar issue, I found that emptying the trash helped a lot.
(Side note: My grandma had over HALF her hard drive taken up by files in the trash bin. Apparently she had no idea you had to empty it.)

Roommate: Well, I just emptied it like a few months ago, but I guess I can try that.

Me: ...

Roommate: Oh, wow, it's fixed now! Hopefully that doesn't happen again.

Me: Emptying the trash was just a temporary fix. You're going to run out of space sooner or later, so I highly recommend you buy an external hard drive and transfer some of your files onto it.

Roommate: No, I don't think it's an issue anymore. The error message went away.

Me: Uhh, okay then. (I quickly change the subject in order to keep myself from screaming.)

"It's really hard to see in here because it's so dark." - /u/th3d3s

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g4cq5/
its_really_hard_to_see_in_here_because_its_so_dark/

So this is a little different because the person having troubles understanding technology was a tech with multiple years of hands-on/onsite experience. Granted, 90% of the hands-on was with residential grade equipment, e.g. routers, PCs, printers, etc, but that is no excuse for what happens...

We get an alert that one of our clients is completely offline. We used a tool called Kaseya at the time and it would send us an email and/or text message if a production server was offline for 15 minutes. All the PCs and servers were showing offline so we were fairly confident it was an Internet outage. We called the ISP and they said that there were no outages in the area, but they could not see our cable modem online.

We decided to send an onsite tech. The tech was a noob when it came to servers, switchs, SANs, etc, but we were confident they could reboot a network device to get them back online. This particular client had a SAN, 3 Hosts, a few APC UPS's, multiple switches, a firewall, and cable modem; it's a fairly simple and small network.

The onsite tech calls one of our escalation engineers after being onsite for 15 minutes without being able to pin-point the root cause. The escalation engineer starts with the basics:

-Escalation Engineer: ’$† ve you rebooted the cable modem yet?"

-Onsite Tech: "No, I can't seem to find it in this server room."

-Escalation Engineer: ’$ö¶ •, well it is here!" (Describes in very specific detail where the modem is located)

-Onsite Tech: "Well, now that I'm onsite, I'm getting reports from people here that they can't get to anything on the servers either."

-Escalation Engineer: ’$ô, Â ö¶ •. Then it has to be something else other than the cable modem. Do you see the network rack? Can you see if the switches are powered on? Better yet, do you hear any battery backups beeping?"

-Onsite Tech: "Maybe, there's alot of beeping equipment in here."

-Escalation Engineer: ’$ö¶ •, perfect. Can you see if one of the batteries has a warning or error?"

-Onsite Tech: "Not really, it's really hard to see in here because it's so dark."

-Escalation Engineer: ’%F†R Æ–v‡B 7v—F6, —2 §W7B –ç6–FR F†R Fö÷'pay to the left."

-Onsite Tech: "Yeah, I found the light switch, but it's not working either."

-Escalation Engineer: ’$•2 THERE POWER TO THE ROOM??????"

-Onsite Tech: "I don't know, I don't think so..."

-Escalation Engineer: '$ôÔdr   E2B6Fb AFSD(AS*DFU H#IFGE*& SGF#@*&BF @#*&B@#*F &#GH@* &FG@ G#*&@ -- GET SOMEONE TO CHECK THE CIRCUIT BREAKERS!!!"

Network is back online 15 minutes later... The onsite tech was not fired for this adventure, but it's safe to say he didn't last very much longer.

An important lesson on password control systems. - /u/HumanMilkshake

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g4hx8/
an_important_lesson_on_password_control_systems/

[In a previous tale](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/69xy92/
youre_very_clever_but_its_l1_all_the_way_down) we learned an important lesson on recursion. Today,
we're going to learn about password control systems.

$Me: Played by Jeff Goldblum from Jurassic Park

$User: Played by Richard Attenborough from Jurassic Park

$SeniorTech: Played by Laura Dern in Jurassic Park

$TheBoss: Played by Sam Neill from Jurassic park

$ShittyMSP is where I work, and $ShittyUrgentCareClinic is the customer. Because I work nights and
they're not open nights, this was the first call I've gotten for them.

> $Me: Thank you for calling the $ShittyUrgentCareClinic help desk, this is Jeff, how can I help you?

> $User: Well, I just got back from vacation, and I think my password expired

Now, $ShittyUrgentCareClinic has a tool they want us to use to determine 1) if we can do the thing, 2) if not,
who do we tell to do the thing 3) how do to the thing and 4) how important is the thing. I would generally
call this tool a huge pain in my ass because it relies on a series of drop down menus and you have to know if
a particular application is listed under $applications, $citrix, $enterpriseApplications, or $Software. And
sometimes it's listed under $network because fuck you, that's why.

> $Me: Alright, let me just double check password reset policy... Right, yep, in order to reset your password
I will need to verify your identity. To do that, per policy, I'll need to call the center and speak with someone
there to confirm that you work at the center and are trying to reset your password

> $User: But no one else is here.

> $Me: Come again?

