Reddit offline cache

Getting wet on the job. – /u/Tw0lfIRL

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lte14/getting_wet_o

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Hey folks

Thanks to a story on theregister.com (On-call story) this morning, I got thinking about a call out I did almost 6 years ago which was messy as hell, could have gone badly wrong, and did start me deciding to switch jobs (Mostly due to the now Husband pointing out the stupid risks that were taken).

Its October 2011, and I'm heading back home after a long day out on site with a client. The radio news in the service van has loads of weather warnings about rain and spot flooding due to a freak weather system in my city – and as I get closer, yep, it is bad. Visibility is maybe 50 metres, so I'm crawling along and eventually pull off at a fuel station to figure out wtf to do, and call a mate asking if I could crash on his couch for the night (It was looking safer than driving around the city to get home)

That's when I get two phone calls – one after the other. First one is the IT manager for a hotel group (our biggest client at the time) letting me know one of their main hotels, located about 150 metres from the river, is beginning to flood (In a fit of building wisdom, the staff offices and all the IT stuff were located 2 levels down in the basement). We have a chat, he's unable to get there (I found out afterwards his wife flatly told him he wasn't to risk it). I let him know where I am, and that as it is, I'm planning on crashing on a mates couch tonight as I don't think I'll make it home. Discussion over, he understands, we hang up, and I go finish the hot drink I'm after buying.

Second phone call is about 5 minutes later – and it's my Boss. No asking if I'm OK or other pleasantries – he directs me to go to the flooding hotel, and pull the servers out. The tone is the "I'm the Boss and giving the orders here" tone. I do tell him no – I'm not convinced I'll even make it there, it's hammering down rain, and the police are advising people to get home and shelter up – get off the roads and stop driving in other words.

His response is simple – go there, or don't bother showing up for work tomorrow. Not his problem, it's mine, to save the hotel. The call was bad tempered to start, and ends the same way. To reinforce it, he sends me a text message (which also contains a few swear words).

I start driving – I'll skip this bit, let's say that I had to take several diverts, back out of water twice, saw several crashes and flooded cars and houses, and what should have been 30 minutes took almost 90 minutes. With two other phone calls from the Boss on the way of a similar sort to the first. Needless to say, I'm not in a great mood when I get there.

Park up outside the Hotel and head in – after talking my way past a security guard, and I find the Hotel General Manager having the worst night of his professional career. There is no power in the hotel, the basement is flooding, the fire brigade want the place evacuated (He was holding his

ground on that request, as moving the guests would be near impossible – it was still blasting down rain). But he's the dedicated professional – and really glad to see me. A hot drink is brought, and the Maintenance manager summoned to update me.

It's not good.

The main problem is the dual–redundant, failure proof pumps installed in the basement to counter this, have failed. And no hope of starting them. The basement level is flooding – slowly, but getting higher. There's no power, so no lights down there except for the emergency lights (Local law, thankfully, required 6 hour emergency batteries in the lights). He evacuated all staff from the offices on the same level as the Server/IT room – so he has no idea what the exact water level is. The level underneath that (three levels down) is already totally underwater.

He gives me two guys to help (thankfully, both look like they pump serious iron) and tells me I'm nuts, but good luck. I grab a few screwdrivers and my head torch from the van, drop my phone (I've ignored another phone call from the Boss) on the driver's seat, and we head on down.

Bottom of the stairs, and the water is about 4 inches high – just enough to flood the work boots of course. It's filthy water as well, adding to the fun. We open the server room door, and I start at the bottom – unbolt the POS server, it goes up the stairs. Return for the next item..

It's then I realise the phone system emergency batteries are behind us in another rack – a nice, compact block of 8 or so car–like batteries. In a cage I can't open to disconnect them. With exposed terminals. And the water is creeping higher. When we entered the room, it was just over my work boots, now it's half way up my shin.

I warn the others, stay away from that cage, and we work flat out – I unplug the UPS and pull the battery isolation connector on the back – too heavy, don't want to waste time on it. Main AD server, remote access server get unbolted and moved. Switches – water is now just above my knees.

Myself and the two guys keep at it – anything we can unscrew and move from the server room we unscrew and move – CCTV, POS interfaces, all the things that make up the backbone of a modern 4–star hotel and its systems. All unbolted, carefully kept above the water, hauled out of the room by torchlight, up the stairs to a holding room on the first floor three levels up (I suspected the ground floor might be wet before the night was out).

In the end – two hours later, with the exception of the phone system cage (which was locked) the server room looks like a vandal went into it with a crowbar, everything ripped out. Cables float in the water like straw. Said water level is now up to my chest and about to hit the terminals of the phone systems battery pack, so that's it. Extra Omnes – everyone out.

We meet two fire brigade guys coming down the stairs as we head up – they were going to order us out. As we get out of the water on the staircase, there comes a distinct frying sound from the server room, and a smell, as the battery pack short out from the filthy river water reaching the terminals.

On the surface, it's now well into the small hours of the morning. A fire brigade officer tries to chew me out for being an idiot, but I'm tired, soaked, cold from the water and sweating from the exertion at the same time. Water is pooling around me where I stand. He gives up when he sees I'm beyond caring, and leaves me alone at the quiet word of the Hotel General Manager.

A fire brigade medic asks a few questions, gives us a once over, says no damage he can see, but we need to be decontaminated due to the water. Simple way to do it – strip off, and a low pressure freezing cold hose plays over us. The fire brigade give us 'emergency clothes' – basically

something like a tracksuit pants and hoodie, thin but warm. The existing clothes are dumped into plastic bags, and never seen again.

Hot soup is poured into bowls for us, and I'm flatly told I'm not going anywhere till I warm up and eat. I eat.

Feeling a bit better, I head back to the van. The same fire brigade officer asking me questions earlier comes over again – asks why did I do it. I show him my phone. He notes a few company details from the side of the service van and tells me safe home – and the best route to head for. The flooding is already dropping, so the drive home was routine apart from me being distinctly able to smell myself.

Get home – the husband is NOT impressed. quick explanation, Super hot long shower, and I crash into bed. Before I wake up after midday, my phone will rack up many missed calls from the Boss.

The aftermath is swift.

The Boss gets two phone calls he probably regretted – one from the husband (I should mention, he worked as a professional Health & Safety type at the time), who personally, and then professionally, rips into him. I found this out afterwards, as I was still asleep when the call was made. The guys in the office tell me he was the colour of a sheet of paper by the time that call was finished.

The second phone call is from the Fire Brigade – following up to see if I was certified for working is water, flood hazards, confined spaces etc. The boss has to answer no – resulting in another fun phone call for him. And a full health and safety audit for the company shortly thereafter(it failed, spectacularly)

For those who are wondering how the pumps failed – they were never installed right, and never had been tested under flood conditions. Also, the control panel was not waterproofed, and was among the first things to be submerged in flood water.

And finally, after about a year of steadily worsening relations with the Boss (and yeah, I suspect this was one of if not the main reason) I left. Discovered afterwards they lost a bunch of clients as a result.

And last time I was in that Hotel meeting mates, I was still given a free drink. Same General Manager.

"Please look into this Issue and do the needful." – /u/GreekNord

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ls6v5/please_look_in

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I work night shift in a NOC. I monitor jobs, servers, mainframe machines, etc.
We work with a lot of consultants from India, which is how this story goes. That being said, a lot of the guys from India that I normally work with are great.. but then there are some like this guy.
Fairly often, there are a couple quality testing guys that will request that I run some testing jobs.

It's a batch of about 30 jobs.
They don't have access to order jobs, so that's why I get to do it.
Super easy, and these run perfectly, and very fast about 99% of the time.

Well today, nothing but issues, and he immediately starts an IM with me:

Him: Please re-run the request.
Me: *I rerun the jobs* OK. done.
Him: But the date shows 7/7. It should be 8/6.
Me: It shows 8/6 on my end. *I send him screenshots that clearly show 8/6*
Him: Please look into this issue and do the needful. I have to complete this testing today and I only have one day.
Me: I reran them again, and all completed except for "insertjobnamehere." This one failed. *my documentation for this job literally just says to send the ticket to the quality team... which is this guys team*
Him: oh. well that job is important for my scenario.
Me: Well, the only thing I can do it try to rerun it further. but it will keep failing until the issue is resolved, and I'm not able to see what the issue is from my side.
Him: Well what can I do in this situation? I am ready to help if it's from my side.
Me: My documentation just says to send the tickets to the Quality team. I'm not able to see why the job is failing, and I'm the only one here for another 4-5 hours. All I can do is send the ticket, and I've already done that.
Him: Please follow up on this and let me know.
Me: I also don't have any on-call information for this department, so anybody that can resolve the ticket won't be in until after I'm gone for the day.
15 minutes of silence
Him: OK. please try and rerun it after a while and let me know if it's working.

Sometimes I feel like people don't read, or listen.

Temporarily interrupt the main power flow to the front user interface. - /u/Chipnstein

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lsguq/temporarily_ir

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First time poster, long time lurker. First just a hi to everyone and i feel your pain, all of you.

Now to the fun part, inspired by recent intern posts, during my university years I got an internal job as an IT student helper. This is a tops 20h/week contract as legally full time students aren't allowed to work full time. Job included anything from checking and replenishing printer toner and paper to setting up machines and helping students and staff with whatever it is that doesn't work.

Of all my student helper colleagues, i was the only one to have any tech wisdom and be in a computer science course too so I would get jobs and calls done really quick. That's a good thing, right? Wrong. As most of the times it would be a tech illiterate lecturer that didn't know how to use the teachers desk, which connects to the projector on the ceiling.

Hey /u/Chipnstein , why doesn't the university give them a crash course? Oh but it does, every new academic year but they're big shot lecturers, advanced in age, very little you can (try) teach them, so they never show up and of course they're the ones saying it's our fault and whatnot.

But I'm getting sidetracked in setting the world I worked in. Something didn't work, they call central, they call us and I rush there to find out every time that te issue is a powered off screen or something was muted, or they didn't swap the input source and their laptop isn't on the projector, this that after such repetition, you just know what the problem is and know immediately where to look and fix it in a few moments.

Couple of weeks of this and my manager calls me in and says he wants a word. I wasn't scared of being fired or whatnot as I didn't do anything I thought was deserving of this. No, he calls me in with a big laugh and explaining to me that the lecturers were complaining I'm making them look bad in front of the class (maybe next time show up to the 30 min training sessions) and shouldn't fix their problems so fast. I laugh, I agree and ask, what should I do then?

He said to use the desk keys, pretend to fiddle around a bit, even do a reboot if unnecessary and if they ask what you're doing just say "I have to temporarily interrupt the main power flow to the front user interface and manually reinitialise the GUI".

Needless to say I memorised that like a priest does Bible verses and still use it to this day, feel free to do so as well.

Simple Solutions - /u/JacenBoy

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lr7xz/simple_solutio

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Hopefully this will be mildly amusing to someone out there.

I'm still at under a year of IT experience and am working my first job at a very small IT company. Most of us work out of the main office, but there has to be someone on-site at one of our clients during the business day. I got thrown into that spot within the first couple months of learning how IT works and handle any day-to-day issues that might come up.

On this particular day, the issue was a computer that wasn't connecting to the network. A few quick tests showed me that the computer wasn't getting a valid IP address. The computer in question connected to the network through a small switch elsewhere in the office. The obvious solution was to check the switch, but I chose to skip that step since there was a second computer connected to that switch that was working normally. So, I decided to check for issues with the computer itself.

I had dealt with quite a few network issues related to various changes that had been made since I started, so I had a number of potential fixes in my arsenal, none of which worked. After entirely too long, I decided that the issue wasn't with the computer, leading me to tracing cables to find any issue with them. Which led me back to the switch.

Turns out I should have checked that first. The cable that was supposed to connect the switch to the network had a tab broken and had managed to come loose. Easy fix, just grab a new cable and swap it in. But it still bugged me that one computer on the switch worked fine but the other didn't.

It didn't take me long to realize what I overlooked: the computer that was working was a laptop. When the wired connection didn't work, it just swapped to wireless. Remembering that WiFi existed could have saved me a bit of time and headache.

It's Working As Designed For Krusty The Clown – /u/molotok_c_518

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ltfwb/its_working_as

- –

Hi.

Over the past couple of months, I was faced with the decision of waiting for field work that may not materialize, or transition to a help-desk environment for a major internationally-used software suite.

I need money. Help-desk, here I come.

It's not the usual environment, either: We are trained to take a ticket, and solve it. It could take minutes, hours, **days**... they aren't tracking how long or how many, they just want the customer satisfied. (That's what **she** said.)

The real beauty? We're not dealing with angry users... we're talking to sysadmins. It's a nice, less stressful environment.

I gave up the road, and that's a bit sad... but stability is what I needed.

It doesn't mean weird things aren't happening.

I picked up a ticket on Wednesday from a $StateAgency ($StA) that a user wasn't able to access $CollaborativeArea ($CA from here on out) of one agency (owner) because when they entered their username from a separate agency (agency) and tabbed to the password field, they were immediately sent to their $IdentityAuthenticationCloudSoftware ($IACS) landing page.

> Customer (Cx): This isn't a huge deal, as we have other methods of doing business aside from $CA. Take your time and get us an answer when you can.

So... collaboration with my team began.

One of my coworkers (CW) showed me what the Cx was talking about by opening the page, typing in the username (user@agency.state.gov), and watching the rediversion.

> CW: See the URL? *points to address bar* Their state uses the $IACS. It's federated through all of their agencies. This is working as designed.

He then proceeded to type his college credentials into the username field (user@university.edu), and we watched as it diverted to the university website.

> CW: All it's doing is trying to confirm the user's identity to make sure they own that set of credentials. It's supposed to do this.

So, I emailed the Cx and let him know that the functionality was exactly what was expected.

I got an instant reply:

> Cx: The credentials for agency.state.gov aren't handled by $IACS, though, so this really **ISN'T** working as designed.

> Me: Okay... we'll research this further.

Shift ends... home, dinner, sleep, back in the morning, back to research.

> CW: Still stuck on that ticket?

> Me: Yeah... someone else has to be having this problem, somewhere. I just can't seem to find them.

Something nagged at me, though... it was one of those little things that kind of tickles the back of your brain, like it has a solution to a programming problem, and you just need to get to the keyboard at 2 AM and hash it out (then refrain from waking everyone with a loud "EUREKA, MOTHER&%$%!" when you get it).

I pulled up the $CA site.

user@agency.state.gov: $IACS page.

My college creds: College site.

user@owner.state.gov: **Branded** $IACS page. It had the state flag, state name... the whole 9 yards.

> Me: Oh, *that's* interesting.

> CW: What?

I pulled up a list of the proper agencies for the state.

> Me: When I punch in a username with a real domain...

username@cloud.state.gov: Branded $IACS page.

> Me: It takes you to the state's verification site. Anyone else...

krustytheclown@simpsons.state.gov: $IACS page.

> Me: And it goes to the generic, as long as it has a .state.gov.

> CW: "krustytheclown"?

> Me: It was the weirdest thing I could come up with.

> CW2 (*new guy as well, in training, just started that week*): What about puppies?

puppies@icecream.state.gov: $IACS site.

> CW2: I'm convinced.

The solution CW came up with was simple: Just have owner add agency.state.gov to their directory, verify their DNS was correct, and update.

Just got word back that the fix took, and agency is able to use owner's $CA.

TL;DR: Site IDs Krusty and puppies at the door before they can use the key to get in, despite not needing to.

The time I took down the email exchange server – /u/Sgxdarklighter

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lsiq1/the_time_i_too

— —

Hey LTR FTP blah blah blah.

I am primarily a database analyst, even though my job titles never reflect that. I previously worked at a company that makes online fantasy games for sports as well as chucking out emails for marketing purposes and running websites for other random companies.

My job there was to essentially build and send marketing/game based emails. Pretty simple till you realise that building emails in HTML isn't much fun and is very out dated.

One of these emails that I had constructed had to be sent out to something like 150,000 people, before we did this we sent several test emails to ourselves just to makes sure it all looked OK when pulling info from our databases. The only problem is I occasionally forgot to switch the code back to using the email addresses that were against the customers. This resulted in me sending 150,000 emails to myself before I had even noticed and taking down our archaic exchange server before the head of IT had to get involved to remove all the emails and stop the extra ones from sending.

I heard about that little mistake for a long long time.

That's how i type my password - /u/selfishjean5

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ltbo8/thats_how_i_ty

– –

First time poster, ive been reading this subreddit for a long time to pass time at work.
I don't do tech support but sometimes i have to go to client's place to deploy something.

$me = me
$user = user

So i was deploying some cloud backup app at some office,
one of the options allow the app to do backups even if the user is not logged in, but requires the
credentials. So i ask the user to input her password.

$user : It's not working

$me: show me, how you do it.

user proceeds to type in her password and then i notice that some entries are getting skipped.

Asks her to do it again, her password was something like password1234 , but she is used to her
keyboard, and not a laptop. Laptop was tenkeyless.

So i had to show her the numbers on top of the keyboard, next to the tide key.

$user: But that's not how i type my password usually.

$me : facepalm

TLDR: $user only knows how to use the numpad, gets lost with a tenkeyless keyboard

Another short story that happened today, went to check on a user and noticed her taskbar was on
the right, in my head i was like, oh wow , nice. A user that knows how to actually use a computer.
After i have done everything on her computer, i then ask her, do you like your taskbar on the
right? (i know some people at work like it on top, because they are used to linux gui),

Then she goes " no... i have no idea how this happened, i prefer it on the bottom"

So i then proceed to move it for her, she has been using her taskbar on the right for years.... and
never asked anyone to fix it for her. o.O

tldr: user didn't know how to move taskbar back to normal position and just kept using it on the
right for years.

edit : formatting, im still not perfect with formatting.

Eyeballs up at the Alley - /u/cptjacko

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lsn6c/eyeballs_up_at

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Hello TFTS, first time poster long time lurker. Admittedly I amn't an IT technician I am a Bowling technician but as there are no other IT literate people in the department many of the tasks fall on me. I am also a recent Comp Sci graduate so colleagues feel it is a 'moral obligation to use my degree for something'.

$me – Bright eyed, bushy tail jack of all trades (I'm a racoon btw)
$DM – My good friend that is a manager but when shit goes wrong he's comparable to an infant who hasn't had sufficient sleep
$computersupport – External company who supply our general IT needs

So, before we get into this a little back story. Ever since I worked there we used the system of using cards to clock in and out at the end of every shift... Until last week. The line manager decided that enough was enough and it was time to update the system thus resulting in a retina scanner system being implemented.

Now this shit was about as useful as a chocolate spanner. You would look into it, it would clock you in but instead of going back to sleep mode it would stay active and the scanner was incredibly sensitive. Someone could clock in and lone behold a poor fuck walks past and it clocks them out resulting in them being underpaid. Eventually this issue was solved by the company that provided it and I thought that would be the end of it.