> $User: Well, it's 6am here, and we open at 8am. I come in before everyone else and turn on the computers
and log on past the encryption, then turn on the machines and run the calibration and self checks. No one
else will be here for half an hour, atleast.

> $Me: Oh... ok... Well, I can make the ticket and pend it for 30 minutes and call back, which I can use to
verify you. If that works for you?

> $User: Sure, that'll work.

So I make the ticket, pend it for 30 minutes, then call back.

> $AnsweringMachine: Thank you for calling $ShittyUrgentCareClinic of $smallTownSouthCarolina. We're closed right now, if this is an emergency, you should have called 911 you idiot. We'll be open at 8am.

Hang up.

> $Me: Hey, $theBoss, do we have direct call numbers for the $ShittyUrgentCareClinic centers?

> $theBoss: No, why?

> $Me: I need to call a center to verify a user and reset his password.

> $theBoss: Oh, no we don't. You're just going to have to pend the ticket until it opens.

> $Me: I already did. When we talked he said he needs his account unlocked so he can get the machines up and running.

> $theBoss: Well, I guess they're going to be a bit late then, aren't they?

A bit later I get another call

> $Me: Thank you for calling the $ShittyUrgentCareClinic help desk, this is Jeff, how can I help you?

> $theUser: Pretty sure we talked earlier about unlocking my account? There's some more staff here now, so you can verify my identity.

> $me: Yeah, sorry about that, I forgot we don't have a direct call number for the centers.

> $theUser: Oh, the voicemail thing? Right.

> $Me: Any chance you have a direct number for the center or could turn off long the answering machine long enough for me to call in?

> $theUser: No... only the center director can turn it off, and it's the only number for the center. What are our other options?

> $Me: Well, basically, I just have to pend this ticket out until the center opens

> $theUser: Well shit. Good thing I called the other assistant director, they should be in in a few minutes.

> $Me: OK, well, I'll keep an eye out for this ticket and call you as soon as you guys open.

And I do. I call in at 8:02 on the dot, with the server open, AD pulled up, his account already to go. By 8:05 I've verified his identity, got him on the phone, and his password has been changed. Problem: he cannot get logged on. I put him on hold.

machine.

> $TheBoss: Do you have the $stupidPasswordTool?

> $Me: The what?

> $TheBoss: The $stupidPasswordTool? You need it to reset passwords for $shittyUrgentCareClinic, even if you change it in AD

> $Me: OK... can you change the password for me?

> $TheBoss: Sorry, no. $shittyUrgentCareClinic wants to control how many people have the $stupidPasswordTool, so I don't. There's a list, hold on, I'll send it to you.

By the time I get the list (and see that they're a random combination of L1s and L2s and a good chunk of the names on it are not current employees) I realize oh right, Mondays! Everyone is on the phone and there are five or six calls waiting.

I ended up getting that guy's password reset by halfway ordering $SeniorTech to do it. It took two and a half hours and four calls, but I did it.

Caller didn't even go to university that we support... - /u/SirHobbes3

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g41f5/
caller_didnt_even_go_to_university_that_we_support/

Soo, I work for computer support at a mid-sized state university. We support the residence halls on campus as well as some of the staff members who work in them. We also offer support to students who reside on campus as well as offering some minor assistance related to university account issues with off-campus students (but often times we end up sending them to the people who actually maintain that stuff as we are very limited with what we can do with a student's account)

Anyway, this tale happened today while we were doing nothing (which is common during the summer for... obvious reasons). The phone starts ringing and so I get up and go answer it. I noticed that it was a 919 area code (which includes Chapel Hills, NC but more on that later) but whatever. So I pick up the phone and greet the caller and they say that they're having issues connecting their AppleTV to the internet. Ok, no problem, they should be using ethernet since the WiFi here is WPA-Enterprise. So I try to ask the guy how he's attempting to connect to the internet and things immediately get worse from here. He tells me that he has the HDMI cable plugged in and that his TV is on and then proceeds to start ranting about how he cannot finish setting up the ATV because he cannot get to the menu to find the MAC address because he cannot complete the setup. This leads me to ask him what part of the setup process he is getting stuck on which causes him to get even more frustrated and give me even more vague information that doesn't allow me to help him at all. So after I tell him to set it up manually instead of using his iPhone (which was where it was hanging because, of course, the ATVs don't support WPA-Enterprise) he just told me that he was going to put his "girlfriend" on and have her explain it to me better. Ironically, she did not explain anything better. I eventually got around to asking what building they were in (which I should have verified to begin with) so that we could simply come look at it ourselves and this is where it gets good. She tells me that they are in Chapel Hill and that they live in an apartment and this is where I stop and inform her that since she does not live on campus and that it is not a network that we support that I am unable to help her. She at least said thank you so I will give that to her but I was quite bamboolzed by that call.

I was later informed by one of the guys who has worked here for a few years that they've gotten quite a few calls like that because our tutorial page regarding the issue shows up at the top of Google for whatever reason and people simply call the number without thinking about that the page pertains to a UNIVERSITY and that we don't offer full fledged computer support. And my boss also told me that the page in particular gets like 3,000 hits a day (which is definitely more than all our other pages on our site combined). So yeah, an odd afternoon call.

Something's worng with my smartphone - /u/AbuDun91919

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g0ymg/
somethings_worng_with_my_smartphone/

Hi TFTS, LTL, FTP, yadda yadda.

I'm not working in tech support, but I still wanted to share this fun little story about my Grandmother, I hope it is appreciated!

Some years ago my Grandmother, 72 at this time, got her first smartphone, before that she had one of those senior phones.

Me, my father and some cousins worked togehter in explaining her how everything worked, and she pretty much got it after one hour or so. She could even answer to whatsApp messages, take pictures and look up the weather on the internet.

When the whole familiy came together for some birthday, she told me to "Fix her phone, the battery is running low pretty fast!"
I deactivated WiFi (didn't have one), Bluetooth and GPS and removed some unused programs (no clue how they got on the phone)

After about one week I got a call from her.

>"Hello AbuDun, you didn't fix my phone at all, the battery is low again!"

I thought some time what the problem could be, the phone was still pretty new at that time, until it dawned on me.

>"Grandma, how long doeas your battery actually last?"
>"Well I charged it right after you 'fixed' it last week, and it's down to 20% already!!!"

>"..."

Apparently her previous phone had to be charged only every three weeks...
I told her that was actually very long for a smartphone, thankfully she accepted it without further explanation.

sibling printer skills - /u/my_fav_slav

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g0h72/sibling_printer_skills/

Long time lurker, first time poster.

Some background info:
This story happened when i was around 17, and my sister was 15.
I'm partially responsible that everything network related at home works at this age, so when anything breaks or doesn't work correctly they come and find me wherever i may be hiding.
at the time i had myself installed in my room with my pc and tv to keep me entertained, while the family computer was at ground level, and was the only computer at home with a printer.

I arrived home one sunny day, when i noticed my sister at the family desktop, preparing to print a boatload of papers, after a few quick questions why she was gonna go print the entire book collection of any writer ever, she explained that she was printing some big project for school that she had to deliver the next day.
The printer however, was an old piece of junk, that refused to work anything it smelled any form of stress, so after a few minutes of going to town on the powercord it decided it was tired of this game of disconnecting and reconnecting, and actually do it's job, my sister happy to continue her bussiness, i went upstairs to my room to surf on youtube a bit.

not even 10 minutes later, i suddenly here the hall door SMASH open, sister stopping at the bottom of the stairs, while screaming her lungs out
> $me COME-QUICKLY-I-NEED-HELP-PLZPLZPLZPLZ

After shouting that for everybody in a kilometer radius to hear, she bolts back to wherever she came from.

Me thinking something caught fire or exploded, I bolt down the stairs prepared for a tornado to have formed in a room. When i arrived she was sitting at the family computer, feeding the printer papers one by one, crying out of pure panic, shouting at me
> THE PRINTER RAN OUT OF INK, PLEASE HELP ME, IT WON'T STOP PRINTING

She was sitting there in pure panic, feeding this printer papers one by one, becuz if you placed more than 1 paper in the tray it would just eat them all at once and just ruin 5 papers, while the black ink was just leaving spots every so often.

So what happened was, my sister is casually feeding this printer paper after paper, and when she noticed it was running out of ink, she timed feeding it a paper, bolting to the stairs to shout at me for help, then bolt back to feed it another paper in time so it wouldn't stop printing.

Priceless.

After 10 minutes i finally gathered enough air in my lungs to tell her to stop inserting papers, to which she,

still panicking, answered
> BUT THEN IT STOPS PRINTING

When she finally processed that piece of information she finally calmed down enough to start thinking rationally enough again to notice her mistake.

It has been a few years now, still comedy gold.

The Inheritance - The Beta Site Part 2 - /u/ ginger_housecat

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fzh3o/
the_inheritance_the_beta_site_part_2/

Following [Part One](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fsjw7/
the_inheritance_the_beta_site_part_1/) I checked out of the hotel after a decent breakfast because expenses.
Three espressos and a large latte to go, and I headed to the Beta Site. Waiting for me was the Finance
Manager (FinMan).

>FinMan: Report!

FinMan took a bit of getting used to. He was ex military - proudly telling us he was in Second Battalion
Parachute Regiment (2Para for all those UK Military people). He was also the largest nerd around, and sort
of looked like Sir Patrick Stewart, so pretended to be Captain Picard from that Star Trek show because all of
IT are geeks.

>Me: Network's slow.

He smiled, which meant that I'd seen through that tough exterior of his, and found the soft centre inside.

>Me: Whoever set up the network, decided that they wanted to save money. Instead of running a fibre
between both ends of the building, they simply daisy-chained switches to work as repeaters, boosting the
length. Unfortunately, as more and more devices are active on the warehouse end, that 100Mb link is being
heavily taxed.