Fuck me how I was wrong.

I come back into work after a couple of days off and all hell has broken loose. The fiery pits have opened and everyone is running around freaking the fuck out.

> **$DM** – *$me* YOU HAVE TO DO SOMETHING NOTHING IS WORKING NONE OF OUR COMPUTERS ARE WORKING
> **$me** (internally) – if I walk out right now I'll probably get a reference from my boss right?
> **$me** (externally) – What's the problem?
> **$DM** – JUST LOOK I CAN'T DO ANYTHING!

I look at this mad mans PC and sure enough the fucker is absolutely bricked. Everything is hanging, can't even access the task manager to find what resources are causing such an issue.

> **$me** – *$DM* did you call *$computersupport* as they handle the server and other terminals?
> **$DM** – DO YOU THINK I AM STUPID, THEY SPENT 8 HOURS TRYING TO FIX IT AND ALL THEY DID WAS GIVE ME A QUOTE FOR A NEW MACHINE
> **$me** – Alright alright, I'll take a closer look.

By this point I physically restart the machine and boot into safe mode. Everything is working fine and by this point I'm confused, it shouldn't be a hardware problem so I decide to change the start up options to basic.

the phone rings

> **$computersupport** – Hello this is *$computersupport* why is the broken machine booted into safemode?
> **$me** – Well the *$DM* needs this machine and I figured I'd have a look.
> **$computersupport** – I don't think you are qualified to do such a thing, my colleagues and I have tried for hours trying to fix this machine and have came to the conclusion the hard drive is failing and you need a new machine to handle the software.
> **$me** – Well trying this isn't going to do any damage

By this point I had restarted the machine...

> **$computersupport** – I guarantee sir, this isn't going to work we have tried...

Windows 7 login chyme intensifies

> **$me** – I'm no expert but it seems to be working fine.
> **$computersupport** – Oh... right well *click*

It turns out that when the company set up the new software for the clock in system they set the configuration of the database to update every second and they also set this software to run on start up. After reinstalling the software and setting the credentials in correctly everything was back to normal and hell had frozen over once again.

Everyone got paid that week.

Let me just wave my magic wand. – /u/Doomscrye

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lum2o/let_me_just_w

— —

Hi all, I've remembered another short incident from my time working at $ISP. Locations have been omitted to protect the identities of the ~~innocent~~ guilty.

This took place back in 2013, or so. Players include:

$me– your charming storyteller

$cx– a pleasant and good-humored customer

$rc– a road crew that really should have hired a better surveyor

As you may have immediately guessed by the presence of $rc in players, this is about a road crew cutting a cable. Unsurprising, as we all know that cables, especially fiber lines, are magnetically charged to attract heavy machinery. On this fine day, the inevitable had happened in $city. Unfortunately, the line in question was rather more important than usual, and all our data services went offline for several million subscribers across 6 states.

As you may have surmised, this was not a great day to be in a call center (worse than usual). I spent most of the day explaining that it was out everywhere, and we didn't do it, but we were working on fixing it.

It was a few hours in when $cx called.

$phone: *ring ring*

$me: 'Hi, thank you for calling $ISP...*account verification and such*... how can I help you today?'

$cx: 'My internet connection isn't working.'

$me: 'We are aware of the problem. A road crew cut the cable in $city, that is responsible for pretty much everything. We're working on fixing it.'

$cx: 'Any idea how long that'll take?'

$me: 'I'm afraid I have no idea.'

$cx: 'It couldn't be that hard to fix a busted cord, could it?'

$me: 'It's a fiber line, that takes some doing to put back together again.'

$cx: 'How come?' *in a curious tone of voice*

$me: '*brief explanation of fiber and how splicing works*'

$cx: '[expletive deleted]! I feel sorry for the guy trying to fix that. I wish there was a faster way to do it.'

$me: 'For real. I've been waving my magic wand around all morning but nothing is happening. I guess I need more practice.'

$cx: '*snort+laughter*'

> $me: 'I mean it! I actually do have a little wand here and I've been trying to magic the line back together since I got the news.'

I actually did keep a little plastic wand at my desk, by the way, and was waving it around in the air during that call. I think it was defective— it never did work properly.

> $cx: '*laughter continues* Oh wow, thanks for that. I'll be patient— you go work on that magic.'

> $me: 'I sure will. Can I help you with anything else?'

> $cx: 'Nah, I'm good. Take care.'

> $me: 'You too.'

That call was a nice break in the constant storm of very irritated callers, and did much to lighten my spirits.

I never could get the benighted wand to work, though.

Edit: formatting

Create a user account? That's hard! - /u/monedula

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6luczx/create_a_user_

— —

So I provide technical support for a specialised custom system at ALBO (A Large Bureaucratic Organisation). Where I am caught in the crossfire between the users and central IT support.

Actually the users are very good. We get quite a few user errors, but usually it's when they are doing something complicated that anyone could be excused for getting wrong. Usually.

Central IT support on the other hand ...

A while ago I sent in the following request:

> Please add the following accounts to server TEST-042 and give them the same privileges as account sam-jones:
>
> - sam-smith
> - tom-miller

I receive an answer:

> We can add account sam-smith, but sam-jones already exists. What privileges should the account have?

(Is there an emoticon indicating "I am not making this up"? Consider it used.)

So I count to ten (actually more like a hundred and ten), ring them up and diplomatically suggest they read the request a little more carefully.

A week later I get a mail "your request has been completed".

After pondering this for a while I give up and go do something else. Then ring the next day.

> Me: Ringing about request 123456. Haven't you forgotten something?
> Central Support: What?
> Me: To send us the passwords you set?
> Central Support: Oh. Yes. I'll ask someone to do that.

So today, another week later, still no passwords. I ring again, they promise to get right on to it. And ten minutes later I do indeed receive a text message.

The passwords are "Welcome1". So OK it's a test server, no big problem. But the last two they did for me on that server were random nine-digit passwords, so I'm not sure what's going on there.

I decide that, all things considered, I must immediately test that the new accounts have the right privileges. But I don't even get that far. *Both* logins fail. With two different errors. So they've managed to set up two accounts in two different wrong ways.

Which is why, at the time I normally go home, I am now at home with an open bottle. I am in serious need of a weekend.

Wait, I have to insert data to see it? (2 short tales) – /u/Alentrish

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lth5r/wait_i_have_to

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So for this one, I have two stories at once. It's more of a 'lazy users' thing, but thought it might fit here anyway.

Usual introduction:

I'm a web developer at a non-IT company, making very custom (usually web-based) sofware. We're all juniors so we usually have to ~~dig our own grave~~ manage things on our own. There's 2 guys who command us, and all software requests are *supposed* to go through hem first. We call them our Mini-Bosses, because they're not our actual bosses, but they are (if that makes sense).

Story 1:

A little while back, I implemented the editing of adresses in our employee database. It used to be so that these adresses could only be changed by reading their digital ID into the database. Because some adresses were incorrect (due to a flaw in the ID reader software, which was later fixed) they wanted to be able to edit these adresses themselves in the web application.

Sure thing, I create textboxes in the page to do so, make sure they save, and go on my merry way.

Or so I thought.

Several weeks later a woman from administration department comes swearing and elling at my desk.

> *Angry lady:* HOW COME ALL THESE ADRESSES ARE STILL WRONG? I THOUGHT YOU WOULD FIX IT!

I stare at her in complete bewilderment and after a few moments it hits me what she's talking about. She used the data from our database to print these label stickers, without ever having edited the adresses.

> *Me (handing the paper back to her):* Well I'm sorry but the data is not my responsibility. It's yours. I gave you access to edit this data WEEKS ago.

She proceeds to argue and I continue to tell her it's HER data, not my job until she finally goes away with a huff and a puff.

Story 2:

About an hour ago, I received an email regarding an entirely different application.

The application is fairly simple, it's to help keep track of permits for projects. For projects one or more dossiers are made, with one or more permits per dossier.

For each permit, we show a list of items that can be clicked to expand and view the details. The list contains 3 pieces of information to determine what permit it is in the overview.

- the status of the permit (new, ongoing, on hold...)
- the type of permit (town, waterways...)
- the reference number (a varchar(255);)

Now back to the email. It was a complaint that when multiple permits of the same type were entered, they could no longer determine which was which. So, they request a change in the software, to display, for example, the name of a state, in case of type 'state'.

A screenshot was enclosed, of 4 rows of permits. ALL had status 'New', 2 were the same Type and NONE of them, NONE, had a filled in reference number.

I replied after a good half hour of ranting about lazy users, saying the following

> "May I point out that the field 'reference number' is displayed behind the permit type in the list? This has been implemented from the start, so you can clearly see the difference between different permits in the overview."

I'm not even expecting any reply. Might be too much trouble to type it in.

#region Rant TL;DR

Do I *really* have to come over there and type in your data for you, you lazy asses?!?

#endregion

Always check ALL cables… – /u/EpicLPer

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lt7yc/always_check_a

- -

Okay, long story short...

A guy in the company was moving from one half of the room to the other taking his laptop and phone with him. All cables were fed through a pretty narrow hole in the table and around some corners. Once he was done (which we didn't even know of) he complained to the ServiceDesk (aka. me) that he phone/laptop doesn't work at his new place and we have to fix this ASAP...

Well, we don't patch every Ethernet port we have here (would be insane). So I go there, patch it... doesn't work. So I switch ports on the wall, maybe one was damaged but nothing... Tried it at another table here, phone works so it isn't broken...

Well after 20 minutes of investigating it turned out that on the Ethernet jack which was plugged into the phone had some plastic spacers bent which he managed by pulling the cables around the corners juuuust enough for the phone to receive PoE (aka. Power) but no data but so lightly that you didn't instantly notice something wrong with the cable. Bent them back, works like a charm again.

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tl;dr – Sometimes it's the simplest things you don't think of.

The Mystery pdf file – /u/Suigintou_

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ltek5/the_mystery_p

- -

Hello TFTS, obligatory Long Time Lurker and First Time Poster. I'll try my best with formatting, but have no expectation of success.

Also English isn't my first language, please forgive any mistakes.

A bit of background: small office, I'm not actually IT, but being the only tech savy person around, everything IT related inevitably falls on my shoulders.

Characters are:

$Me Feeling particularrly sassy that day

$Co1 Coworker 1

$Co2 Coworker 2

$Boss Thankfully not present during this excange

> *It was an hot summer day, the decade-old AC unit was struggling to keep room temperature just under outside temperature, while the rest of us was struggling to get things done despite the heat.*

> **$Co1 :** "$Co2 I can't print this pdf file $Boss sent, could you check from your machine?"

> **$Co2 :** "Sure ... and nope, doesn't open here either, I'm get an error message."

> *Hearing this excange, I feel a chill running down my spine*

The last two times something like this happened, it was because of ransomware (those that came before wannacry) encrypting every document on the PC (and every network drive it could find).

I immediatly think about wannacry, take a deep breath telling myself that, worst case scenario, it can't be more than one machine, since just the previous week I managed to coerce the office to give me 5 min with each machine to finally apply the wannacry patch. (most PCs run Win7)

> **$Me :** "What's going on? can I see this file?"

I move behind **$Co2**, he opens the file and is greeted by an error message, which he expertly closes before I can read a single word on it.

> **$Co2 :** "See? it doesn't open"

> **$Me :** *with my best sassy tone* "Thanks, now do that again and this time let me actually read the error message, so maybe I can do something about it".

> **$Co2 :** "Oh my god calm down ... here, do it yourself"

I sit at $Co2 machine and look at the file, it's only 8kb, kind of smallish for a pdf. I open the file and sure enought the application is claming that's not a supported file type.

> *Thank god it's not saying it's encrypted*

> **$Co1 :** "Come here, I'll show you the email it came from".

I then sit at $Co1's machine and start checking things out.

Now, since this machine I actually use from time to time (because, yeah, I don't have a desk, I just use whichever happens to be free) I see the familiar notepad++ icon on the desktop (which only I use). I remember the file size and the error message:

> *What if this actually isn't a pdf file?*

So I drag the file on the npp icon. At this point I'm expecting nothing more than binary code, but I know that sometimes there are short plain text strings laying around that can give helpfull hints.

Instead, I am greeted by a plain text file, with handy tags at the beginning stating the encoding and that this was, in fact, an html file.

I immediatly change the extension, open it in firefox, check with Co1 that all the needed info is there, then print it.

> **$Co1 :** "What did you do?"

> **$Me** *evading technical explainations* "More importantly, how did $Boss manage to turn that html into a pdf, I'm 100% sure he's not capable of changing a file extension" *among most other things*

> **$Co2** "I don't know, but he does teach Computer Science after all".

Once again, i'm filled with dread as my thoughts drift to those poor kids $Boss is *""""teaching""""* to.

Dangerous Electric Signals – /u/boilem_mashum

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lo4tm/dangerous_el

——————————————————————————————————

I work for a Medical Group, as a sysadmin. Every once in a while the medical group will acquire another practice to join their ranks. During the transition period, either me or the other sysadmin are tasked with surveying, assessing, purchasing, re-wiring, and deploying our standardized equipment to facilitate the transition and support users during this process as needed.

Yesterday, I was finishing up on replacing the old practice's computers with freshly imaged ones from our warehouse and moving all their devices when I noticed a USB dongle plugged into the back of a doctor's computer-- Henceforth referred to as 'Dr. Lectric'.

I have never seen something like this before and I didn't know its purpose or functionality, so I walked over to Dr. Lectric and had this small conversation --

> $Me: Good Morning Dr. Lectric, I'm currently switching your computer out and found this. [*I showed her the dongle*] I was wondering what this was used for so I can make sure that it works properly after plugging it to your new computer.

> $Dr. Lectric: Oh, this is to protect me from dangerous electric signals from the computer.

> $Me: I'm sorry... I don't think I understand--

> $Dr. Lectric: You don't need to understand, just make sure it's plugged into my computer before I use it.

After cutting me off, Dr. Lectric walks away and into an examination room. I go back to her office and continue setting up the computer. I plug the dongle back in, and do not see the automatic driver installation message one would expect. I don't hear any sound letting me know a USB device was plugged in either.

I check the device manager, and there is nothing out of the ordinary. I test a different USB port, and the nothing happens. I pull the dongle out and check to see if there is a way to open it and make sure nothing is wrong internally.

I get the dongle open by prying the plastic casing apart and... it's empty. The dongle was nothing but the USB plug hot glued to the plastic opening. I stared at it for a moment, and considered showing it to Dr. Lectric-- then realized that it was probably too complicated for me to understand so I snapped it back closed and plugged it into her computer and moved on to the next workstation.

Better safe than sorry.

One Man's Trash Becomes Another Man's.....Felony? - /u/savacli

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lnedz/one_mans_tras

- -

A bit of backstory:
My company takes in "old machines" as donations from large corporations (and by old I mean no more than 3 years of prior use). We are a certified refurbisher so we take these computers in, clean them up physically, slap a license on it, and redistribute it to one of our clients or other community members that are on a waiting list for redistributed computers. This usually means we can give them a machine for about <$300 where they would have had to pay around $700+ for a similar box.

Today's donation pickup was a little...unusual.

$LuLu: Our manager.
$Chatty: Part time tech that likes to talk *a lot*.
$Savy: Yours truly, also avid fan of lemonade.

$LuLu walks up to the Dispatch area holding a plastic bag by its handles

> **$LuLu:** Hey, wanna see something?

Everyone leans in and notices that there is a vial of medicine and a syringe located at the bottom of the bag

> **$Savy:** Where did you find this??
> **$LuLu:** $Chatty came up to my office and closed the door behind her when she walked in because she said she needed to tell me something. Turns out that when they found this bag wadded up in one of the computers we got in today?
> **$Savy:** So...what are we gonna do with it?
> **$LuLu:** Beats me? But is anyone suffering from irregular heart rhythms?

Resolution: I ended up dialing up one of my nurse friends to find out the best way to dispose of the medicine since we didn't think it'd be the best idea to just toss it in the trash.

TL;DR: Make sure your computer clean-up checklist includes a box for "Remove drugs tucked away under the hard drive".

Apparently IT should never make a mess - /u/Naclox

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lu5ey/apparently_it_

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I've left my previous job as a sysadmin at a state university for the wonderful world of private enterprise where I am the sole technical person for the company. Officially my boss is the IT manager, but that's really only from a policy and money standpoint, anything remotely technical is my responsibility so I do Tier 1 through Tier 3.

Shortly after I started the new job I was introduced to the manufacturing location which is not the office where I normally work and told I was now supporting it as well. The manufacturing portion of the company was purchased by the company I work for a couple of years ago so their IT is entirely different from the rest of the company. This particular office has the worst IT setup I have ever seen. Everything is Mac based and most of it over 10 years old including their "servers".

After getting AV added to things ("but it's Mac it can't get viruses"), one of the first projects was to move all of these servers that contain the accounting system from the middle of the building where nothing is secured into a secured room. It's not a proper server room, but at least better than them sitting out in the open. The plan is to migrate all of these off of their ancient Mac based software onto our hosted solutions eventually so this move is really just a bandaid at this point to fix a glaring issue.

In order to do this, I had to run some new networking cable to the new location. No big deal, move a few ceiling tiles, drill a couple holes in a wall, the usual. Of course as we all know this leaves a bit of a mess behind and dust is not good for computers. I go ask one of the service guys if there's a shop vac around.

> Service Guy: "Did you drop a bunch of screws or something?"

> Me: "No I need to clean up a bunch of sawdust and stuff."

> Service Guy: "Oh I didn't think you IT guys ever made a mess like that."

After that he gave me the shop vac and I got everything cleaned up so I can get the servers moved next week, but I was internally rolling my eyes at the idea that apparently we IT people live in these pristine environments and never have to do any "dirty" work.

To use an intern - /u/Norwaymc

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lk7kw/to_use_an_int

— —

Hello! I am a 17 year old IT intern, so naturally I am support. In all honestly I really like it, and most people are really nice, not always smart, but mostly nice. There is this one person at my work though. A woman in her late forties, that we have dubbed "the woman with the resolution". My first experience with her was when she called the support phone, and I picked up.

Important information: Everyone working at the company uses two monitors. We have just upgraded every computer to Windows 10. We (IT) are not allowed to order new equipment just because a user says they need it, it has to go through the leader of the department. Only thing we can do is change the equipment with something in our storage, but that is mostly cables.

"Hello, IT, And What can I help you with?"

"Yes hello, I am having a problem with the resolution on my monitor, I can barely see anything. Also I need a new monitor because I am unable to see anything."

"Okay Ma'am, where are you located, I will come by and see what I can do" *I was thinking that her computers resolution had been jacked up somehow, or the monitor did an auto adjust*

When I arrive at her office, I see that there is, by my standard, no problem with the resolution. I ask her.

"Okay, ma'am, what is the problem? Is the text to small, or too large for what you like?"