>FinMan: Is that all?

>Me: Not exactly. To overcome that, they installed a domain controller in the warehouse cabinet. It makes it
a bit quicker, but replication down the dodgy link is killing it even more. To further compound matters, the
route.

>FinMan: What's your recommendation?

>Me: Put a fibre in between the two switches. You'll need 2 modules to connect each switch but the
performance will pick up. I've costed it for you.

>FinMan: Ok. Send it to me and I'll consider it. I believe that you'll be wanting to get back now.

So I drove back to Central.

2 Weeks Later...

Fibre is in and tested. I've programmed the two modules and ensured that I have spares, and even saved a
config for both switches. I've been told that I can't do this during office hours, so again I book out the BMW
(just to spite the Angry Lady) and head there after work.

Warehouse Switch. Module installed, fibre connected, config loaded and saved.

Sales switch. Module installed, fibre connected, config loaded and saved.

Back to warehouse, test, and fantastic speeds obtained.

Back to Sales, test and ... Nothing.

Reboot the switch and reload the config. Still nothing. I cannot ping the gateway, I cannot get any network resource, nor can I access the internet. I can however, ping the warehouse switch and the warehouse server and the machines down there. A barely audible WTF escapes my lips.

Switch config is loaded on my laptop, and there's absolutely nothing wrong with it at all. Comparing it with the previous version, there are no gateway or routing changes that would cause this error. I walk to the vending machine for a coffee flavoured drink that barely has any caffeine in it. As I do, my phone rings.

>FinMan: I can't get remote access, are you still tinkering?

>Me: No. We have a fault here. Something bad's happened.

>FinMan: Define Bad for me in this context?

>Me: I have no network drive connectivity or internet other than the Warehouse Server.

FinMan utters an expletive.

>Me: I already said that. I'm working on it though.

After I disconnect the call and drink the foul beverage that is supposed to be coffee, the phone rings again. It's my colleague back at Central

>Colleague: What did you do?

>Me: Why?

>Colleague: We've lost the entire network at Central, North and West.

Part 3 coming soon...

I have a computer forensics degree! - /u/ fruit-support

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fykdb/
i_have_a_computer_forensics_degree/

Long time lurker, first time poster

system.

This call started out like about 80% of my calls do. They forgot (or ass the customers say "<company> forgot my password!") their password.

Alot of the conversation has been censored to protect the identity of me, the customer and the company. Profanity was also removed per mods request.

$cx = Customer
$me = Me - The poor tech support adviser

$me: Thank you for contacting <company> my name is $me! Can I start off with getting a good callback number for you? Just in case we get disconnected.

$cx: Oh, we best not get disconnected. I've been on hold for over ten minutes!

$me: I will do my best, $cx. But I do need that number to continue.

$cx: ###-###-####

$me: Thank you and is blah@blahblah.com a good email for you still?

$cx: How in the world do you have my email already?

$me: Well it looks like you have called in # times in the last few months about various issues.

$cx: And you keep this information?

$me: Yes. We keep the information to better assist you.

$cx: Okay. Well after this call we will need to work on deleting all of that information. Thank you.

$me: Okay. What seems to be the problem today, $cx?

$cx: Well I have quite a few issues today. I have been on hold for an ungodly amount of time and I dont understand how a company as big as <company> can have such long hold times!

$me: Well a company as big as <company> is bound to have a lot of customers. If you would like, I can give you a link you can use to submit feedback. We would really appreciate it.

$cx: No. I just need back into my account.

$me: I can definitely help you out with that! What seems to be the issue today?

happen?

$me: Is the sign in page telling you that the password is incorrect?

$cx: Were you not listening to me?

$me: I was. I did not hear you give this information. I am very sorry if I missed it.

password.

like?

$cx: I just reset it dude

$me: And we are going to need to reset it again.

password.

$me: No. No one at <company> has access to passwords.

thing.

    I'd just like to pause right here. The company I work for makes possibly one of the easiest phones to use. It is in no way difficult to use these phones.

$me: I am sorry to hear that. I would be happy to assist you with the reset process though.

$cx: I shouldn't need help with a password reset!

$me: Okay. Would you like me to stick around in case you have any questions?

$cx: No! Guide me! I am just saying this shouldn't be needed!

$me: Okay. I need to take a quick look at the account to ensure I take you to the right place. Can i please have your <accountID>?

$cx: Well if I could remember that darn
 thing I would!

$me: How are you signing in, then?

$cx: I am just putting random emails in.

$me: Sir, do you have access to a computer?

$cx: Yessssss........... why?

browser?

$cx: A web browser? You mean pull up the internet?

$me: *Thinking to myself "You just said you had a computer forensics degree..."* .... Yes, $cx.

$cx: Okay. Where do I go?

$me: okay go to <accountPage>.<company>.com

$cx: *talking out loud to himself* <accountPage>@<company>.com

$me: Okay I heard you say <accountPage>@<company>.com. Its actually <accountPage>.<company>.com

$cx: Right. It says its not loading

   At This point I decided I didn't want to deal with this. So I decided to try to get the customer set up with screen share.