"Well, can't you see the problem? The monitor resolutions are different. I look at the monitors" *I look, and I can see that there is a color difference in the two monitors, but there was no resolution changes (I checked).*

"Yeah I can see that there is some color difference. I can check the monitor settings to see if I can do anything about it." *I try to see if there is anything I can do, and I manage to get it a little closer to the other monitor, but not quite there yet. I decide to try to adjust the other monitor to be closer to the first one, but it did not help much.*

"Okay ma'am, it seems that I am unable to get it any closer than this. If you want I can try changing cables to another standard?"

"No! I have already tried to change the cables myself." She points at some power cables on the floor

"I am sorry, those are power cables, and I was thinking to change the cables between the computer and the monitor."

"What do you mean? There is no cable between the computer and the monitor! Are you talking about the connector hard disk?" She points at her computer.

I take a second to think about what to say next, to be as polite as possible

"I am sorry ma'am, that is the computer, the only thing that the screens do is to display the images that the computer outputs. Anyways it don't matter too much, can I just try to change cables?"

"Again no! I thought you were supposed to know what you are talking about! The only thing that can fix this is if you order me a new monitor, if not I have to take sick days because I get such a headache from these monitors!" *I tell her about our policy about not being allowed to order new items without them talking to their group leader. I can see that she is starting to get angry, so I decide to get my superior, so he can talk to her*

When I get back to the office, I talk with the guy that takes care of the interns and explains the situation to him. He then tells me that this person is notorious for "abuse" the interns for being impolite and demanding new computer items. And that I just have to make sure that I don't take anything she says to heart and that I should bring tell a superior to go talk to her after if she behaves like this again.

When my leader went there to talk with her there was no problem anymore.

Thanks for reading through my dyslexic mess of a writing, if you want to read more of my stories, tell me and I will write a new post, because I have a lot of stories.

2AM Call "Are the lights back on?" - /u/Theallmightyadmin

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lnizd/2am_call_are_t

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Almost a year ago a company let me go cause they thought I made my position no longer needed cause I scripted most the job.
(See topic https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/4x2wco/)
While I was out of town a few weeks back I got a call at 2am and thought it might be a friend so I answered it to be greeted by a foreign voice asking to confirm who she was talking to then asked me if the lights and power were back on. I ask her to verify what she was talking about and she told me she was calling from $OLDcompany $CommanLocation to see if the power was back on. I asked her why she called my number and she stated I was still listed as the onsite tech for the evening. At this point I was extremely amused and told her I was on vacation for 2 weeks and let me get her the correct number. I gave her the day shift manager's house number who let me go. Fast forward to now, I got a text from a old co-worker saying a email was sent out to make sure I was no longer on any call list also they found my Jelly and Milk in the back server closet fridge 9 months after I left.

My Facepalm IT Moment - /u/Jabologna

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6losq6/my_facepalm_

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I think in IT(especially Level 1 Helpdesk when you're just learning), it becomes really easy to have those "facepalm IT moments" where you end up spending waaaayyy too much time on an issue with a simple fix.

I was working my first IT job with the University I was going to. I got on a call with an older user who said a window wasn't showing up. So, I remoted onto the computer, and figured it would be something simple like it being hidden beneath the taskbar. At this point in my hire(a whopping one month), I felt like a tech-wizard beast in his prime. "I'm a computer scientist, this **** is too easy" etc. etc.

So, I pull up the proprietary software, and just like the user said, the window wasn't showing up. So, I tried Shift+Right-Clicking on the thumbnail in the Taskbar and clicking maximize, minimize, and move etc. I tried doing some alt-tabs and all sorts of funky stuff, to no avail. I didn't even see the top of the window below the taskbar, which led me to think that it was a software issue.

So, I decide to reboot the software in the hopes that it'll show up to no avail. At this point, I've spent about 30-45 minutes on the call trying to diagnose this issue, and I can already feel the heat from the lead IT-person in the room(we worked in cells at the University. 2-3 student it persons

per room and a "lead" IT-person. Fun fact: The Lead IT-Person in the room that day was a multi-millionaire and had 2 decades of industry experience . He was only working at the university and out of retirement because his wife was fed up with him at home).

So, the lead IT guy comes over after getting hit with a barrage of calls, and verifies with me I've tried all of the basic stuff. He starts looking into it which takes a couple minutes, and then I see him do it.

And in my head, I go "If this is the solution I'm going to freak out."

The lead helpdesk member shift+right clicks, and uses the *arrow keys* to move the window from completely out of sight below the taskbar to the desktop. Problem solved.

I immediately took my 10 minute break and yelled all sorts of obscenities once I got alone, realizing I was going to have to justify to my supervisor spending an hour on a call with someone over a window below the taskbar.

Needless to say, the alpha mentality disappeared immediately

Google isn't "The Google" - /u/ShadowSlasherZ

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lmmdv/google_isnt_

Some people accept that they don't know and are nice to help. Some people are too stubborn to learn things they don't know because "old age". And some people don't deserve to own any technology. For more reasons than just the below exchange, this uncle falls into the third category.

This happened two days ago. On Saturday I made the backups. Tuesday I restored them, and once I was done sent him away thinking it was over. Oh how wrong I was because this happened not 30 minutes later.

Uncle: Hey SSZ, The Google isn't working on my phone the same way it used to.
Me: What? Show me.

he pulls out his phone and presses the Google icon
Uncle: See it's not the same. It doesn't look like Google.
Me: That's probably just an update. The only thing that's different is the suggestions underneath the search bar. Ignore them and use it like always.
Uncle: But it's not the same. I don't know how to use it.
Me: Just use it like always. I'll watch and see if you did it wrong.

he proceeds to type his search query and then hit the "x" for delete instead of the magnifying glass for search
Me: Why are you deleting whatever you type?
Uncle: I'm pressing the same button I always do after typing.

at this point I'd finally figured out his actual problem
Me: Open your browser.
Uncle: What's a browser.
Me: The internet.

Uncle: Where's that?
Me: How do you download images of cars?
Uncle: Through The Google.
Me: Give me your phone.

I take the phone, replace the search app with his phone's browser app on the home screen and set his homepage to Google
Me: Right here. Try it now.
Uncle: Why is the icon different?
Me: Samsung update.
Uncle: Okay. It works now. Thanks.

Tl;dr: Uncle is tech illiterate. Can't figure out how Google works after an update to this phone.

Let me copy this serial... - /u/AscotV

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lm0nw/let_me_copy_

— —

As a second job I (among other things) fix computers at the customer's home. This one customer had bought a new PC and I was busy installing/configuring everything and moving files from the old PC.

I was checking the old PC if there were still some commercial software I hadn't moved yet, and saw they had payed for some obscure "makes-pc-faster" software I never heard about (I don't remember how it was called). The customer double confirmed she wanted to keep using it on the new PC. Of course, she didn't have any box, papers or purchase-mail so I went through the about windows to find any license info. I find the serial and tell the customer I need this on the new PC and ask her if she can write it down, so in the meantime I can download the software on the new PC.

I'm busy on the new PC, downloading and installing the software, and there she is... with the mouse from the old PC (disconnected) in her hand. "I copied it, that's faster than writing it down right?"

- "Uhm... you can't copy something from one pc to another like that"

- "Yes you can. I copied it before I disconnected the mouse. Now it's in the mouse".

I had to let her try to paste it before she would believe it doesn't work like that.

"Hey can you see if these work" - /u/UrbanSurvivor

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lvrvi/hey_can_you_se

— —

So, my buddy last night decided he wanted to give me his old hard drives. Because I'm a tech collector (kind of), and I like tinkering around with the old stuff (pre Windows xp and vista), he thought I'd be a good person to dump these on.

After work, he decides to throw them into my car, after sitting around in a hundred degree weather the entire day, and also having rested on fabric seats inside of a plastic sandwich baggie,

he says "see if they work".

I look him dead in the eye and I said that "they're dead as hell", and explained why.

He says "try it anyway".

These aren't even worth booting up an old computer to see if they work and he kept asking me to send him anything that I find on them, as if I didn't say anything for the last 45 seconds, let alone me even saying I'd even take them.

I told him "you get the same amount of information off them if I threw them into the parking lot and ran them over. They're garbage now".

He still didn't listen to me. So now I'm sitting here with a plastic bag full of dead hard drives, that I know he'll never stop badgering me about until I actually get around to building one of the old computers again, just to see if they work.... Uhg..

Edit: Formating

You don't know what you've got till it's gone! – /u/darrk666

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ll4rt/you_dont_know

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I have just had an email from one of our partners asking to remove all licenses for Office 365, for one of their customers. We explained this will leave them with no licenses and they use Office 365 for Email (Exchange) and Skype. They said this is known and to remove them as they are moving to another vendor.

We proceeded to remove licenses.

5 minutes later I get a call.

$Caller – Our email has stopped working. Can you raise a case please?
$Me – Sorry to hear that, I will do some investigation and then raise a case if required.

Moments later I realise this is the customer that had their licenses removed.

$Me – Did you recently request your licenses to be removed?
$Customer – Yes as we want to move to another vendor.
$Me – This leaves me with little I can help with as our support is only valid... while you have valid licenses from us. As well as this you still need active licenses for these systems to work.
$Customer – So what do we do?
$Me – Either reactivate our licenses or buy new licenses from the new vendor as soon as possible.
$Customer – So I need an active license for this to work?
$Me – That is correct.

I am not sure how they expected their service to continue after cancelling it without any handover to any other vendor... This call were an hour ago and I can still see them on our customer list with 0 licenses... so they have not had any transitions to the new vendor yet.

I question sometimes how people get so far in IT without knowing that if you don't have a license, that these things will stop working.

TIL That a program can still be doing something without doing something... - /u/SnaiperskayaMC

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lnebc/til_that_a_prog

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I've been working for a couple of weeks to try to get the email notification portion of one of our systems (eforms for submitting inspections for a state agency). I set up the SMTP configuration and tried a couple of test submissions, but nothing went through and no errors were thrown. I couldn't find anything in the logs, so I reached out to the vendor to try to determine where I had gone wrong.

Fast-forward to today and I met with the vendor to go over that and a few other issues. We adjusted a few settings and suddenly some of my test submissions started showing up in my email... and then wouldn't stop...

As it turns out, there was a bug with the software and our back-end configuration that they had found through the logs we submitted, which hadn't been addressed yet due to a miscommunication. The 2 original tests I had done 2 weeks ago (June 22nd) had been retrying to send every 90 seconds since then, with the bug causing it to duplicate the messages each time they were attempted.

In short, I ended up with a grand total of approximately 35,800 emails flooding my inbox, while we scrambled to get the backlog cleared (we do not directly control the SMTP server used). It ended up working through the backlog on it's own and we got the correct server configurations for the backend to prevent that from happening again.

Shoutout to **DB** for getting us the fix quick enough and having a laugh over it during our meeting while I tried not to panic.

Last Day for LastPass - /u/Frodo_McSwaggins

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lm6bp/last_day_for_l

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For those of you that don't know, LastPass is a tool used to store all of your online passwords (this isn't an advert). You create one really good password for your LastPass account and LastPass can generate random passwords for your other accounts, if you want it to. Otherwise, it just keeps all of your passwords stored and can log you into sites automatically as long as you're signed into it. My boss and I began using it about two years ago and introduced it to some of the younger (i.e. the technology capable) employees in the office to help with their numerous sites they must use. However, some of the more wizened members of the office did not take to it so well. Mainly, and understandably, they were already against the amount of passwords they have to use on a daily basis. But, this was supposed to help as it would require them to only remember one password.

We hoped this would help reduce the amount of sticky notes, binders, and notebooks filled with two or three variations of the same password over and over again. One of these wizened members gave me a call today:

Me: "Hello"

Former_Prez: "I'm trying to login to a personal account and it's telling me my account has been locked due to too many failed attempts. Is that weird to you?"

Me: "Yes, that is a little weird. How many times have you tried to login?"

FP: "Just once, but I have this LastPass thing you know and I thought it's supposed to save my passwords. Why is LastPass not working?"

Me: "It could have had an old or incorrect password saved. When was the last time you logged in?"

FP: "About 2 or 3 weeks ago. I thought LastPass changed all my passwords for me routinely. So why isn't this working?"

Me: ??? "No, LastPass just saves your passwords for you. It can change some of your passwords, but you have to login and tell it to do so."

FP: (*getting more angry by the second*) "Well, I've been mislead then. I thought this was supposed to improve our security. What's the point of having this if it won't change our passwords?"

Me: (*it would improve security if you wouldn't use Lastname76 for every password*)

FP: "How am I supposed to change my password? Through LastPass?"

Me: "No, you still have to use whatever site you're on to change it, especially if it locked you out. LastPass can change passwords, but that is just so you will have more secure passwords."

FP: "Well, I don't see any point in having this stupid thing then. We might as well take it off my computer." *CLICK*

We have tried more than a few times to explain how LastPass works to this guy. This same guy has also "fixed" the former printer upstairs by banging it on the side a few times. It worked once, so that was obviously what it needed every time it stopped working. This eventually led to us replacing said printer.

Edit: readability

The problem with a $300 signup credit. – /u/BakerNZ

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ll2hc/the_problem_w

— —

Not sure my "story" fits here as it's not strictly techsupport but I'll run it up the flagpole and see who salutes.
Short time lurker first time poster.

I work installing fibre optic internet (and phone) connections to residential and business customers. We deal with all the ISP players here. One of these outfits requires us to call them to activate voice services.

This company is currently running a promotion where new customers are getting a $300 account credit. Needless to say their connections make up 3 out of 5 jobs for us now. With this increased demand comes more stress on their call center. A typical call to them would vary, they went through staff, being a call center. Last week one of my activation calls I spent 40 minutes on hold. Not a huge problem that day but we don't get paid by the hour and have been told by $boss$ to spend no longer than 30 minutes on the phone to **anyone**.

Fast forward to today's activation call.
me tall, handsome, modest
LW Lovely call center Woman

About 14 minutes on the line

> **LW** Hi this is LW from $popular service provider$ how can I help?
> **me** Hi this is me from $network company$ can I give you my ASID?
> **LW** Yes certainly
> **me** *looks at website on phone for service order only to find* ~~potato powered~~ *website has logged me out*
> **me** Sorry one second while I find that number. *making small talk* Wow you guys are on the ball today, less than 15 minutes on hold.
> **LW** Yes not very busy today. We don't answer the phone much anymore now there are email activations.
> **me** *The what now?!*
> **me** That sounds helpful. Could you txt me the email activation address to this number?
> **LW** Yes certainly I'll just do that now.

She sends me the address, gives some instruction how to format the email and spends some time ~~umming and aaahing~~ activating the service.

> **LW** OK looks like that service is up and running. If you still have no internet you may need to reset the modem.
> **me** Thanks, bye.

I silently congratulate myself for not telling her there is more chance of her poking a pin into an orifice til she blinks than there is of me returning to the job I left 20 minutes ago because their modem needs resetting.

I understand there are at least three layers between her company and mine, and bad communication is the norm is this business. But this really stood out for me. We've been battling to get these activation calls done and there is a an email service we never knew about.

edited for formatting

"What kind of music do you like?" - /u/Sonicman1

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lmsfu/what_kind_of_

- -

Background: I work at my college's helpdesk

Most of the tales that get told here are of how badly users can mess up. And while it's true that users can mess up pretty bad, it's also important to show that users can also make your job enjoyable. This is one of those tales

A faculty member of the college walked in our tech center and asked if we could help him burn some files onto a CD for him. I volunteered and went to his office, and started the process.

As the process is going, we start to just talk about non-computer related topics. He brings up music, and asks me what kind I like. As I'm talking he proceeds to hand me some CD's from his collection, and tells me just to keep them if I like them.

We then talk about sports, art, and just life in general. After his disc was burned I thanked him and I was on my way back to the tech center.

It's nice to see that people can see beyond the "tech support" and know that we are actual people

Ripped Pants and Personal Space - /u/ApocalypseNowInAMin

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6llhox/ripped_pants_a

- -

Hey all, I am back with another tale for my tech support brothers and sisters. Today's tale happened today, and involves ripped pants and some personal boundaries.

It started innocently enough today. Too warm for my blood so making sure I wore some not so heavy trousers and a loose shirt.

I'm setting up some beautiful 27" Dell monitors for a user, I go to head under the desk to plug in some plugs and I hear it.

> $ANIM's Trousers: **RIP**
> $ANIM:Uh-oh

Yes, I committed one of the most embarrassing faux-pas of any technician... I ripped my trousers. Not a little. A lot.

I promptly excuse myself, head to a local cheap clothing outlet that rhymes with MriPark and get some new ones. No biggy, nobody seen, crisis averted.

I head into our company's ground floor shower/changing rooms, nobody is around.

I unbutton my broken trousers and there they are. A **$User** has followed me INTO the changing rooms and says

> $User: Oh hi, $ANIM, I have a quick IT question for you.

I look at them in disbelief.

> $ANIM: Umm... I'm in the middle of something at the moment?

They stay stood there so I walked passed them into a disabled toilet, locked the door and changed.

TLDR; Users... **they don't even understand personal space.**

When the printer has had enough - /u/Cryptic-Panther

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6loalt/when_the_print

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I just had a call that had both me and my caller laughing.

Me – Company Help desk (normal greeting name ID gathering) how can i help you?

Caller – My printer is saying it needs Cyanide.

Me – Do you mean Cyan?

Caller – Yeah i knew that didn't sound right

Me – I guess the printer has had enough.

Caller – yeah it might have.

Me – or it's trapped in a 90's Spy movie, and is not wanting to give up it's secrets.

At this point we are both having a good laugh.

So nice to get a happy call, instead of the ones where the deep sigh every time you ask them a basic question.

Space isn't nothing - /u/Chilled_IT

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lw2v8/space_isnt_no

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The players are:

$VIT: Vice-IT, 2nd in command

$User: Future astronaut, j/k just a random user

$Me: Yours truly

$VIT and $Me were minding our business in our office as a wild phone call appeared. It was $User who couldn't login anymore after his long vacation.

$VIT and $Me knew the drill. The reason could be that

a) user had to change his password and forgot about it (or just forgot about it)

b) somehow misspelling it

c) wrong username

d) computer is not in our network (loose cable, computer losing trust-level of domain or however that is called in English – basically the DC kicks it out of the domain because it isn't trusting the computer anymore)

e) account got deactivated by accident

There are sure other reasons it could be, but those are our frequent ones that cover 99.99% of those cases. All our computers have their pc-# attached to it.

$VIT: So what is your pc-#? *he wants to remote in*

$User: Nothing attached here.

$VIT: Ok, what is your account-name?

$User: It is $blabla

$VIT: *checks AD to see whether account got disabled....nope, wasn't* Did you change your password lately?

$User: No, I'm sure I typed it correctly.

$VIT: Just to be sure, I will set your password to $1234. Try logging in with that.

$User: Still cannot log in.

At this point I just take off and with sign language tell $VIT that I'm on my way to $User's office.

$Me: Let me try to log in, so we can rule out that your computer is not connected to our network.

tries to log in

logs in successfully

checks IP-address and yells pc-# into the phone #our pc-# is always the subnet and last section of its ip-address#

$VIT remotes in

I log out

$Me: Ok, so try to login again.

$User puts in username, $VIT confirms it is the correct one.

$User puts in password, $Me confirms that it is the correct one...or not

After putting in his password he hits the spacebar.

I take over his phone and tell $VIT to abort remote-session and that $user just hit the spacebar, ergo case closed.

$User: But why? It is just empty space, why would the computer care?

$Me: Imagine I put a space right after your first digit on your paycheck. How much money do you think you are going to get? Still the full amount or just 1-2€?

$User: Ummm...I see.

$Me: I'm glad you understand.

TL;DR

User comes back from vacation and somehow developed the habit during that time to hit spacebar after entering passwords. He is confused that the computer cares about spaces in passwords.

Help me hook this do-hicky up / we just need to disable the firewall. - /u/warriormoose89

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ln0wx/help_me_hook

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Was just asked a couple days ago to help hook up an inventory control device to our network. The individual asking (Grumpy Gossip Hag) said just plug it into the back of a computer and go. As I inspect the device (relocated from a different branch) I note that it has a serial to Ethernet adapter on the back, and GGH wants me to plug it into our computers which have no serial ports. After a lot of talking to GGH and trying to get documentation from the last branch for this device I get the "you don't know what you are doing, let me call vendor's support line and fix it talk" (angry face). I ask to be looped in on the call because now she is trying to randomly plug into our Credit card terminals etc. 15 minutes later I hear GGH on the phone with support, she sees me and walks away so I can't get involved. 5 minutes later she is back gloating about being an expert on the system now. The serial port is on a proprietary box that she never brought from the other branch. As a parting shot she goes I even got it to work when it wouldn't I called local ISP and had them disconnect other location's firewall so it could talk.

So the connectivity issue with cables is solved but may need to do some security auditing at both locations because GGH decided to take it upon herself to mess with the firewalls.

Ancient Printer support. - /u/texasgunowner12

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6llz64/ancient_printer

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Walked into work this morning with my boss catching me at the desk.

$boss - Mail room needs you to take a look at their printer.

$ME - They submit a ticket?

$boss - Yes they did.

$me - Christ. Alright Ill go down and take a look.

The mail room uses an ancient printer because the lady who runs the place is stubborn and has pull. We have wasted so much money on that printer that the entire IT dept has been given the terms to retire it for any reason.

I go down and see it is unplugged. I ask the mail lady what is going on with it and she informs me that someone accidentally printed to it this morning. These 400 page contracts on the contract length paper.

Now normally I would turn on the printer and clear the queue through the printer GUI. Problem there.

This is a 14 year old Dell behemoth printer that has a display about as advanced as a TI-83 calculator. I plug it in and it starts to print off another contract. I look at the mail lady and ask how long it had been unplugged. She told me a little over an hour.

That is odd. Usually if you unplug the printer long enough it will lose power and delete the queue itself. So I unplug it again and google the users manual. I am thinking maybe it has a battery I can disconnect to make it manually clear the queue. Nope.

I open it up and start digging around and notice a capacitor. *That's weird.* I google again the printer model and clearing the queue. Nothing. This printer was already 2 years old and was one of the first Dell office behemoth printers when it was acquired back in 2003. I was shocked it had an ethernet and did not use a dial up connection.

Not much coming in about it other than a joke post from 2006 saying. "Just blow the capacitor and put the beast down for good."

So I plug in the printer and let it finish printing the contract wasting about 200ish pages of contract length paper.

Then then cover sheet comes in. Cool time to go visit Jane Doe's desk to see why she wasted my time this morning. Then I noticed the read out on the printer. "Jobs in Queue. 122 Remaining." The second contract starts printing and it prints the exact same one again. I shut down the printer and unplug it as I briskly walk up to Jane Doe's desk with her contract.

$JD = Jane Doe

$Me – So can you tell me why you printed this off to the mail room?

$JD – I did? Oh sorry I guess it somehow got selected as my primary printer.

$ME – Ok lemme take a look. Also how many of these did you print?

$JD – Sure thing take my seat. Oh umm. I don't know I got so frustrated I just kept clicking print.

I rolled my eyes in contempt when I realized something. This may be our opportunity to fix this. Surely the cost of all of that paper plus toner would be more than the cost of one of our Ricoh's right?

I see that $JD's ISIS driver was corrupted so I uninstall it and open up the intranet website. Log into engi console and type in the command for obtaining the ricoh drivers.

So I load the driver in and print off a test page to the ladies primary printer. I clear the print queue from her end knowing full well that it will do didly squat to the mail room printer. I even uninstall the behemoth from $JDs machine to make doubly sure.

I go to my desk and research how to clear the print queue on this dinosaur and find nothing but unanswered posts and early internet trolls just learning how to ply their trade. I have to admit touching a screwdriver to the capacitor and bridging it with the metal from the hard drive sounded like fun. Unfortunately I do like my job, and subsequently like having all of my fingers.

I go back into the mail room to see that it will take over 48k pages to finish all of the jobs. I try through the old keypad on the printer to clear the queue but it kept erroring out while still printing.

I unplug it again and walk to my boss with a big smile.

$Boss – What did you find.

$Me – Well two things. One frak that printer. Two I may have a legitimate excuse to lay it down.

$Boss – *BIG GRIN* Really? Do tell.

$Me – Well it will cost roughly 350 for the paper needed to finish out the print queue that it is currently stuck in. And since that printer will not print without toner, we have to replace the toner at least twice during the process. One of our C250s only cost around 250ish according to amazon. So my answer is it is cheaper to upgrade her to a new printer, than it is to buy the 48k pages necessary.

$BB = Bosses boss

$Boss – *Raucous laughter making his boss come out.* $Me here just found a solution to the mail room's ancient printer.

$BB – If you can make it stick, I owe you lunch. What is it?

$ME – Well Jane Doe from legal's PC had her ISIS drivers corrupted causing her computer to make the behemoth the primary.

$BB – Okay?

$Me – She got frustrated when it would not print and kept clicking the print button creating a bigger and bigger queue for the ancient beast.

$BB – You are losing me.

$ME – I have been unsuccessful in clearing that print queue. I will cost this company no less than 3 of those expensive toner carts, and 48k pages of contract length paper.

$BB – So?

$Me – One of the C250s is cheaper than the price of those toner carts and the cost of all of that paper.

$BB – *Slow realization as both me and $Boss smile wider and wider.* Holy shi– crap. Give me 10 minutes and Ill have you go replace it.

$BB went and talked to the VP of logistics and informed him of the bad news. It took very little convincing to get him to agree as he hated the problems this printer has caused.

They both went down to share the "bad" news with the mail room lady. She was upset but understood since both VPs were informing her of the resolution.

I got an IM on my skype to bring the printer down. I hooked it up and connected it to the server. Logged in with the default creds on it and loaded up the basic stuff.

Normally I would have had to set up scan to email on it. But the mail room never scans. They don't even need an MFP. But thats corp's for you.

My boss is taking me out to a REALLY nice Italian food place for lunch. I am talking mega nice Italian place where the meals start at 40 bucks a meal.

All in all a good way to start my day.

Programs have end of life for a reason – /u/prius_power

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lltgz/programs_have

This last happened a couple years ago, but the issue went on for me entire life on this planet so far. I always help family with computers, but this one was very special. As a little back story, my aunt had an old XP computer that ran Microsoft Money 2.0. This was a 16 bit application designed for Windows 3.1. When her XP computer hit the fan, I had to run XP in a virtual machine on her new Windows 8 computer.

Aunt: "I tried saving my file in Microsoft Money and went to go open it, and now it says there's nothing in it. Can you come take a look at it?"

So I drive to my aunts house and fire up the virtual machine. Sure enough, when I try to open the file, there is nothing in it. So I close the program, but then the file size catches my eye. It spat out a 2GB file. There's no way the file would be that large. So I re-open the program and try saving a new file with just one record, and it does the same thing. At this point, I can only conclude that it hit some kind of time/date wall that it's 16 bit programming wasn't designed for. Though I could just turn the clock back in the VM, I tell her it's definitely WAY past the end of life for it, and I'm tired of fixing a program that's 3 years older than I. She said fine, but I still want to use MSFT Money to track expenses. So I got her updated to the last MS Money sunset edition which still took some finessing to get working on Windows 8.

tl;dr Aunt tried using 16 bit applications for 24 years with mostly shocking success until it decided it didn't want to work anymore. Aunt was very reluctant to update to ANYTHING else.

Mind games - /u/nik_drake

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lk4e0/mind_games/

I work escalations for an ISP.

A little bit of background is needed before I go into this tale.

My work assigns IPv4 addresses to residential accounts on a dynamic system with a 24 hour lease which time starts either from the time issued or last reissued. If a restart or an outage occurs the system will try to reissue the last recorded ip if it hasn't been issued elsewhere.

> me: How may I assist?

> $cst: I need a new ip.

The guy sounds a bit desperate. Either he is having trouble connecting to a game or Sony has barred his ip. Extra points to my guess work if he mentions anything about making money from streaming on twitch.

> me: I am sorry you are having trouble with your connection. What type of trouble are you having that makes you feel you need a new ip?

> $cst: I have had you guys issue me a new multiple times before. I need you to do so now.

This is either an exaggeration or he talked with an initial tier rep that just restarted his modem and told him that it reset the ip without checking to see that it didn't.

> me: I cannot sir. If you have had to have new ip addresses issued multiple times than that means there are other issues. Either it is not an ip issue or some action you are taking is causing your problem.

> $cst: Just give me a new ip address or get me to someone who will.

> me: I cannot do so. We don't have any way to reissue ip addresses.

> $cst: But you do it for me all the time.

> me: If we do it for you all the time then that explains why I can't do it for you now. We can't keep giving you new ip addresses as it strains our system. Something else is going on causing your trouble and you might have to change what you are going. We can't issue you an new ip address again.

> $cst: Well you issued me new ip addresses all the time before but it has been a long time since it last happened. You don't understand I need you to give me a new ip.

> me: I cannot do so sir.

> $cst: You need to transfer me to someone else because you don't understand your system they've done it for me before.

> me: Look to issue a new ip address we will have to be on this call for longer than 10 minutes while I run through multiple resets and hope that maybe the system might give you a different ip address. It puts a lot of strain on the system and we can't keep doing it over and over again.

Essentially I pull the internet access off the modem by declaring that a tos violation has occurred or placing the modem into preactivation mode and basically kill time on the phone with several resets for 10-20 minutes which I am required to keep the customer on the line. When I put the

internet back on sometimes the previous ip has been reassigned to another device so our system issues a new one. It is not an official troubleshooting step and it kills my call handle time. Most reps that even know about it, don't bother.

> $cst: I play something called Xbox. Do you know what that is? You probably don't. It is a gaming device where I play games. Every time another player starts playing I can't play. I am perfectly fine when when he is not on. When he figures out I am on he logs on and I see him playing. When I see him my game becomes unplayable like I can't login at all. He is using I ip to stop me. It is his fault, so I need you to get me to someone who knows what they are doing.

Oh no bonus points for twitch? I stop even trying to reason with this guy while I look blankly at my desk including my Super Mario Bros wallet that I had tossed to the side.

> me: We cannot issue you a new ip.

> $cst: You don't know what you are talking about you need to get me to someone who does.

> me: I cannot do so.

> $cst: I'll just call back and get someone who knows what they are doing.

> me: Have a good day.

I checked back on the account a few days later. He called right back in and got an initial tier agent who noted that they restarted the modem to issue a new ip. The guy did eventually get a new ip about a day later but because of a network issue on our end not any effort by his request.

Press square for a critical hit. Fallout 4 on my PS4 is a great stress reliever after a long day.

TL:DR– Customer assumes that just because I refused his request for a new ip that means I didn't know what an Xbox is.

That was unfair – /u/Repsack

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ldqzf/that_was_unfair

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My mom once had an elderly neighbor, but she since moved away. Some months ago, i visited my mom, and this lady greeted me and asked if i could help her with a computer issue. She usually had a handful of small tech troubles that she would ask for help with aswell, but this one issue surprised me:

She had quite poor vision and small double magnifying glasses on her face to see better, and because of this, everything on her computer was set up to be very large or zoomed in, windows, browser and fonts all around. (This is relevant)

Anyway the issue was with printing some document from gmail, i cannot remember what. Despite her habit of getting stuck with even the simplest things, she had gotten surprisingly far on her own! PC was on, gmail was open, she found the right email as well as the chrome menu and the "print" button therein! She was presented with a popup menu where she could choose print direction, scaling and other settings for the printer, but she was helplessly stuck on how to actually get the document to print from here. It was a really impressive effort and she was only stuck because of how windows was so upscaled/zoomed in; The print options popup could be dragged around, but the minimum size was still so large that the bottom part, aswell as the last print button was hidden below the taskbar! Windows 10 has a slightly transparent taskbar, but this poor lady could not see it! You could only just press the top of the button because the rest was hidden. Ofcourse the old lady could not see it!

Sometimes, the issue is not stupidity but bad design :)

Edit: Thanks for all the good suggestions! At the time of this issue, i did not dare to change anything even if it could have helped. Since she moved away i doubt i can even do much to help her by now anyway.

Welcome to $SodaCorp - /u/Selben

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lfo0y/welcome_to_so

— —

Do you like to read in Chronological order? Here is the [Index](https://www.reddit.com/r/Selben/comments/60r5ps/timeline_for_tfts_stories/)

$Selben – Previous Tier 1 tech support now an IT contractor – a bit more into his career.

$Soda – Entrepreneur and IT Consultant and in a way $Selbens boss – Extremely knowledgeable IT guru. Previously worked with $Selben at $SmallerCompany until they decided to move on. Also had a never-ending supplies of 48oz soda's constantly on his desk, in his car, literally everywhere!

$BM – Building manager… or you can be creative with this.

$ITLead – IT lead from a random company.

Recap

At this point in $Selbens career he had been working with $Soda at $SmallerCompany up until it was decided to replace all of the IT staff through a third party agency, $Soda put up a fight to keep the current IT… But the corporate blade trimming fat is cruel and unforgiving. Upon losing his job

$Selben spiraled into a world of 20 hour a day gaming, fueled by a poor job market that lasted for several weeks, thankfully $Soda appeared at his doorstep offering to come work with him as an IT contractor.

First Day

A fresh black polo shirt, khakis and a pair of dark sunglasses $Selben and $Soda are seen walking across a parking–lot. $Soda looks down at his watch and looks startled, he shouts something and starts running – $Selben ~~sings selos~~ makes haste to catch up. $Soda had purchased a ~~dilapidated~~ used work–van, it wasn't much to look at, had no carpets, struggled to start in the cold and rattled like mad with the back packed full of assorted IT related tools, but it was now The Van.

As they drove $Selben was updating $Soda on how they had been trying to get him fired and even went so far as to force him to leave a day early etc.

> $Selben: So then he pulls me into his office and…

> $Soda: Oh sorry, we're here!

> $Selben: Oh uh, so do I work for you or something?

> $Soda: In a way… I find us the jobs, they pay me and I'll pay you… Were both independent in the end.

> $Selben: Gotcha… So do I sign anything?

> $Soda: LOL, no – they might have a disclosure agreement but otherwise… Nope! If you hate this, just let me know and you can go.

> $Selben: Well okay then!

They got out of the van, $Selben had to slam his door a couple times to make it stay closed, then they headed inside. They met with a large sweaty man called $BM at the location and he explained the situation, it was a cabling job with 14' ceilings in an empty office space, a new tenant was coming in a few weeks so network cables needed to be run. There was nothing to sign – $Soda

offered to charge per drop or they could be hired for the whole day and stated he wasn't sure exactly how long it would take, $BM choose to be charged per drop. $Soda scribbled down the job and showed $Selben how to write up the order, a carbon copy was handed to $BM after being signed and they got to work.

They counted where each drop would need to be and checked out the end point, being a small room where a server would eventually live and found a total of 30 drops. After a super quick tutorial from $Soda, they discovered empty cable conduit directly to each drop point from the server room – it had been there previously for the phones but for some reason the phone lines were removed. They made short work of the drops and terminated the connections, they were done in about four hours, all lines tested and working – $Soda called up the building manager to have him come take a look. $BM showed up and checked all the work before payment, as they walked they spoke.

$BM: You were trying to charge me for a whole day! Ha!

$Soda: Yes, we found the old phone line conduits – it made the job go much quicker. I was wondering why were the lines were gone?

$BM: Oh the last group used wireless phones.

$Soda: Does the new group plan on doing the same?

$BM: Not in my contract with em, not my problem!

$Soda: Okay, well if they decide they want phones, give us a call!

$Soda handed $BM a business card with his name and contact on it.

$Soda was handed cash for the work and they headed out to the van, $Soda in turn shuffled out a handful for $Selben – it was almost half what they charged for the whole job. $Selben was about to object – they had agreed on an hourly rate but $Soda grinned put an end to it, ~~casting a mind calming spell~~ somehow changing the subject to getting lunch and announcing he was buying. During lunch $Soda got another call for the next day – since this job was already complete they accepted.

800 feet meets 10 feet

> $Soda: Do you see the light?

$Selben was covered in sweat, crawling along a girder just above a drop ceiling (*Which had poorly run electrical lines blocking it from being lifted, hence the $Selben in the ceiling*) – he shouted back.

> $Selben: Yea, I think so… Move it again!

The end of a pull line wrapped in duct tape was just ahead of him, slightly out of reach.

> $Selben: push it up more!

He grabbed the line and pulled it up – then attached the cable he had lovingly been dragging for 800' through the dusty hot ceiling, he sighed and shouted back.

> $Selben: Okay! Pull it down!

$Selben had been working with $Soda several months, while the camaraderie was great – the mental challenge just wasn't there. He sighed as the last of the cable snaked its way back down – $Soda shouted that he was good and $Selben began to carefully work his way back. He was covered in sweat and was having a bit of trouble keeping a grip on the metal girder – he wiped his hands on his shirt but only seemed to collect more moisture. In his mind he was missing the mental challenges of Computing based IT… The pay for this work was really nice, albeit a bit unstable at times – however nothing was more unstable than slipping from the rusty metal girder and crashing through the ceiling, which is exactly what happened – then landing feet first on a desk. $Selben stared up and the gaping hole in the ceiling and really began to contemplate finding a different type of work, he took a step forward, adrenaline pumping and cried out in pain – $Soda ran in to his aid.