$me: Okay, $cx. I have a tool here that will allow me to see your screen. This way i can see exactly what is going on, on the screen and better assist you. Would that be okay?

$cx: WHAT ARE YOU? THE DARN NSA NOW? I DONT NEED YOU TO VPN INTO MY COMPUTER TO TELL ME HOW TO GO TO <accountPage>@<company>.com! I KNOW EXACTLY HOW THIS WORKS. YOU GIVE ME A LINK TO DOWNLOAD A VPN THAT YOU THEN USE TO TAKE CONTROL OF MY KEYBOARD AND MOUSE. THEN YOU DEMAND MONEY FROM ME SO I CAN HAVE ACCESS TO MY COMPUTER AGAIN! NO. NOT TODAY, KID.

$me: Sir. Thats the problem. It's not <accountPage>@<company>.com. Its <accountPage> DOT, PERIOD, POINT <company>.com And I can assure you, We are only able to view your screen and point to where we need you to click.

$cx: I KNOW HOW TO TYPE A LINK. AND YOURE WRONG. ITS <accountPage>@<company>.com AND YOUR DARN SERVER IS DOWN BECAUSE IT SAYS "Hmmmm, we cannot find that website" AND DONT YOU DARE TELL ME HOW A VPN WORKS. THE VPN WILL ALLOW YOU TO TAKE CONTROL OF MY KEYBOARD AND MOUSE! I HAVE A DEGREE IN COMPUTER FORENSICS! I GAREN-GOD-DARN-TEE I KNOW A BIT MORE ABOUT COMPUTERS THAN YOU. IM NO IDIOT

   Right. It sure sound like it. You contacted me for help with your computer...

$me: Okay sir. Let me know when you are ready for directions.

   At this time I hear $cx typing away and every once in a while I hear "Darn it" In a very strained sounding voice. After about 2 minutes of this...

$cx: YOUR DARN SERVER IS DOWN! <accountPage>@<company>.com IS NOT RESPONDING!

$me: That is probably because <accountPage>@<company>.com is not a proper URL. But <accountPage>.<company>.com is a proper URL

$cx: YOU JUST THINK I AM ANOTHER ONE OF THE IDIOTS YOU TALK TO EVERY DAY DONT YOU? WHATEVER. JUST TO *tickle your fancy* I WILL DO <accountPage>.<company>.com

   First of all... who even says "Tickle your fancy"?
   at this point I hear ***VERY*** slow typing.
   Then I hear the line go quiet. $cx muted himself for about 5 seconds. I assume he face palmed and yelled some profanities at himself

$cx: Okay. What do you want me to do now?

$me: Oh, Did that work for you?

$cx: yes. What now, $me?

$me: Huh, I guess the server really isnt down. Weird. Anyway! go ahead and click on Forgot.........

TL;DR: Man claims he has a computer forensics degree multiple times. Goes on to tell me a VPN would grant me access to his keyboard and mouse and take over his computer. And then proceeds to try to enter an email as a URL and tell me I am wrong when I tell him that it isnt a URL. He finally tries a proper URL and calms his shit.

Not sure if user is idiot or visionary. - /u/ rykker

Cast

$me: rykker

$savant: Dude who got accepted into the program through a government assistance program.

So this happened many many years ago back when people were starting to float and fly above their cubicles to the tune of Madonna's "Ray of Light", but the details are pretty hazy... this was during a computer lab at school and I was asked by the instructor to help out fellow students in the lab. I don't remember what the lab assignment was, I just remember I was busy helping out my fellow classmates when $savant approaches me.

$savant: How do I copy something off the document and paste it into another?

$me: Just select the text you want, Press CTRL+C to copy, and then CTRL+V to paste.

$savant: Ok.

Shuffles away. Shuffles back.

$savant: It doesn't work.

$me: Did you highlight all the text you wanted to copy and press CTRL+C?

$savant: Yes.

keyboard...

Shuffles away. Shuffles back.

$savant: Still not working.

$me: Save your work. Close the program, relaunch it and try again.

$savant: Ok.

Shuffles away. Shuffles back.

$savant: Still doesn't work.

$me: OK. Fine, let's go see what's wrong. Show me exactly what you're doing.

We head back to $savant's computer and he starts by showing the document he has open, highlights the text, presses CTRL+C, starts walking away (*hey... where are you going?*) and heads to ANOTHER COMPUTER across the room and presses CTRL+V. Looks back at me.

$savant: See? It's not working.

$me: (*Half-stunned between wondering how in the world he thought that that would work... did he think his fingers were a storage medium? That the other computer would know that it was him? That that's an incredibly awesome idea?*) Um, that's not how that works...

Not sure what happened to the guy after we graduated... but I like to think he's the guy behind pastebin.

There are a few bugs in the system - /u/ gamageeknerd

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fyh9e/
there_are_a_few_bugs_in_the_system/

There I am working in my station on a custom pc when I get a call to come up to the front.