After a visit to the ER $Selben was diagnosed with a fractured toe and some minor scratches – $Soda drove him home and paid him for his share of the job even though it still wasn't complete, thankfully $Selben did not decline because the ER bill was a couple grand – working as an independent contractor meant he had no insurance.

Different work

Not being able to work with $Soda for a couple weeks made $Selben's money situation become a bit concerning – he did some job searching for office work and actually received a couple interviews, but they were all with HR type folks who had no idea what they were asking, so if you

did not answer exactly as their paper indicated, you wouldn't get hired. After having failed several interviews, $Selben finally returned to work with $Soda, on the way to the site $Selben chatted with $Soda.

> $Soda: So then I tell my sister – 'Well it wasn't the fatherboard!'

> $Selben: Ha ha... So I wanted to talk to you about something...

> $Soda: Yea yea, but then she holds up the hard drive and is like 'It says this needs pins set to master...' So I hold up my screwdriver like a magical wand and point at the drive and go 'You are Master now!'

$Selben couldn't help but laugh – then he tried to bring up the subject of not wanting to do cable jobs, or dragging 300lb server racks up stairs – the medical bills had made his recovery that much harder. But $Soda had his charm on full blast, likely from working alone for a while – before $Selben could get a word in $Soda announced they had arrived. They hopped out of the van, $Selben asked what tools to bring in and $Soda only tapped on his head, $Selben grabbed his clipboard that they used to fill out job requests and followed $Soda inside, with a slight limp in his step.

The office was fully furnished and operational, unlike the barren empty offices they usually did jobs for. $Soda chatted up the receptionist and had her laughing out loud – he was on a roll today. The next thing he knew $Selben and $Soda were sitting in a conference room, waiting for someone – $Selben tried to talk to $Soda about getting out of the manual labor side of IT work but before he could get a word in the door opened. Greetings were given, this was $ITLead, he was short staffed due several members of his team leaving for another company and he needed more than just the warm bodies of the IT Temps he had been getting. He knew $Soda from a previous IT job and desperately needed people who could hit the ground running so to speak. $Selben would be filling in for one of the previous mid tier techs but $Soda was the icing on the cake, he would be taking on a programming role (*A jack of all trades he is*) – forms and documents were produced and signed.

The temporary contract was set for them to be on for two months and if replacements were not found they may be kept on. $Soda and $ITLead began chatting about the 'old days' – but $Selben butted in to ask when they might be starting. $ITLead turned and smiled –

> $ITLead: Right now!

What a Slacker

$Selben was taken to a small office all to himself, he was given credentials and shown a report he needed to work on as best he could – his predecessor had been focused on moving to the new company and neglected his duties for several months – $Soda was whisked away to wherever programmers go. The first report he had was to delete any AD Accounts that were not active and also not flagged by HR – $Selben documented everything he did with his own list. Since they did not have files or emails attached to their AD accounts the process went very quickly. After two days the report was completed, so he moved onto the second report – it was the same list from before but this one was to deactivate emails. The method to deactivate them allegedly had no interface, but instead you were to email each name and email address to the email vendor and they would shut down the accounts for you, then you were to wait up to 24 hours and verify the account was deactivate… Then go back in the report and attach the email… $Selben emailed the email provider to make sure this was the process and they indicated this was the process his predecessor had chosen – seeing the contact number for the vendor $Selben gave them a call.

> $E-Tech: Hello this is $E-Tech thank you for calling $Email-Support.

> $Selben: Hi, this is $Selben, I am working on getting some emails deactivated and was told to email you guys directly…

> $E-Tech: (*Sigh*) Are you calling from $Company?

> $Selben: Yes… Do you guys maybe have a web portal or something I can do it myself, or does your system not allow it?

$E-Tech sounded excited.

> $E-Tech: Yes! We do! Here let me give you the address… Okay I need to confirm with one of the account holders to make you a portal admin…

> $Selben: Is $ITLead an admin?

> $E-Tech: Yep!

> $Selben: Okay, I'll talk to him and see were we can get.

> $E-Tech: Great! Talk to you soon I hope!

$Selben notified $ITLead about the possibility of using the portal, and was surprised when he was unaware it was an option – he instructed $Selben to get it setup with a service account and to show the other techs how to use it. The next day during the staff meeting $Selben did just that, and showed how easy it was to modify and manage the accounts. $ITLead then asked $Selben to break up the report so each of the other techs could help him work on it... But $Selben confessed it was so easy he had already finished. Then $ITLead said he could divvy up the AD report instead... But $Selben again confessed that was already done as that was his primary role at his old job. As it was expected for the reports to take several months to get done but were now complete, it was then decided $Selben would finish up his contract working with the ~~helldesk~~ helpdesk instead!

Old story. When computer tech turns to gun tech and back to computer tech then back to gun tech again. – /u/TheLightningCount1

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lg7g5/old_story_whe

– –

Long time ago I was doing freelance tech support on the side, you know the craigslist kind, when a call from one of my regular clients went a little weird...

So this was a guy who just refused to listen to me when it came to protecting his computer from harm. I would tell him he needed x software, or enable y firefox addon (chrome wasn't a thing yet). He never did it. He always used to say he could just pay me to fix it.

Meh whatever I can deal with that.

I arrive at his place to see an old browser hijacker on xp. Booted the computer into safe mode, rkill, tdss killer, ccleaner, and then ran a few other programs to search for anything outside of the norm. Ran hijack this to check for anything malicious and also reset his browser.

I put adblock, ublock wasnt a thing yet, and installed noscript showing him how to bypass it on certain websites... again.

So everything is proceeding along nicely with his computer when he starts asking me about his rifle. We had talked about going shooting in the past so it was not uncommon conversation.

He mentions that his rifle keeps failing to extract and double feeding. I ask to take a look. He brings it to me and I check his bolt carrier group. I take it apart and notice the first thing I assumed. His extractor spring was overstretched and misshaped. Happens when people who don't know what they are doing over clean their rifles. I tell him where to go to fix it and he says he will, handing me an extra 20 dollars for my efforts. NICE.

About this time seagate disk utility came back with a failing hard drive notification. I informed him that this particular failure notification is merely an about to fail notice. Could be 3 minutes, could be 3 days. Point is we needed to take care of it. I had a spare unopened hard drive in my car with the exact size of his and offered to sell it to him for 75. Back then this hard drive went for over 100 in stores. I got it for free and was looking to dump it.

He agreed and I spent another 2 hours backing up his data and reinstalling windows on the new one. Had to pull out my laptop to grab the drivers necessary as his was the old style realtek kind. Ones that would not connect to the internet without the necessary drivers.

I finished installing the drivers and loading his data on it, thankfully this fixed all firefox problems as well, when his wife came home.

He had texted her to go by a particular gun store on her way home from work to pick up the ejector spring. He handed it to me and said if I installed it for it he would pay me another 20 dollars.

Heh OK I am good with that. I ran the seagate disk checking utility while I installed the spring. Was not a very hard install. Had to remove the firing pin from the BCG and remove the ejector. I remove the old spring and install the new one. He grabs a loaded mag and starts manually cycling the rifle to confirm its working. (THAT made me nervous.)

Thats when his computer came back with no errors. I mentioned that all of his favorites were gone, his programs had been uninstalled as well but showed him where all of his files were.

I loaded up everything in my car and collected a very nice fee from the guy.

All these years later I met him again while shooting out on the range during fourth of july celebrations. Never again have I shifted from one field to another so easily while on a job and probably never will again.

Password Security - /u/ISeeNothingKNT

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lluh5/password_secu

— —

LTL FTP
Sorry for the way this is laid out, first post, mobile and all that jazz.

Anyway this story happened a couple of weeks ago. Get a message from my manager, let's call him $M
$M Hey ISeeNothing, $CEO IS having a problem with his office, can you remote in and have a look please.
$Me Sure, I'll shoot him an email first to get more info

$Le Email
Hi $CEO heard you were having problems with office, is there any error or anything? If you ring when i can remote in I can have a look.

$Le Reply
Hi $ISeeNothing, I'm getting $Le Error Code (can't remeber what it was) I have a meeting with a customer where I don't need my laptop so you can do it then.

I think to myself ok cool, I can grab myself a tea and Google the issue. Google has a general consens of try the repair tool if that doesn't work do a reinstall. Cool nice easy fix.

Anyway, $CEO calls in and I explain what I will be doing while getting the remote software up. He explains that he's in a cafe and doesn't want a large install so try the repair tool.

I connect in use the repair tool and all works fine... for about an hour when i look in our support box and there's an angry email from him, great, pissed off the $CEO and only been here for a month.

Discuss the issue with $M to see if I'm in any serious shit and the best way to proceed. $M tells me it should all be fine just shoot of an email to get him to call for a remote session.

$CEO busy being $CEO all day so have to do it tomorrow morning. Come in and wait for the phone to ring with him on the other end. Have a relaxed conversation while setting up and connecting in. Get in, go to open word to check things, think crap can't do that but it ends up working, check the version and see he's on 2013 still so explain that I will still reinstall. Uninstall office reboot his laptop then he says he's going to the shops. Ask him to sign into office portal first. Not sure of his password so he goes to his excel document to check it. Yes, he stored all his passwords in excel. I remind him I've just uninstalled that so he can't so I end up resetting his password. Go into the portal install 2016 office and recommend he keeps his passwords more secure.

It can't my code that's at fault, so it must be your product. – /u/mixtwitch

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6le70t/it_cant_my_coc

- -

Hi TFTS. I (**$me**) worked as a support engineer for a multi-national chip maker. In other words, I was an engineer supporting other engineers. Yes, the customers were all technical themselves, but that often made it worse, because they thought that they knew everything.

One time, I had a call from a customer (**$knowitall**) who was convinced that they had found a bug in our silicon.
(**SPOILER ALERT**: they had not)

> **$knowitall**: Your silicon has a bug, and it only shows up occasionally.
> **$me (internally)**: Oh no! A non-reproducible issue! :(
> **$me (externally)**: I shall attempt to reproduce it and see what is happening.

/me gets all the details for the part and a copy of the source code...which is an absolutely **massive** single assembler file, with no comments.
/me cries...

> **$me**: Have you been able to reproduce the issue with your debugger attached?

(debuggers were very cheap and nowhere near as expensive as a full hardware emulator, and allowed you to step through your code on a real chip)

> **$knowitall**: Oh, I don't have a debugger or emulator. But I've been writing assembler for years, so I know my code is OK. It's definitely your chip that is at fault.
> **$me**: *sigh* OK, I shall endeavour to reproduce your issue here at my desk.

So it turned out that the problem (a value in a particular memory location should have been zero, but it was non-zero) only showed up when the device was booted from a battery – it was all fine when powered from the wall.

I finally figured out that the guy had forgotten to select the correct memory page when acquiring the value to use (i.e. he had zeroed/initialised page 0, but then had forgotten to switch back to page 0 from page 1). On boot, all memory locations have undefined values, which **$knowitall** obviously knew, because he was initialising some of them to zero for a reason.

When the chip was booted from a stable power supply, it did zero the undefined locations. Booting from an unstable source (e.g. placing a wire against a 9V battery terminal by hand), however, did not zero the undefined locations.

> **$me**: We found the issue, and it is a problem with your code, not a bug with the silicon.
> **$knowitall**: Well, I find that rather unlikely.
> **$me**: On line 12345, you use *var0*, but you forgot to select its memory page, so you are accessing an undefined location.
> **$knowitall**: ...oh...hmmm...I see...
> **$me**: When I select the *correct* memory page, it all works fine.
> **$knowitall**: Right...thanks for that.
> *click*

From beginning to end took about 3 weeks, because it was so hard to debug his spaghetti mess of uncommented assembler, and I had to help other customers. However, the satisfaction of solving it (and, let's be honest, being able to show the customer that it was their own mistake) was simply wonderful.

I was pissed, so I smashed it with a fork! Can't you fix it? – /u/j0kerOS

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6le8n7/i_was_pissed_

LTL FTP etc. *formatting suggestions are alway welcome!*

Cast:

$me: Student working part-time at a tech support company

$customer: Well...

Story:

It's a busy Monday morning and I'm working the front desk of our shop. I've had my first gallon of coffee, so I'm somewhat functional around people. Here comes $customer:

> **$customer:** Good morning, I was wondering if you could save the photos from my phone onto my laptop. *pulls out MacBook.*

Sounds easy enough and the customer even brought their own computer, as we don't save customer data on our machines. Of course I would be proven wrong...

> **$me:** Well, why don't you get your phone out, so we can have a look at it.

> **$customer:** Give me second. *$customer pulls out a plastic bag with bits and pieces of something that vaguely resembles a smartphone of the fruity kind.*

I was slightly dumbstruck.

> **$me:** I don't think there's any chance you'll be able to get data from that...

> **$customer:** Why? I brought all the parts with me! Can't you just put it back together and save the files? *tries to hand me a bent housing with parts of the circuit board in it, I decline*

> **$me:** It's literally broken! I mean the circuit board is smashed to pieces! There's no way we can get anything from that device! How did that even happen???

The customer looked confused.

> **$customer:** I was pissed, so I smashed it with a fork! Can't you fix it, please? I really need the photos!

> **$me:** I'm really sorry, but there's no way we can do that.

At this point the customer turned away and started rambling about how we were too lazy to fix his phone and were just trying to sell him a new one.

There's always a new low in customer expectations...

EDIT: formatting...
EDIT: We don't even sell phones... (thanks /u/some-british-bloke)

Do you know how sequential numbers work? – /u/ZeroManArmy

Long time reader, second time poster.

I started working for $MSP as a industry standard L2 tech. Basically we skip all password resets and work on actual problems. This doesn't mean the customers are any smarter though.

This was my exchange. If a client calls in for help they sometimes already have a ticket number.

- $ME – Obviously me
- $DL – Dumb Lady

$ME: Thanks for calling $MSP, is this a new or existing issue?

$DL: It's an existing ticket.

$ME: Do you have the ticket number?

$DL: Yes. It's 123, 345, 6.

$ME: Okay that isn't pulling anything up. To verify, that was 12 33 456?

$DL: NO! It's 123, 345, 6!

$ME: *tries the internal search as some techs give out that number*

$ME: 12, 33, 456?

$DL: *clearly getting frustrated about this* It's 123, 345, 6!

$ME: *dawns on me* 12, 34, 56?

$DL: YES!

Before anyone says anything about the length of the ticket number, I should have verified and that's on me, but we have two ticket numbers. The request number that gets sent to customers and our internal one. For what ever reason, some of our techs give out the internal one which can throw us for a loop when pulling up tickets.

Watching the technical world burn. – /u/Ten_DU

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lfc7f/watching_the_t

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I had the chance to stop a catastrophe, but instead sat in disbelief as it happened and watched it unfold before my very eyes.

I arrive this morning at a customer site to install a new solution for them on the production servers after everything went smooth sailing during the POC. It's been a gloriously sunny day, no traffic, great tunes etc.

Calm before the storm.....

It's not all too complex, DB already pre configured just back it up, create and install the production servers, detach the base DB and attach the one used in test to get all their configs up so nothing is missing and its exactly the dream they want it to be.

Now, they have an existing service that this one will go over, which will be installed side by side and rolled into live site by site with end user training etc.

I'm with a guy that seems to know what hes doing, gets everything done and doesn't miss any pre reqs on the server build so all looking good... all servers are made, everythings ready and its looking GREAT , i'll be out in like... 2 hours for a nice lunch and drive home. THE DREAM GUYS... THE DREAM.

Nope

Im waiting in the main IT room for him to come back from w/e he went off to do and he sits down.

> $Customer: "Anything missing from new servers?"

> $Me: "Nope, all good, copied all the software onto them so ready to start when you are, we can grab the test DB to attach once its all in and we get through any issues during install that we may run into."

> $Customer: "Cool, well i'll get rid of the old servers then, clear up the host a bit ready for the new system"

At this point $Customer then proceeds to start removing existing production servers out of Hyper-V. I'm watching it in slow motion thinking this cant be right, check its not test envionrment... it's not... it's live...

> $Me: "Err... $Customer.... why are you removing those? I thought we were deploying it side-by side with training??"

> $Customer: -- WHILST STILL DELETING THE DAMN SERVERS -- "Huh? Na they will be using this new solution so they dont need the old one."

STILL DELETING SERVERS

> $Me: "Yeah but you have thousands of end users and hundreds of devices to deploy this on, which will take days and we were going to do OOH and site by site with training so its all smooth, i mean we can do it this week but most of the end devices are going to be offline until we load them with the new software"

At this point it clicks, and the phones are going absolutely crazy with the expected calls when you roundhouse kick a production service into hell. The IT director comes in asking wtf is going on, which $Customer sheepishly explains, i'm thinking they just restore some backups or off site backups and it's a slight blip... but after a few hours of calling previous provider it turns out they all have to be on the same version/time for a restore and they can either find a full backup of all servers and restore them all or rebuild all the slave servers and start again.

All the while im sat behind them all eating a sandwich thinking "I should have said something...i could have stopped this."

I'll now be on that site for the rest of the week and weekend getting the new system up and running, which i guess for overtime is nice but... not the light and breezy 2 hour day i was really hoping for.

TL:DR If someone is doing something you think is horribly wrong, they probably are in fact doing something horribly wrong.

Worst thing is i'm not even surprised something like this happens anymore...

No, those protocols are not compatible! - /u/er1c1996

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lg8ml/no_those_prot

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So $boss, the IT Director, and I were discussing setting up the last Microsoft Surface in the first wave of rollouts, in anticipation of a second wave starting soon.

There was a bit of a snag since we didn't have the proper adapters to get this last $user set up at his workstation (as in being connected to his old monitors, keyboard, and mouse via a docking station.)

> $boss: Hey uh, go ahead and set up $user with the last Surface.

> $me: But boss, we haven't been able to because his monitors use DisplayPort and we don't have mini DisplayPort to DisplayPort cables.

> $boss: But didn't we just get those HDMI adapters in last week? The ones for the next wave of rollouts?

For reference, $boss has previously asked me what type of adapter I recommended based on a survey of what connection types I found on all the monitors. I told him that mini DisplayPort to DisplayPort cables would be our best option, since the cables would be cheap and all of our monitors have DisplayPort.

He ignored this and ordered 20 or so mini DisplayPort to HDMI adapters.

> $me: Yeah, but those won't do us any good, he doesn't have HDMI on his monitors. In fact, none of our monitors do.

> $boss: But just plug in the squared off end into the monitor and the HDMI end into the mini adapter.

> $me: Uh... I don't follow.

> $boss: Okay so the mini end of it goes into the Surface, correct?

> $me: (I assume he means mini DisplayPort) Yes.

> $boss: And the big, squared off one goes into the monitor, correct?

> $me: (I assume he means regular DisplayPort) Yes.

> $boss: So then just plug it into the adapter on one end, and the monitor on the other.

> $me: Boss, that's what I'm trying to tell you. Our cables are DisplayPort cables, we don't have any HDMI to DisplayPort cables!