The cashier asks me if I can take a look at what's wrong with this guys computer and give a quote for any repairs it needs. Guy says that it's overheating so I take it back and open the case and it's what I've seen hundreds of times before. It's a case full of dust and parts, this isn't a huge deal and something that wouldn't take long. I have it at the front desk when I start to feel something tickling my arm.... my hand was covered in ants. It scared me so much I nearly dropped the pc and when I set it down I could see a small line of them coming from the tower.

I basically told the guy to get his computer out of the store before we got infested with ants. He obviously didn't appreciate this class moment and he set it down and started to argue with me. For 2 minutes he talked all while there were still ants in his computer. I myself don't like ants so the teenage girl cashier had to deal with the angry customer while the grown man waited in the bathroom washing his hands.

This was easily the most traumatic experience I've had while working here in a long time.

White ink - /u/iwriteofdragons

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fwbd3/white_ink/

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brother.

Players: Me: the fabulous me and Bro: Youngest brother, still learning computers but likes to game

over.

>Bro: "Hey, sis, I'm having trouble with something."

I wander into our computer room and lean against the back of the computer chair.

>Me: "Okay, what's the problem?"

Word."

He then proceeds to pull up the Word doc and sure enough, it looks blank.

>Me: "Weird. Okay, pull up the website." He does, and I instantly see the problem and start laughing. "Okay, bro, here's the problem. There is no such thing as white ink."

He gives me this blank look.

>Me: "What color is the font on the website?"

>Bro: "White."

>Me: "What color is the page in Word?"

>Bro: (it takes him a second, he's only 12) "Oh! So the cheats are all there? It did copy?"

>Me: "Probably. Go back to Word, hit crtl+a and then change the font to black."

This of course worked like magic and all of the words appeared in a flash.

>Bro: "Sweet."

>Me: "You're welcome."

white.

Edit: Some people are telling me that on the big professional printers, there is white ink available. This is complete news to me. But I'm talking about a small desktop printer and in that case - there is no such thing as white ink.

Please contact your IT Administrator - /u/ CalebDK

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fv2t8/ please_contact_your_it_administrator/

Hey everyone, this is my first post, been a lurker/commentator? for awhile though. Just got off this call and I really want to share it.

When a user calls in, our ticket system pulls in their information so we can see their full name, line of business, email, username, ect. We can also see if they are an associate or if they are a contractor, agent, ect.

$Me - Guy that works as level 1 tech support at big insurance company help desk.

$SoftDevGal - Software developer gal that can't put 2 and 2 together.

$SoftRequestApp - Web store we use for users to request software access and software

$DBApp - App used by software devs to access databases

>**$Me:** Thank you for calling the IT Helpdesk, this is $Me, who am I speaking with today?

>**$SoftDevGal:** Uh hi, this is $SoftDevGal, I am having a problem with my VPN

>**$Me:** Ok, whats the error its giving you?

>**$SoftDevGal:** Please contact your IT administrator...

Really...

>**$Me:** Ok, whats the rest of the error say?

>**$SoftDevGal:** Well the full error says 'Error: Please contact your IT administrator. You do not have permission to login to VPN'.

>**$Me:** Okay, have you ever used VPN before?

>**$SoftDevGal:** No.

Check users permissions in AD - No permissions to use VPN

>**$Me:** Ok, it looks like you don't have permission to use the VPN client, you'll need submit a request through $SoftRequestApp to get access, but since you're a contractor you wont have permission to do that so you'll need to have your manager do that for you and it can take 1-3 business days to be completed.

>**$SoftDevGal:** Ok, I can do that.

Here is where I start closing out the ticket and do my closing stuff lines when...

>**Me:** Is there anything else I can help you with today?

>**SoftDevGal:** Uh yes! I am having problems with $DBApp

Ugh... Really lady?

>**Me:** Ok, what error are you getting with $DBApp?

>**SoftDevGal:** Well I am trying to login and it says the domain cant be found.

Face = Desk

>**Me:** Well thats because it cant find the domain. You're not connected the VPN which you need to be on the network.

>**SoftDevGal:** Oh..

Duh!

>**Me:** Is there anything else I can help you with?

>**SoftDevGal:** Uh one moment, I am going to check with my coworker on his access.

Wtf lady? No, you're done. Cut off.

>**SoftDevGal:** My coworker says since I have the VPN client I should be fine.

>**Me:** Yes you have the client but you don't permissions to use the application. You need to speak with your manager to request access so that you can sign into it and connect to the network. Is there anything else technical I can help you with?

>**SoftDevGal:** Umm..

>**Me:** Ok then I am going to send you an email with your ticket numbers and transfer you to our after call survey and you have a great day *~click~*

UGHH

EDIT: Formatting

"No ma'am, VPN's are not magic..." - /u/ RobZilla10001

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fthnd/ no_maam_vpns_are_not_magic/

Backstory on me: I work Deskside Support, contracted by a company that is big in Europe (or so I hear) but has a pretty small footprint in the U.S. My team consists of only 6 people nationwide (as far as DSS goes) and I am one of only 2 that are actually on site (the third uses a citrix receiver to remote into the network). My office is located in a call center. We are contracted to a company that provides a specific, non-tech related service.