This exchange continues for a few more minutes as we continue to miscommunicate the situation to each other.

> $boss: Bring an adapter and an HDMI cable over here, let me see.

I do so and prepare myself for what will follow.

> $boss: Okay so look, this end goes into... oh. I see. The port is not cross-compatible with DisplayPort.

> $me: Not at all, which is why I was very confused as to what you meant before...

> $boss: I guess the engineers over at $thirdparty lied to me then, they said it'd be compatible.

So I guess he had figured an HDMI cable would plug into a DisplayPort port just fine, or vice versa. Not only is that not true, but why he had to consult the vendor about this kind of thing is beyond me. Anyways...

> $me: Yeah, I'm sorry, there's just nothing we can do with these.

> $boss: Well I guess then I should return them and swap them for some active mini to DisplayPort converters.

A part of me dies when I hear him say that.

> $me: Boss... "mini" is just short for mini DisplayPort, there is no need for a *converter* between mini DisplayPort and DisplayPort, as they are the same protocol on both ends--

> $boss: No, see Microsoft has required us to get an active converter before. Don't you remember when you had to run to the store to get those VGA adapters when our passive adapters didn't work?

Another side note here, Microsoft has since released a dock firmware upgrade to allow passive VGA adapters to work with the Surfaces.

> $me: Yeah, but that was because we were converting DisplayPort to VGA. That conversion can sometimes require an active converter because it's converting from a digital to an analog signal.

> $me: In this case, you're talking about a theoretical mini DisplayPort to DisplayPort converter, which is the same as if you were trying to find an active converter to plug your micro USB port phone into a USB port. I don't even think such a converter exists.

> $boss: We've been burned on this before so let's make sure we get some active mini DisplayPort to DisplayPort adapters. I'll talk to $thirdparty.

> $me: *bites tongue* Okay...

After this conversation I did some quick searches to see if anyone even claimed to make an "active" converter for this purpose. They just don't exist, because there's no such need.

A simple cable is all that we need and he's going to have a hard time finding anything esle.

Where is word? – /u/Radijs

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6le5fr/where_is_word

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Another tale from the home for senior citizens. Starring me! And clueless coworker (CC).

Our CC called me up on the phone because she couldn't log in to one of our applications anymore. The computer was rejecting her username and password. And of course the user was insisting that she was typing everything correctly (rule 1, users lie!) but what the hell, on the off chance I don't immediately reset it and instead do some troubleshooting.

> Me: I think the language settings on your keyboard might have been messed up a bit. Can you open Word for me and type in your password there. And tell me if you think it looks odd.

> CC: Where is word?

> Me: Word? You should be able to find it in the start menu. Just click it and go to all programs and from there to microsoft office.

> CC: I don't know what you mean. I can't see Word!

> Me: (thinking wether it's possible we've got a computer somewhere without word installed.) We can try something else. Could you open notepad or perhaps a new browser window?

> CC: I don't know how to do that and I don't know where Word is. But my password is working again!

> Me: Well that's good to hear. Have a nice day!

I looked at the drink, I drank the drink.

No, it can't be THAT app – /u/some-british-bloke

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6leoxa/no_it_cant_be_

— —

Not official tech support, but on this occasion I did provide technology support to my mother.

My mother is one of *those* people who knows just enough about technology that they could be considered dangerous. In this case she's decided to download an app from an app store, without reading the reviews first.

One day my mother wants to download a $popular_social_network video to send to a friend who does not have $popular_social_network. So she puts into the app store and downloads the first "video downloader" she could find.

I later get told that she can't receive any phonecalls, so try to help out, the conversation went a little like this:

```
$me = me
$mother = mother

$me: have you downloaded any apps recently
$mother: yes i've downloaded one app but that can't be the cause because $app
worked properly
$me: have you tried uninstalling $app?
$mother: no because it isn't $app, $app worked properly
$me: okay
```

I check the permission on the phone, they all seem normal

```
$me: i'm going to uninstall $app and see if that helps
$mother: you can try but it isn't $app
```

I proceed to uninstall the app in question from the phone, and when it's done, call the phone from my phone. It rings.

```
$me: Your phone's working now i've uninstalled $app
$mother: what else did you do? it can't just have been that!!
```

tl;dr: my mother installed some kind of malware onto her phone, and refused to believe that was why she couldn't receive phone calls, even after she'd seen me uninstall the app.

I don't remember the name of the app in question here.

EDIT: Minor clarification to the tl;dr

Being On Call Makes Me an Operator It Seems – /u/iggzy

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6l8oj0/being_on_call_

— —

Hey TFTS, and to my fellow Americans here that got the day off (which I didn't) congrats.

Short reminder about my situation is that I'm tier 1 working for a company contracted to $GovernmentAgency. So of course $GovernmentAgency is closed for the 4th of July and we don't have to work either...or rather the rest of the IT team doesn't but I'm "lucky" enough to be on call. I was already woken up at 3am thanks to a P1 our monitoring company sent in for a VoIP server, so it shouldn't have been a P1, so I was a little cranky when this call came in an hour ago. $Me will be me and $AU will be Annoying User

> $Me: Service Desk Emergency Line, this is $Me

> $AU: Hi. I had a lot of work I decided I could work on today so I went into the office but I set off the alarm for the building. I don't know who to call.

> $Me: Unfortunately sir this is the IT line

> $AU: I know that...I just don't know who to call about this alarm

> $Me: IT doesn't have any relation to building security or maintenance so I really wouldn't know either.

> $AU: Oh. I thought you might just have all the numbers for things like this

> $Me: No sir. Only for IT teams to address IT matters

> $AU: Guess I'll just wait for someone to come because of the alarm

> $Me: That would be all I can recommend. Goodbye *click*

Tl;dr: Evidently being IT means I'm an operator for the whole agency

Wait, what device did you plug that into?!? - /u/grmmac

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6l7cqz/wait_what_dev

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LTL FTP

Backstory: I recently started working as Support for an aviation navigation vendor and I deal with various customers around the world. I started about 5 months ago, and have a couple stories but i think this one deserves to be here.

Story: I received a call from a customer in the Caribbean client, apparently having problems with a cisco "VPN" appliance.

After looking at the layout, this cisco VPN device was actually a basic router with port forwarding. Ok, no big deal. Probably needs to be reconfigured cause this client likes to experiment and change things. So, I request remote access to a workstation in order to attempt to reconfigure this device.

> ME: Could you give me team-viewer access to I can test connectivity to the Cisco device?

> client: it doesn't work!! fix it!

> ME: I would like to, but I need access

> client: FINE! its XXXXXxXX and password XXXYXYXYX

Neat, that was painless, they are pissed and they probably broke the config themselves. And they changed the teamviewer credentials from what we configured originally. Yay! :(

Just some info about the systems....

Internet <> cisco <> HP switch <> Our servers.

Our servers need to use the Cisco router to reach the internet, without this device working. These servers will be restricted to internal use.

ME: Could you make sure the cable cable into port 1 on the cisco and port 13 on the HP switch
client: port 1 on cisco to port 13? there isn't a port 13?!?!

ME: (What the hell are they talking about. its a 48 port switch!) Ok, which device are you talking about? The HP switch has 48 ports. Plug it into port 13. I cannot help if its not plugged in properly.

Client: OK its plug into port 1 on the cisco and another port.

Me: (Another port? Ok lets see what they just did)

I login to the HP switch and don't see any connection on port 13, or another other port that is configured.

ME: Are you sure you plugged in into port 13 on the HP switch?

Client: *confused* you wanted it plugged into the HP??

ME: (Thats what I asked) Yes, were is it plugged into?

Client: I plugged it into port 1 and the last port

ME: (last port, what?) Whats that last port number?

Client: port 8

ME: (port 8? the cisco has 8 ports. WAIT? THERES NO WAY THEY JUST DID THAT) ... Did you plug the cable into port 1 and port 8 of the cisco?

Client: yes...

> ME: Unplug from port 8 on the Cisco, and please plug that end into the HP Switch.
> I cannot see that device at all
> Client: OHHH....the Hp.....switch....
> ME: Are you in the same room as the HP switch?
> Client: .....yes....I'll go there now *click*
> ME: hello?

Well I guess he didn't want it fixed.

He later called back to say it was working again, once he plugged it back in

TL:DR:: Client decided to take a critical device out of the server room, and when asked to plug it into the switch, they plugged the ethernet cable into the same device on another port....

edit: formatting...

Unable to print… or follow due process really – /u/keepitsimple77

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6la22f/unable_to_prin

_____

Need to vent, remembered the following story

Early morning, I see several emails titled **"UNABLE TO PRINT"**. No one dialed, so I assume it can't be that urgent (needles to say, no ticket). Emails are coming from a remote branch, too far to quickly drive there. I dial:

> **Notepad (me)**: hi guys, whats going on
> **Tech (tier 1 tech)**: uh, the printer... it's not working out, what do we do?
> **Notepad (me)**: the main printer? or is it a different printer?
> **Tech**: a different one, the one for the pre-printed stock

I lean back and start to remember...

> **Notepad**: Oh! I remember now. Wait, it was put on hold months ago!
> **Tech**: They asked us to install it late Friday, said they couldn't wait any longer. Everything was fine yesterday, but now it's not working!
> **Notepad**: Brilliant!

It was a Tuesday. They ninja'd installed a new printer late Friday, and since everything worked out Monday, I guess they assumed it was OK, and no need to involve anyone else. I love it when we do trials by fire... right on Monday morning...

> **Notepad**: Ok. What is the problem exactly?
> **Tech**: It keeps jamming on the pre-printed paper
> **Notepad**: That's odd, I remember the spec sheets, and the quotes we got back.
> So which printer did they go with? X or Y?

When I got the requirements, I asked for a couple of quotes. Narrowed it down to two options, sent the info along with the price and a summary table comparing the two. Due diligence, right?

> **Tech**: Oh none of those. **VP** said they were too expensive. We just grabbed the
> "spare" from the building over, it was much faster.

Frustration rising...

> **Notepad**: Wait, but those guys handle low volume right? won't that be a problem?
> **Tech**: Well... they use the same paper! I mean, it's the same right?
> **Notepad**: There's a difference between printing 15 a day, to a hundred a day!
> How... but... so you put the "spare" which is used, and now it jammed after a full
> day of printing at a higher volume?
> **Tech**: ...yes?

Meanwhile, a desperate email chain was forming. The kind of email chain that involves ever more people, and you don't really want to read but you can't pull away from

> **DepartmentHead**: I need an estimate on when this issue will be fixed!
> **Tech2 (tier 2 tech)**: we haven't been able to reach **ServiceCompany**. We're
> looking for alternatives.
> **VP**: Don't just stand there! we have a fall-back plan. Get on it!
> **DepartmentHead**: entering them by hand is not really an option. It's not
> sustainable!
> **Supervisor**: can't we just, not use the new paper?
> **VP**: we can't just send them out one way, and a different way the next day! it will
> look weird to customers!

Printed my emails and highlighted the dates, just in case anyone stopped by to ask questions. Walk away...

EDITED for clarity.

Transferring Photos - /u/insomnia98

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6lcz3r/transferring_pl

Background story: I'm not tech support at all. I just help out family with their problems. So the other day we went to visit some rather older relatives. I was asked to transfer their pictures they took on vacation to their Windows 10 PC (from a stock Android phone). I'm mostly an iOS guy but transferring photos is quite easy.

So I get a cable and connect it to the PC. Nothing happens. Nothing. Well maybe the cable is faulty although the phone charged. I get another cable also nothing.

So I remembered I setup $PhotoBackUpCloudService. I don't know why but their internet was crazy slow like 100kbs/s... (maybe they exceeded their monthly limit).

I go ahead and let the download start but search for another cable. I found one that the PC did recognize!

Easy as cake. Find the phone. Click on it. Find the right folder and copy it!

DONE! Relatives are happy. No questions asked why it took me so long.

Remove their name! I think… - /u/TheN00bBuilder

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6l9at0/remove_their_

— —

Hello TFTS! I am not a tech at all, but I act as tech support for a business who does not have one, and I enjoy it. I do things like upkeep on systems (cleaning out bloatware that somehow "downloads itself," replace power supplies after they blow up, upgrade PCs, etc.), so excuse me if this isn't a great tech tale.

About a good 5-6 months ago, I was called in by a new person of about 3 weeks who was brought in to replace someone else who had to leave. They are still using the old Gmail account from the person before them and wanted to start "using their own name," which I could assume was their own Gmail account, based on their lack of knowledge of tech. Easy enough, just log out and log into the other one, right? Heh... not so much.

$n00by; me.
$user; the person.

> $n00by; Alright, so from this page, I need you to click on the little profile picture at the top right.

> $user; Okay, now what?

> $n00by; Now you just need to click "log out" and it should bring you to a sign-in page.

> $user; *silence....*

$user; *angrily* I didn't WANT to do that, all I WANTED to do was change THE NAME!

$n00by; I understand that, and you have your own account that your boss set up for you to use, right?

$user; No, I just wanted to **CHANGE THE NAME!**

$n00by; Of the account, I presume now?

$user; **NO!**

(what)

$n00by; So let me get this straight, you wanted to change the name of the old account you were just logged onto, right?

$user; NO! I want to change **THE NAME!**

$n00by;...so you want to change the old account name from "Worker McWorkerFace" to yours, right?

$user; **YES!!** Thank you, finally!

(I just asked you that and you said "no.."

$n00by; Alright, so now I need you to log into the old account again.

$user; ...I forgot their login.

$n00by; Alright, give me one sec.

They keep a paper book full of passwords in a safe for all accounts, so I check there and retrieve the password for them.

$n00by; Okay, so the password is "Password McPasswordyFace," does it work?

$user; Yes.

$n00by; Alright, click on the profile picture again.

$user; You better not log me out again.

$n00by; I won't. Now, click on "My Account" and select "Your personal info."

$user; Now what?

$n00by; Click on "Name" and enter what you want the name to be on the page that pops up, and click "Done," then close that tab.

$user; It won't let me change the name, says something about another account having to do it.

So it is controlled by the boss, easy enough... but wait. That means I didn't even need to go through the confusion with this person? ...ugh.

$n00by; Alright, that will need to be done by the boss, I can't do it from where I am, because you don't have the credentials to change the name.

$user; Well, this was a waste of time. *hangs up*

What's in a name? Well, something quite important actually. − /u/GeePee29

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6l68nm/whats_in_a_n

— —

There have been quite a few stories recently of files stored in the recycle bin and distraught users losing them when the bin gets emptied. Here is a similar story.

A long time ago (1996), in a strange land (Crawley, UK) I was contracting for a manufacturing company. The company had just upgraded all their desktops to Win95 but were still stuck using 8.3 file naming because the Novell servers would not support long filenames. Note for Novell geeks; I know they can be configured to do so, but the beancounters would not pay a four figure sum for the necessary upgrade to the RAM in all the servers.

One day one of the techs was working on a users machine and noticed a file called something like myfile.xkb. Not recognising xkb as a normal file extension he looks deeper. Even weirder, it shows up in explorer with the Word icon.

Digging deeper he finds a whole bunch of weird file extensions, some associated with Word, some with Excel. So he has a chat with the user and discovers that the whole department have their machines set up this way. They had put in place their own structured file naming convention and eight characters was not enough for their needs so that started creating their own extensions as well.

So the tech looks deeper and finds most of their extensions won't cause any problems, but they are using .DAT which could be problematic and .TMP. Yes! tmp used for data files.

So, the tech wisely reports to the boss and discussions ensue in which it is explained that tmp files might disappear never to be seen again. Users representative gets very angry about this and demands that we change the system so this does not happen. When we explain that it is Microsoft and not us who chose this we are angrily informed that we need to tell Microsoft to change it.

Needless to say, this does not happen. I.T. then tried to use this as a case to get the money to upgrade the servers to support long filenames because there was clearly a need, but the beancounters still said no.

TL:DR Users are renaming some Word files to use .tmp as a file extension. When told not to, they get angry and demand MS stop using tmp for temp files.

Computers don't have cookies – /u/iwriteofdragons

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6l29df/computers_don

– –

Just remembered this one.

I have a man in my life that we'll call H. He's in his 70's, has a PhD in mathematics, very brilliant man. Does work well with computers most days, surprisingly enough. When he can't figure something out, however, he will call either me or my father. Since he's basically a grandfather to me, I always just go to his house and fix it. (I've learned better than trying to explain it over the phone. 3x longer. Always.)

So one day I get a call from H.

> H: "Writeofdragons, my computer is remembering my login name and password for my online banking."

I was totally impressed he did online banking. My parents sure won't.

> Me: "Is that a problem?"

> H: "Well, I have a grandson that uses this computer from time to time and I don't want him to get into it. I tried calling the bank, so they'd fix it, and the little girl over there said something about cookies? I don't think she knows what she's talking about, but they won't fix it."

Ohhh boy and here we go. I just knew it was going to be one of THOSE conversations where if I tried to explain it over the phone, I'd be there three hours and he still wouldn't quite grasp what the problem was.

> Me: "Tell you what. I'll just come over and fix this for you."

> H: "Oh, can you fix it on my computer? We don't have to talk to the bank?"

> M: "Nope, sure don't. I'm on my way."

TL/R: My adopted grandfather doesn't know that computers do, in fact, have cookies and they're the reason why sites remember logins and passwords.

Is there an invasion? Good, I could use the peace and quiet – /u/scoldog

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6l5g65/is_there_an_in

— —

I work at a large car dealership.

I've been submitted quite a few stories to TFTS over the last few days. These stories were all written the night after they occured. Reading back, you'd probably see how busy it has been lately.

That's nothing compared to how its been today.

I got called at 7 this morning. Our early starters can't access the sales system from most of our sites. OK, decided to dial in and have a look. Most sites are unable to reach any server on the sales system subnet. Our head office is the only one able to access it. Thankfully, most people remote desktop to our RDS servers at head office, and are unaffected. Printing directly from the sales server is down though, but printing to email from the sales server works. So everyone has been emailing themselves documents today, then printing via Windows.

This settled everyone down to something resembling standard operations. With nothing else to do but liase between the sales server people and the ISP, I decided to send Junior Sysadmin out to deal with the latest attempt at desk shuffling that I mentioned in the ["Ah, this must be George Kaplan's desk"](#)

[(https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kyl77/ah_this_must_be_george_kap](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kyl77/ah_this_must_be_george_kap) story since that had escalated further in 'urgency' at least in the eyes of the branch manager who complained to the management team (Whole sales system down? I don't care, I need this desk setup now for the salesperson I don't have!). With my boss on holidays and Jnr offsite, there's only two of us left in IT.

I've been resembling a Cyberman most of the day with my mobile phone glued to one ear and my headset on the other, liasing between the sales server people and the networks people. The usual back and forth has been going on, sales support team blaming ISP, ISP blaming sales support and me fielding calls from every man and his dog who ignored all my emails and kept calling in whinging about having to work this way and asking when the system will be back up.

At 2PM this afternoon, I was trying to email the ISP another batch of diagnostics when my Outlook client went kaput. The email server was knocked offline. The backup software had the same issue I mentioned in my Electric Monk story [(https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6jzk7a/anyone_know_where_i_can_bt](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6jzk7a/anyone_know_where_i_can_bt) Now we have the influx of people freaking out they can't access email, which means the backup to the sales system has stopped working.

So now I am dealing with two phones at once, plus trying to kick the exchange servers in the head and also dealing with all the people walking in asking "Do you know email is down?" when the branch manager here starts wandering around the office yelling something.

I paused for a few seconds to listen out, turns out there is a problem with the water supply to the neighbourhood and it's been turned off. Which means if it is not back on soon, they're kicking everyone out of the building. Oh well, it's nothing I can fix (nor want to fix, no matter what some people think my job entails) so I go back to yelling at the sales server mob and the ISP.

Then I got another call. It seems there is an electrical problem on the side of the warehouse we rent out to another car dealership. They asked if they could turn the power to the building off. Oh well, hope the generator works fine!

I almost wish it was an invasion. I'd grab the dog, grab my rifles and head for the hills and go live in a cave without electricity and never have to deal with a computer issue again!

I may no longer actively work for my old telco, but you can never _truly_ leave tech support. - /u/Bytewave

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6l3h20/i_may_no_long

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Many here know I finished a PolSci masters last December and moved to full time union-related work; I mentioned I was studying for it quite a few times these last few years and explained more in comments since [(https://www.reddit.com/r/bytewave/comments/5hialj/why_was_everybody_late_and_more_import](https://www.reddit.com/r/bytewave/comments/5hialj/why_was_everybody_late_and_more_import) With no need to vent, I largely stopped posting even though there's many old stories I could and may still write. But given I have friends and a girlfriend still working my former job as tech support senior staff for said telco, I'm inevitably still in the loop.

On May 31st Android Pay finally launched in Canada, and mostly it works without a hitch. But unlike traditional credit and debit cards, banks do not cover a single penny if you get defrauded. They practically hang up on you if call about that. It's in their TOS, so it's part of the risk. Android Pay transactions here are currently capped at 100$ CND but it can add up real quick if someone gets a hold of valid credit or debit info and abuse it on a phone that can't be traced to them.

Telco I used to work for was in panic mode for a couple weeks in June, because several phones from tech supports' labs were implicated in multiple reported frauds. Each instance below 100$ but it added up fast. Even though nobody would refund a single penny, the telco was swiftly told a bunch of issues were related to their tech lab test Android phones.

It was clearly going to be an issue, as [even when it's obvious they usually take forever to figure out what's going on (https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/2b9heo/theres_an_app_for_that/)](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/2b9heo/theres_an_app_for_that/). Over dinner with [Amelia (https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/2psql6/she_just_shut_down_the_dire](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/2psql6/she_just_shut_down_the_dire) at her place, I learned it had been a problem for a couple weeks.

> Amelia: "So yeah, its been pretty insane, I heard we've been asked to provide a full list of all our testing devices for blacklisting to make sure it stops happening. Over twenty different devices involved so far but they want like a hundred, full-on ongoing witchhunt. Always related to credit cards in Sales' database. I'm not on it myself but management are pulling their hair off."

> Bytewave: ".. nothing surprises me anymore there but, did 'we' have issues with a single bank or multiple?"

> Amelia: "Only one, which is why management has not turned over the IMEIs yet probably."

> Bytewave: "And access protocols for labs haven't changed in the last six months?"

She nodded. There's no high security features. You're supposed to sign your name on a piece of paper before you leave a lab with any test devices but the place is far from using retina scans to confirm..

So I start messing with my phone, ignoring our Mexican food a minute..

> Bytewave: "Okay, well the only bank complaining has weak Android Pay security. They just need card numbers, CVVs, and from there you can validate with a simple email address with no mandatory confirmation and your Android Pay is live.. recipe for disaster."

Amelia: "That's been TSSS' angle so far, but nobody on tech floors have access to customers' credit card numbers, nevermind CVVs. And managers do watch who checks out test devices usually, so we've started using tracking apps again to figure out what's going on. Cleaning staff has been ruled out this time, they couldn't see any customer's full credit card info. So they've been mostly looking at Sales'."

Bytewave: "Sure, sales staff gets to see full credit card numbers and CVVs. But only tech staff have physical access to the testing device rooms. Both have access to customers' email addresses for app validation. So absent someone with two sets of security cards messing around, which is unlikely, the most logical culprit is.."

Amelia: ".. a manager or a sysadmin. They're the only ones who get full DB access and creds for test devices. And nobody cares if either 'forget' to sign out a test device. Still the same as last year. But its easier to blame it on imaginary sneaky salespeople apparently.

Bytewave: "Okay, I know you're off hours but you know I can't leave an easy problem unattended. Mind if I use your telework desk after this? I occasionally miss this stuff."

She nods and smile. After dinner.. I should probably have asked for consulting fees, but I just logged on and looked at senior staff emails listing IMEIs of devices pulled from labs over Android Pay issues...

I then text'd Gregory, my best contact at Internal IT, featured previously for stuff like fixing [an uneven keyboard (https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/2yxqmo/im_here_for_an_uneven_key](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/2yxqmo/im_here_for_an_uneven_key) or say [helping me shut down the billing system (https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/2fgvtq/fine_time_to_bypass_the_billi](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/2fgvtq/fine_time_to_bypass_the_billi)

Bytewave, TXT: "Gregory, I'm sending you a short list of devices from tech test labs. Please cross-reference IMEIs versus billing database access, top 3 users who checked the relevant test accounts most would be nice."

Amelia: "We tried escalating, but there's still suspended tickets for. Haven't lead anywhere yet. But its worth a try, I don't know this guy."

Gregory, TXT: "Wait, Bytewave?! I know I owe you a few but I thought you didn't even work here anymore."

> Bytewave: "I'm on indefinite leave for union-related work per the work contract, but I'm still technically a full patch L3 tech. I can whip up a Severity 2 Remedy ticket if you want, I don't mind."

Though I'm indeed technically still an employee on (likely permanent) union work leave, that would have been possible but it would have sent critical 90 minutes alarms to middle and upper management rated 'major network emergency'. We always try to avoid that kind of thing, [otherwise crazy stuff tends to happen (https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/2q1yvx/can_you_figure_out_whats_w](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/2q1yvx/can_you_figure_out_whats_w)

> Gregory: " Hehe.. that won't necessary. I'll do it, it's a quiet night anyway."

30 minutes later I get a single name PM'd back.

> Gregory: "Got a floor manager at tech support, Anthony, who accessed every billing account on your list according to internal IT logs, do you really need a top 3?"

.. No I didn't. Funny thing is, I had no clue who that guy was, started after I essentially left.

> Bytewave: "Amelia, here's your thief. Who is he? Never heard of him?"

> Amelia: "I'm not too sure, a new hire from March I think? Poached from EvilSatellite. So we have a couple months old manager sneaking test phones out of test labs, abusing his access to the billing database and to user accounts to add valid Android Pay creds, treating themselves to stuff worth less than 100$ repeatedly? .. Nothing to do with us, it was middle management's job to figure this out within two days of first occurrence."

> Bytewave: "Yeah, but when do they ever? Also, lower management's pay is awful, all tech senior staff earn way more than any of them, so the notion they are above suspicion for theft was always flawed. You got your guy anyhow. Go see the floor director tomorrow and take full credit. Most people don't even know I still _technically_ work there anymore, take the win."

She gave me the sweetest kiss and the thief was summarily fired pending further legal proceedings. Its unlikely what he stole will be recovered because despite VIP perks, he was already late paying for his heavily discounted cable, internet and mobile.

[Bytewave's Tales on TFTS! (http://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/search?q=author%3ABytewave&restrict_sr=on&sort=new&t=all)](http://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/search?q=author%3ABytewave&restrict_sr=on&sort=new&t=all)

I finally had my first TFTS worthy encounter yesterday – /u/elemandatory

LTL FTP etc

A bit of context first. A few months ago, I finally got ahold of my first real job at a local computer repair shop. I handle the front desk greeting customers and answering the phone, and when it's quiet, the techs give me a small, easy jobs to do (like putting a macbook back together or doing a stocktake). I'm not very experienced but I'm learning new things every day and I'm very thankful to have this job.

I have to admit though, I was nervous going in mostly because of this sub. I thought I'd be dealing with a lot of problem customers. But to my surprise, most of the customers are polite and understanding. I've had a few odd customers but never anyone quite TFTS worthy.

That was, of course, until yesterday.

In the morning, I got a call from a woman referred to as Angry Lady (AL) about her macbook. She said that she needed her macbook, she was going away soon, she needed a working computer, she handed it in days ago and it still wasn't done (we don't work on weekends) etc, etc. I gave most of the standard responses: I'm very sorry, I understand your frustration, we will call you as soon as it is finished, we are working on it, etc. I offered to transfer her to the tech who was working on it but she declined, opting instead to wait for our phonecall. I put the phone down and didn't think any more of it.

A few hours later, the manager handed me a macbook belonging to none other than AL. When the techs are busy, it usually falls to me to call customers about finished jobs, so this wasn't unusual. That being said, I reckon the manager knew who owned the computer and decided it was time I learnt about the *real* world of tech support. This is all he told me

- The data on it is irrecoverable

- There will be no additional costs

- There is nothing more that can be done

Bracing myself, I picked up the phone.

> *Riiing *Riiing

> AL: Hello?

> Me: Hi, this is $ComputerRepairShop. I'm calling to let you know that, unfortunately, the data on your macbook is irrecoverable. That being said, there are other companies with more specialised –

> AL: What do you mean irrecoverable? Does it work? I need to know if it turns on.

Wait, what?

> Me: I, um, I wasn't told it had any issues with –

> AL: Look, I left my computer with you days ago now, and you're telling me that it's still not fixed? I need a computer and you're leaving me without one, all you can tell me is that the data isn't there but you're not telling me if any of the other problems have been fixed.

> Me: *Managing to get a word in edgewise* Ma'am, I'm not a tech myself, I was only told that the data was irrecoverable. If you want, I could put you onto the tech who worked on it for greater detail –

> AL: This clearly shows a breakdown in communication with your company. The guy was supposed to have it written down for you (What?). You're clearly not taking my computer seriously, you can't even tell me what's wrong with my it and...

This went on for around a full minute or two. She just continuously told me about everything wrong with $ComputerRepairShop without ever stopping for a breath. I eventually managed to get her to agree to talk to the tech himself (I put her on hold and let him know first) and that was the end of my conversation with her. Out of curiousity though, I asked later what had happened to her computer. Turns out, she had deleted her notes. It booted up fine, nothing else was wrong. We couldn't recover the notes so we were done with it. No clue what she was going on about then.

Despite the stories here, I do still want to work in the tech industry. I enjoy computers and love working on them. That being said, this definitely opened my eyes to the more interesting parts of the job, and hopefull, I'll be a bit more ready next time.

Wait, so you don't regularly use files in the Recycle Bin? – /u/Sunturnt

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6l2k64/wait_so_you_d

Got a call from a pretty high up user last week (by high up, I mean she prints my pay check twice a month and handles all purchasing in the company) that she was not able to use Internet Explorer to reach a website she uses regularly. So, to fix that, I set Chrome as her default and let CCleaner run its magic for 15 minutes. Come back and make IE her default again, voila, it works again.

Dandy. Close ticket. Go about browsing reddit as usual.

Get a call today that her "Recent Documents" for Excel and Word are missing. What could be doing that? Oh, duh. CCleaner. Explain to her that it wipes it and if we don't run it for awhile, recents will start staying again. Proceed to open CCleaner and uncheck "Remove recent documents list" (which

is under Windows Explorer, not Office, but she doesn't know the difference). She notices "Empty Recycle Bin" and asks me when run, does it delete the files. Well of course, it is the trash can of a computer, so bye bye files. This was detrimental. She begins explaining that she uses files from it that date back to 3 and 4 years ago. (3 AND 4 YEARS AGO????) She was in a state of shock that they were gone and she would not be able to access her recycle bin files.

I began to explain that I would not be able to recover the files and apologized as I backed out of the office.

I've seen some crazy stuff, but this one sits atop the list of crazy for sure.

Edit: spelling

Just because cable A fits into port B, doesn't mean you should do it... - /u/sarcastic_dude

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6l41pl/just_because_c

‒ ‒

I'm an AV engineer at a university by trade, but have picked up the fundamentals of networking and switches by necessity and osmosis. This was about two weeks ago.

I get a call from a lab manager whose touch panel I had fixed a few months previously (bad USB cable -- spent entirely too long determining that...), saying it was "disconnected" this morning, but it was fine last night. I get there and sure enough, it was. Reboot of the device does nothing. Weird.

Next logical step, connect to the device and see what's up. I connect to another device in the AV system, whose LAN port should pass me into the "private AV subnet" so I can get at the offending panel. Can't see it on the network, so I run ipconfig on my laptop just to check...

Expected IP: [AV internal subnet]

Actual IP: [Building PC subnet]

...What? This is an *private* network, running on its own 32-port switch. Only one device on it is connected to both networks, but the device does not bridge its two NICs and also does not sit on that subnet.

I head to the AV closet to see what's up, check the other device IPs -- building network, through and through. I have no idea how to actually *configure* switches, but I at least have the wherewithal to know that if the devices are on the building network, then one of these cables on the other end is plugged into somewhere it ought not be. I trace each one (most are labeled, fortunately) -- most are in the ceiling and connect to inaccessible devices or terminate in the rack I'm in front of, but I remember that there's exactly one that is user-accessible; there's a booth with a network-based microphone that I had fixed before, that should be on the internal subnet also.

I head to the booth, and...sure enough, some ~~idiot~~ bored individual (probably a student temp) had taken the purple cable that was supposed to be connected to this microphone to power & connect it to the AV subnet, and plugged it straight into the wall. Naturally the switch saw the building network as an IP-providing entity and re-assigned IPs accordingly.

Unplug, reboot switch, all is well. Leave a note on the desk saying *"Don't plug the purple cable into the wall!"* for good measure.

Manager of the lab sends an email to my boss with kudos, so that's a nice bonus.

The epitome of "old person using computer" – /u/WanderingKittenHerd

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6l354x/the_epitome_c

- -
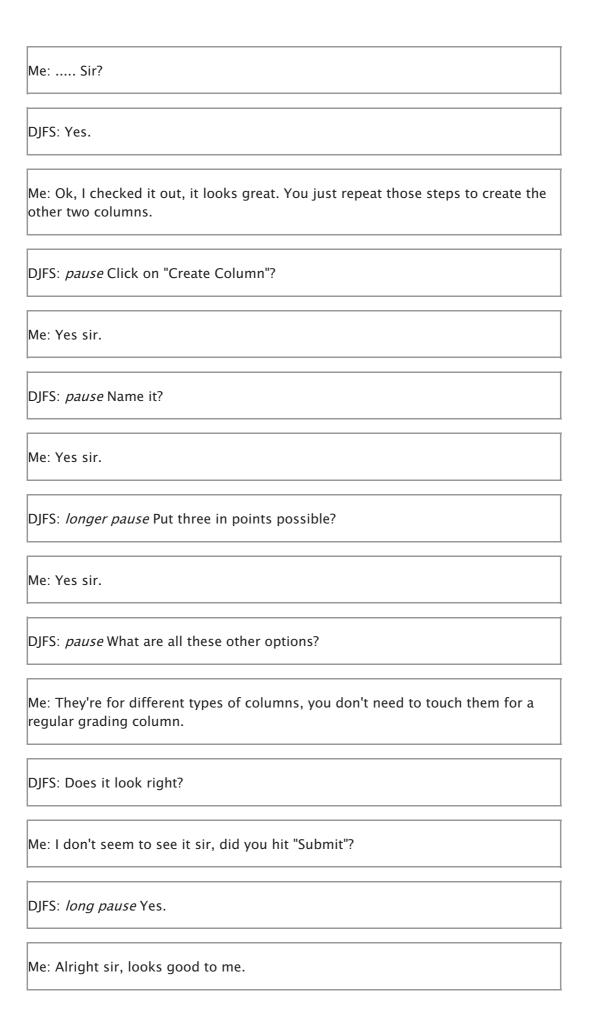
Edit: holy shit formatting

First time poster, I'm not traditional tech support, but I help professors with a service many colleges use to supplement their classes. It's easily described as the online version of every class we have. Professors have to use it at the very least for grade books, but are encouraged to use it to reduce paper waste with assignments, tests, class content, etc. I hope this fits, I know the clients certainly fit in with many of the clients from other tales I've read here.

I want to introduce a frequent caller that we'll call "Dr. John Fucking Smith (DJFS)" for privacy reasons. Whenever I mention his name to coworkers or my supervisors, I get an immediate sigh/groan/grimace/eye-roll. When I first started working here, I got forewarnings of professors that are hard to work with, and he was widely regarded the most PITA of them all. Most older professors like to joke that they're completely inept with computers, but they tend to be pleasant and write notes while I'm teaching them how to do something so they won't have to call with the same question again (exactly how our calls are supposed to go). The little old ladies are the best with that, and I've come to enjoy their calls as a nice and simple break from the professors who yell at me for not doing what *I physically cannot do, sir that is not how the math for that works please listen to me I know you've been doing it for 30 years in excel but you've been doing it wrong for 30 years and that's why there isn't an option that does it for you because IT'S MATHEMATICALLY INCORRECT.* DJFS, however, is not a sweet little old lady. You have to talk to him like he's a kindergartner, but in a tone that suggests that he's the president of the world and he could never do anything wrong. He calls multiple times a day (only on my shift, might I add) and repeats questions consistently throughout the call. He'll forget basic instructions within seconds, will forget to respond to you, will answer calls on his cell phone while mid-conversation with you, and interrupts frequently. A conversation with him typically goes like this:

> DJFS: I need to create three grading columns about this one assignment.

> Me: Ok, sir, so if you–

> DJFS: How do I do that?

Me: Right. If you take a look at the upper left hand corner, above all of the grade columns you already have, there's a button that says "Create Column". Click on that for me please.

DJFS: ....

Me: ....

DJFS: ..... *I can hear TV noises in the background*

Me: Sir? Have you clicked on the button?

DJFS: Hm?

Me: If you click on that button, it should bring you to a page that allows you to fill out the column information.

DJFS: Which button?

Me: The button in the left-hand corner that says "Create Column".

DJFS: Ok now what?

Me: You name it what you'd like in the box next to "Title".

DJFS: *Muttering the title name as he types it slowly*

Me: ..... *I used to try to fill the space here, but found it pointless. I'd always end up repeating what I said here later anyways*

DJFS: Now what?