Rule 8: Nothing is, has never been, or will ever be "user proof."

Ticket arrives, "User Cannot Connect to VPN at home". Damn helpdesk. I've been going through my queue and renaming tickets every morning so they actually make sense. I don't care where the VPN isn't working, as long as they're not stupid enough to say "it's not working in the office, hmmmm, better send it up". Rename to "VPN - Can't Connect". Search the ticket for helpful information, "user states they installed certificates". Rule 0: Users lie. Call the user, she's about as helpful as the ticket. Remote in, check her certificates, she has 1 of 2 root certificates and no personal certificate. Oy. Making a mental note to fire off a nastygram to the helpdesk supervisor, I install all pertinent certificates. Ask the user if the she remembers the message, queue poorly paraphrased, vague error message (thank you Cisco AnyConnect, for providing 0 troubleshooting help in your error messages!). Advise user to try the laptop tonight and CB tomorrow, disconnect, notate ticket.

The following day I hear nothing from the user. Call her back the next day (+2 days from the original call, for those keeping track), and the user sends me to voicemail. Leave our canned voicemail message, go about my business. Several hours later, I receive an incoming call. Lo and behold! She hath responded!

>$RZ - Me, obvs.

>$Ditz - User

>
>$RZ - $Company Deskside Support, this is $RZ speaking, how may I help you?

>$Ditz - It didn't work.

>$RZ - I'm sorry, to whom am I speaking? And do you have a ticket number?

>$Ditz - *gives name, rattles off ticket number* It still doesn't work. I still can't work from home.

>$RZ - Give me one moment to bring up your ticket. *load ticket, mentally reevaluate work done from notes* Hmm. So what error message did it give you?

>$Ditz - *same poorly paraphrased, vague error message*

>$RZ - Interesting. *remotes to the user* Can you show me the exact steps you use

when connecting to VPN and attempting to company resources.

>$Ditz - *queue user jumping straight into the program*

>$RZ - $Ditz, you're not launching the VPN?

>$Ditz - What do you mean?

>$RZ - Don't you launch Cisco AnyConnect prior to using these programs?

>$Ditz - ....no?

>$RZ - Ok, well there's the beginning of your issues. Cisco AnyConnect is the VPN program. If you don't launch it and connect first, then you're not connected to the corporate network, and won't be able to connect to corporate resources.

>$Ditz - ....oh.

>$RZ - So give that a shot and give me a call back tomorrow. If it doesn't work, take a screenshot so we can see the exact error message.

Notate ticket.

answers.*

>$RZ - This is $RZ with $Company Deskside Support, can I speak with $Ditz

>$Ditz - Yeah, it's still not working.

>$RZ - Were you able to to get a screenshot of the error?

>$Ditz - No. I forgot.

correctly?

>$Ditz - Sure.

At this point, I'm unable to connect. The user says the wifi isn't connecting (alarm bell 1) and asks if I need her to plug into the LAN. I advise her to do so. She takes some time to do this, and her computer locks while she's goofing off

>$Ditz - It locked. Let me log in. *attempts to login* It says something about trust/relationship and won't let me login.

Alarm Bell 2, the sysadmins have a list of computers that don't have the SMB patch yet and have begun kicking them off the network. This must be the issue

>$RZ - Unplug the LAN cable, login and then replace the LAN cable. I believe you may not be at patch level. Let me know once you're logged in and I'll remote in and check. If that's the case, we can get you patched and back on the domain shortly.

>$Ditz - Ok. *logs in, allows me to connect*

Connected, open elevated command prompt, run command:

–F—6Ò ööæÆ–æR övWB× 6¶ vW2 Â `indstr KB4012212

nothing found. Guess who needs patched?

>$RZ - Alright, so we'll get this patch installed, put you back on the domain, force McAfee to update, and then you should be AOK.

go through the motions, push out the patch, login as local admin, remove from and readd to domain, reboot, push the script that tells mcafee to update, reboot again, user is now able to login fine when connected to LAN and wireless is working again.

>$RZ - Ok so now that all of that is taken care of, take the machine home tonight and try to connect to the VPN. Give me a call back tomorrow and let me know how it goes.

>$Ditz - Sure.

call the user back the next day, get through, ask her if she was able to connect, still no, ask her if she got a screenshot, still no. Ask user if she can callback when she's home, she agrees. Queue a week-long game of phone tag where she didn't understand that I wasn't allowed to incur OT to take care of her issue. Finally, she gets permission from her manager to come in late one day so we can work this out.

>*queue receiving call, bringing up ticket, etc.*

>$Ditz - I'm getting the same error.

>$RZ - Can you read the error off to me exactly?

>$Ditz - *still paraphrased, vague message indicating no network connection.*

>$RZ - *queue bells, chimes, alarms, flashing lights, rockets firing, etc.* $Ditz, are you connected to the internet? To your wifi I mean?

>$Ditz - ...No, i'm trying to connect to the VPN.

>$RZ - *facepalm* You still have to be connected to the internet...

>$Ditz - ...What? Nobody told me I have to be connected to the internet before the VPN. So do I disconnect the internet once the VPN connects?

>$RZ - ...

proceed to explain to user how a VPN works, and that an internet connection is still required

>$RZ - So if you wouldn't mind, could you please connect to your wifi?

>$Ditz - Sure. *connects to wifi, walk her through connecting to VPN, logs in successfully, brings up corporate customer database, loads fine* Thanks. *CLICK*.

Tl;dr: User lacks understanding of how a VPN works, complains that it doesn't. I correct her errant behavior that is preventing a VPN connection, user hangs up as soon as she gets satisfaction.

First solo on-call - /u/rslashusertaken

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fwpgj/first_solo_oncall/

Obligatory "long time lurker first time poster" preface.

Everybody in the tech support industry has had that call that was much more simple than they expected, and this tale is from one of those times. Several years ago as a highschool graduate, I landed a job at a small MSP. Said MSP had a small client (8 or so employees, maybe 4 office users) with a handful of computers for accounting, scheduling, and email. Simple stuff. However they did have on application that utilized a server, so they had a small server rack. On my first week on the job we received the call, the internet is down. After some preliminary monitoring tool tests from our office it was decided to throw the new guy in the deep end and send me on site solo. I got on site and performed all the standard checks. IPs on the correct subnet? Check. Computers rebooted? sure, why not. Ping the everything? nope. Nothing was online. I couldn't connect to the server, the NAS, switches, router, everything was down. Now their server was in the open lunch room in the shop where they keep their heavy machinery connected to the main "office" (closer to a trailer) via fibre link, and I was informed to look for chewed fibre as they had a rat problem. However, the fibre itself was intact. When I got the server rack, I didn't notice anything, and that was the issue. No fans, no lights, nothing. The whole thing was deader than a really dead thing. Even the UPS was dead (and no, I have no clue who set up the alerts on that thing). Now, I couldn't get into the server rack because it was [enclosed](http://imgur.com/a/JrxK3) and locked up and apparently nobody had bothered to hang on to the key. So after disassembling the side of the rack to get in, I found that all the wires were connected correctly. Everything was plugged into the UPS, no problems there.

Now, remember the part where the server rack was in a lunchroom? It was also their break room where they had a reversible foosball/pool table. Well, somebody though that it would be a good idea to clean up the area, take apart that table, and slide it behind the nearest heavy object to keep it from falling. The nearest heavy object, of course, was that server rack. The table mangled the [power cord](http://imgur.com/a/uVgoy) and killed the server rack. And that, fellow TFTSers, is the story of my first solo on-site call.

TLDR: Internet down caused by server rack power cable being rekt.

EDIT: The title should have been **First Solo On-Site**

I hate this job. - /u/muumrar

I will try to keep this short, while the experience itself certainly was not. On mobile blah blah.

Worked for $app designed for small businesses. Did sales and phone support, stretched very thin. Crap managers. Always thinking:

I hate this job.

Our lucky caller, who we will call $Bambi, connects and says she's having common issue with connecting to $partner software. It's genuinely always something to do with user error, inputting login details, on the api permission page.

It was terribly designed tbf.

It turns out that $Bambi, who has a lovely soft accent, was a fair bit older and computer illiterate. It's almost lunch. All my friends are leaving soon to beat the queue.

I hate this job.

She is trying to input the login for $partner to allow our $app access. Obviously they always put password for $app. They also need an auth key, which is hidden in the api settings of $partner.

Guiding scorpions through a snake pit may have been less painful than the journey to get $Bambi that auth key. Getting her, first off, to not use Internet Explorer was a whole story arc in itself.

As $Bambi was talking though I softened: it turned out it had all just been dumped on her to learn alone. And she wasn't rude, just exasperated. Reminded me of my aunty I guess.

We put the key in. Home straight. Input your $partner login details and we're there.

Error: incorrect login details or key.

$Me: I hate to ask this. Are you sure you have the correct login details?

All my friends, now eating their lunch, burst out laughing.

I hate this job.

$Bambi, who has been pretty passive, is certain they're the correct details.

I tell her I will call her back after speaking to the dev. Shouldn't of bothered. I am reminded by said dev, very very patronisingly, that it's never anything other than user error.

When I call back, before I can say anything:

$Bambi: Oooh don't worry I figured it out.

$Me: ...did you?..
$Bambi: yeh it was the wrong password.
$Me: ...
$Bambi: but thank you for all your help, you gave me some good tips and calmed me down.
$Me: ...you're welcome. Glad to hear that we could get it working for you today. I am sure I will speak with again soon $Bambi.

I hate this job.