Me: Now if you scr–

DJFS: Do I need to do anything else?

Me: Just one more thing, sir. If you scroll down, you should see an orange asterisk with the description "Points Possible" next to it. Input how many points you want there.

DJFS: Where?

Me: You shouldn't have to scroll far. It's under the section titled "3. Grading Options". The bright orange asterisk is pretty big, you shouldn't miss it.

DJFS: Where do I put the score?

Me: In the text box next to the name.

DJFS: Three, right?

Me: If that is how many points you want the grade out of, then yes, sir.

DJFS: Does it look right?

Me: Unfortunately, like everything else I help you with on these calls, I cannot see it until you hit the "Submit" button.

DJFS: What now?

Me: I can't see it yet, did you hit "Submit"?

DJFS: ......

Me: ..... Sir?

DJFS: Yes.

Me: Ok, I checked it out, it looks great. You just repeat those steps to create the other two columns.

DJFS: *pause* Click on "Create Column"?

Me: Yes sir.

DJFS: *pause* Name it?

Me: Yes sir.

DJFS: *longer pause* Put three in points possible?

Me: Yes sir.

DJFS: *pause* What are all these other options?

Me: They're for different types of columns, you don't need to touch them for a regular grading column.

DJFS: Does it look right?

Me: I don't seem to see it sir, did you hit "Submit"?

DJFS: *long pause* Yes.

Me: Alright sir, looks good to me.

> DJFS: I can't see it anymore.

> Me: Could you hit the refresh button for me, please?

> DJFS: Where's that?

Aaaaand repeat. Something that takes less than a minute to do yourself, roughly 5 minutes to explain to someone else (including answering the phone, getting their information, clarifying that's actually what they want, asking if they have any other questions and wishing them a nice day), takes a solid half hour with him. At least I'm getting really good at describing the location of buttons?

Friendly Food Company: The Wild Goose Chase – /u/chumly143

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6l3m3n/friendly_food

– –

Let me set the scene for you a little bit. For the last couple years I've been doing dispatch warranty work, and, with the same company, have moved to a T2 helpdesk job contracted to Friendly Food Company (FFC), not going to name them, but suffice to say, if you're alive on this planet, chances are you've eaten their food. FFC used to be based in Cityville, but recently has shifted to Village Town a few miles down the road, leaving the Cityville campus as a support site.

The Cityville campus is.....big, 3 buildings, 7 floors, making up about 2 million sq ft of Class A office space, it's big and fancy (https://goo.gl/eNWPCF). FFC has since decided to shut down the Cityville campus, well, most of it at least, building #2 will be shut down by the end of the year, #3 already is. A side note; while the team I am on is T2 help desk, we act as the "hands" for a lot of teams that can't physically get to things, say if the admin is in another state or country.

$mrn – Mr Network – a network team member
$me – Me....duh

(via messenger)

> $mrn: Hi

> $mrn: Do you have a minute?

> $me: Sure, what can I help you with?

$mrn: Are you in building #3?

$me: Building #3 is empty of FFC employees, I am in building #2.

$mrn: Super Important Firewall needs to be restarted *sif.na.ffcompany.com*

$me: In building #3?

$mrn: Not sure where in the Cityville campus it is. *sif.na.ffcompany.com*

$mrn: can you help me reboot it?

$me: That device could be anywhere, can you narrow it down at all?

The Cityville campus has 2 network closets per floor, plus one in the basement, plus a network closet per lab, at any given point we can have 10–15 labs up, all of which I don't have access to. 15 x 3 + 30 = I'm not paid enough for this.

$mrn: Cityville #3

Helpful.

$me: Like I said, building #3 is empty of FFC employees, we don't even have access to that building

$mrn: And what about the devices in that building? Who looks after them?

$me: I was under the impression that there were no devices in that building. Can you track it down more? There are 3 large buildings here, I can't just go looking for it.

$mrn: Can you find it by IP?

$me: I don't have the tools to track down an IP, the only info I can generate is what you've already provided me. Is there anyway you can narrow it down?

I can get some more information, but at most I can narrow it down to a building.

> $mrn: No..........I cannot do that.

Yes he can.

> $me: Then I am unable to restart that device for you.

> $mrn: Okay, thank you.

And so begins my adventures at Friendly Food Company.

tl;dr: Wild goose chase a la Hott Fuzz.

A tale of… the wrong holes – /u/namastayy

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6l2h8s/a_tale_of_the_

– –

Preamble: This is my first TFTS support simply because I recently started my first job in tech. May this be the start of a long and illustrious line of sharing in the joy and tears that seem to be part of a standard day within tech support.

Background: I work as a network technician for a school and am in the first month of the role. It has been hugely enjoyable to date and has left me with no regrets about switching to a career in IT. There have also been plenty of moments that beggar belief and bring a smile to my face. The school contains around 150 desktops and laptops plus a range of other devices. Lot of frustration comes from services being managed by external companies and hence, I am locked out from being able to manage them.

The wrong holes: This tale takes place on my very first day. An external company that set up a new server for the school (a month before I started....to be covered in the next tale) were present on the same day to do some reimaging and I was assisting in this process to speed it up. As we went around to each classroom, we were ~~assaulted~~ kindly asked to look at other issues that staff had been experiencing. This was one of the highlights:

> $confused: I am so glad you're hear! We have been having trouble with this computer for ages!

> $namastayy: (oh god, this will be great) Sure, could you explain what the issue is?

> $confused: Well. Every time a student uses this computer, stuff starts appearing on this one and not on the one they think they are using.

> $namastayy: *at this point, you may already have a clue to what the problem is but I dismissed it* Okay, we are reinstalling the operating system and I will then look at the issue for you.

I attempt to start the reimaging and have immediately forgotten about the issue temporarily, but the issue would not forget me! I try to use the keyboard as normal in the process but nothing is happening on my screen. In a fit of stupidity, I repeatedly try a few times until I look over at the other screen to see the poor computer following my every command.

> $namastayy: *AAAHHHHHHAAA, the problem strikes again*

Someone (I have my suspects, you may think it was the students, I think it was the teacher), had incorrectly plugged the keyboards so that they crossed wires to the adjacent computer. Easy to fix but, in my head, extremely difficult to cause in the first place? Apparently not.

On my way out, I did not want to make the teacher feel bad so I just left with a thanks and a mention of the problem being fixed.

Side-note: On my first tour of the school, every single member of staff I met said something along the following lines:

> $genericstatement: You'll be seeing a lot of me ~~mwahahahahahahahaha~~, I cannot understand computers at all.

In my naive thoughts, I simply put this down as being something they said as small talk.....

In all honesty, I feel very lucky to have been given this job and want to learn from every experience. Everyone has been extremely welcoming so far.

Any tips on formatting etc are most welcome! Thank you for reading.

The day I became true Tech Support - /u/TheMysticFrost

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6l2ls2/the_day_i_beca

— —

LTL, FTP, new to the whole helpdesk *and pay!* Apologies about any formatting, new to this whole reddit commenting and posting format. Nevertheless, today I became true tech support, I became **Helpdesk**^TM

It all starts in the morning. It's July 3rd, I work for a manufacturing company who sells to other companies, so business is slow. It comes as no surprise when I find the email server is down for the 4th time in 2 weeks, but that's another, less interesting tale.

I feel it prudent to mention out of an IT department of 7, 3 are here. The head of IT (who is in meetings 12/7), the programmer, and myself, a summer intern.

I get a phone call from one of our other buildings, minor issue. While away, I get an IM telling me to call $Dr, it's ASAP priority.

$TMF: That's be moi

$Dr: The user with 2 doctorates

> $TMF: Hi, I got a message asking to call you, something about your laptop being frozen?

> $Dr: Yes! It's gone now, so everything is fine, thanks!

Another day, another dollar.

Lunch, bought some parts for my new (and first) build, come back to a message from a different employee to call $Dr back, no context. 1 missed call. What follows is what I can only describe as mind numbing.

> $Dr: I need help getting onto the wifi.

She then proceeds to read off the entirety of the diagnostic window after it is done, so cool, she has some skill.

> $Dr: Oh by the way, I need help moving pictures from my phone onto the flash drive.

Easy peasy, brain cell squeezing.

Before I can get her to do anything with the network, we're already onto the phone. Management gets a company issued Iphone to work with our windows 10 machines, wonderful, I know.

We spent 10 minutes trying to open her file explorer. She does this by going to excel for the first 5 minutes unbeknownst to me (at the time). She manages to navigate all through her user profile, all wile not being able to find the *my PC*. Then I find out she's on windows 7. This goes on for an eternity.

Finally, she manages to get to the phone, but only after me having to tell her to plug it back in. A pop up says her phone is in asking what to do. She then proceeds to read the whole of everything it said.

> $TMF: Don't worry about that, you don't want to click the backup. Simply close out of that.

> $Dr: Okay, but now everything is gone.

I contemplated running away. For the third time I ask if I could just go over to her desk and show her, then she dropped the bomb that killed all of my hope.

> $Dr: I'm in Texas.

I was not. Not even close.

Finally we manage to get the file explorer open. After fruitlessly explaining how she can find her usb that is plugged in, she finds where she wants them backed up to. USB disk she says. Whatever, close enough.

We spend another 10–15 minutes going from there and her phone, because when we leave one she begins to stress and panic, and working with two file explorers is like asking her to eat the Appalachian mountains.

Once we find the pictures, she asks how to copy them.

> $TMF: All you have to do is highlight the ones you want and click copy.

> $Dr: Okay, I clicked on one and hit copy, do I have to do this for each one?

> $TMF: You should be able to click and drag to select the ones you want, kind of like click and dragging on your desktop.

> $Dr: Okay, do I do that for each one?

Time for a different approach.

> $TMF: Alright, do you see the pictures you want to copy?

> $Dr: Yes.

> $TMF: Wonderful. Hold control and press A.

> $Dr: Okay.

> $TMF: Right, now press control and C.

From here it takes a few minutes to find where she wanted to save them again.

> $TMF: Alright, now all you need to do is hold control and press V.

$Dr: Nothing happened.

$TMF: Nothing happened?

$Dr: Did I need to hold control when I pressed C?

Apparently there was a part of me left to die, 'cause I certainly felt it. We spend what felt like ages copying and pasting. Every dialog prompt she read the full thing out. Pretty thankful, but it grew old fast. Apparently she had done this before, as many files were duplicates. I am choosing not to include 10 minutes of asinine questions that lead to 'Oh I get it!' scenarios when she really, **really** did not.

She ends up running out of space on the first usb. The second one has just enough space, and even more duplicate pictures. I am talking copies of copies of copies. Eventually, we make it through. Here is a few things from the list I made to pass time.

She asks how to make sure it copied over, I assure her it's been done.

At some point she started backing up, AND LOOKING, for her pictures in a folder called HP Scan.

She had the files sorted by date and didn't know how to change that.

Wow, clicking on a .jpg makes the picture come up!

"But how do I make sure it's all there? Do I have to go back and check for each one?"

Kept calling it a usb disk.

Was surprised to find out iphone is not the same computer. Windows and Apple are separate things.

Kept asking about public folders, such as my documents, pictures, and music.

Hey, back in HP Scan again.

"So how do I make sure everything copied over?"

"Oh look, it's a picture of the horse I had to put down

Finally, when everything was said and done, I breathed a sigh of relief.

$Dr: But now we need to get the wifi working.

It's cool, I didn't want to be happy.

$Dr: So I normally press the windows key and F12.

$TMF: Do you have a key on the keyboard that looks like a wifi router?

> $Dr: Yes, the F12 key. It's not working.

I have a hunch...

> $TMF: Okay, try holding the fn key and hit f12, it should be next to the windows key or somewhere on the bottom.

> $Dr: Nothing happened.

> $TMF: Did you hold the fn key? It's supposed to–

> $Dr: OH! Oh my gosh what's happening? It's ju– Oh my gosh it worked!

> $TMF: Phew, awesome, that should be everything, correct?

> $Dr: Yes, thank you so much!

> $TMF: No worries, don't hesitate to call back if you have any more questions.

Fuck. Total call time: 1:16:38 There is so much more I'm just choosing to leave out do to sanity. Hope you don't have the pleasure of helping similar Users.

Ugh... *Users...*

Edit: Format should be better.

Edit2: I sit in engineering, R&D sorta thing. The two guys my age came by and admitted to trying to follow along by listening to the phone call. 8/10 Good fun

I don't want Windows 10, I want University! – /u/Peter_See

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kvyp1/i_dont_want_v

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EDIT: I wasnt very clear on this, when I say "University" I am referring to the universities name, which I must leave out for privacy reasons

I work as a student IT for my university (for obvious reasons I wont name the institution) Part of what I do is watch over the computer labs that are open for students to use. As it is summer there are not too many students that come through, but a couple of weeks ago I dealt with the most

incompetent, contradictory, and confusing person I have ever had the displeasure to come across.

One day while I am sitting at the labs help counter, a blonde woman walks in, lots of make up, looks to be in her mid 20's. I could tell she was going to be an issue the moment she sat down at a computer and immediately looked towards me with what I can only describe is a look of fear. Sure enough within a few minutes she shouts out in my general direction, "HI I AM HAVING SOME PROBLEMS". I try to get her to explain but getting annoyed she insists that I come over and help her. I really wish I hadn't.

She was staring at the log in screen just saying "Whats this?! What am I supposed to do with this??!!" all while flicking the mouse around uncontrollably. Not wanting to be rude, and just assuming she may not be that familiar with computers I explain that the log in screen for these labs simply wants your university username and password, the same for the wifi and every other service. She responds with, "Ok Ya but why does it look like this?!" At first I thought she was referring to the way the log in screen looked (we had just upgraded all the lab computers to windows 10, so she may just have not been used to it). I explained to her its the same as other labs, we've just updated to windows 10. She responds saying that, "ok ok but I want the University, not this". Starting to get weird but ok, I manage to get her to log in all the while she is sighing and huffing and puffing. What I noticed was how fluent she was with the keyboard which contradicted my initial thought that she was just not accustomed to computers. So we finally log in and... shes even angrier, clicking like crazy on random icons getting quite upset saying this isnt working why is this like this. Our computers have alot of science and math software on them and she hovers over a random icon and clicks it starting the application. When it (obviously) didnt open up "university" she started to freak out asking what the hell is this. I explained that it was graphing software used mostly for physics students... she promptly yells at me "WHY THE HELL WOULD I WANT THAT" (How the fuck should I know.. you're the one who opened it!) At this point my co-workers are getting interested and I can see them laughing as I try to help this woman. She kept saying "I DONT WANT THIS, I WANT UNIVERSITY!" Which did not make any sense. I tried to get her to open the browser she said "WHAT?!" ok open up google chrome? "WHAAT???"... uh the internet. open up the internet "SIGH I DONT WANT THAT, I JUST WANT UNIVERSITY". So I open it for her and sure enough when the default university page opens up she starts typing away and everything seems fine.

Cut to 10 minutes from now and shes back complaining that it isn't what she wants, "Can I just have a guest account?". At this point I noticed she was completely ignoring my 2 other female coworkers and kept asking me (am male). I explained to her we don't give out guest accounts, and that also a guest account is kinda pointless because she has her own account. "But I dont want other people to get my stuff!", maam nobody but you can access your account. Your files are saved to the account. "Yes but if someone goes on this computer they are going to get my phone number and other info!!" I then try to explain to her that our files are saved on a server, and not on any individual computer in the lab. This seems to be the most complex and foreign concept she has ever heard, arguing with us every step of the way. Again completely ignoring mostly my coworkers. She keeps asking for a guest account and I tell her for the 10th time "WE DON"T GIVE OUT GUEST ACCOUNTS IN THIS LAB" She then plops her boobs on the counter trying to show some cleavage , "Please.. can I just have a guest account"... I tell her no we cannot give her one, and that it wouldnt help! (Whatever *help* means in this I do not know). At this point a more senior staff walks in and asks her the problem. Upon getting a tirade of nonsensical ranting he says, "Well if you do not feel comfortable with windows 10, the other labs on campus still have windows 7". Her response, "I DONT WANT WINDOWS, I WANT UNIVERSITY". I snap telling her that WINDOWS IS AN OPERATING SYSTEM, UNIVERSITY DOESNT MAKE ANY SENSE. She gets extremely angry and then

leaves. To this day I still have no idea what she wanted, or how someone who seemed to be able to use a computer was also so computer illiterate at the same time. My only semi plausible explanation: Mac user?

Quickie: No, the WORLD WIDE web! - /u/hab136

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kyo6u/quickie_no_th

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["I Want University"](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kvyp1/i_dont_want_windows_10_i_v) reminded me of an old story.

Back in the 90s when the web was new, I was working in a university computer lab. One rather self-confident guy came in and said he wanted to "surf the web". We had Solaris machines and Macs, so I sat him at a Mac and pulled up ~~Firefox~~ Netscape Navigator for him, which defaulted to the university's home page. He then said "No, the WORLD WIDE web!".

It took me a second to process this, then explained that the machine was connected to the whole internet, and he could pull up any web site he wanted. By way of demonstration, I pulled up a university's page from the other coast.

He was still visibly unhappy, so I asked if there was some specific site he wanted to see. He got mad, said "forget it", and walked out. To this day I'm not sure what he was expecting and didn't get.

Edit: Netscape Navigator, not Firefox, lol

The site is closed in the evening! - /u/Fransiscu

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kyre6/the_site_is_clc

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Hey everyone, I'm no tech support nor IT but just a guy studying computer science who knows his way around computers. People I know ask for help about for every single thing that runs with electricity.

Anyhow, a couple months ago it was my dad's turn.
So, I live in Italy and an online system to manage your health care was just introduced. What you need to do is set it up for the first time and then you are good to go.

I was asked to help with the setup but I had been busy in that period for several reasons so I kept postponing.

Finally one day after dinner (we eat at approximately 8pm or later here) I show up with my computer ready to help

> $dad= "What do you think are doing at this time?"

$me= "Well I wanted to help you setup your healthcare account now"

$dad= "It's closed now, what do you think people wait this late for you at work?"

$me= "What do you mean?"

$dad= "It's closed now! The site closes at a certain hour"

Now here I can't help but have a little chuckle, which he didn't really appreciate too too much

$me= "Look dad sites don't close, there isn't a person sitting behind a computer waiting for you to start interacting"

Here he starts getting a little pissed at me

$dad= "Do you think I'm stupid? I know that"

$me= "Then what's the problem?"

$dad= "The site closes anyway"

$me= "whatever dad just give me your smartcard reader and your codes and I'll do it"

Fastforward 15 minutes I'm done doing everything that was needed and I give back all his stuff providing him with the infos he needs to login

$dad= "did you actually do it?"

$me= "Yes I called berlusconi and he opened the site back up just for me"

dad groans

I don't think I need to explain who berlusconi is but just in case, he has been the italian "first minister" for more than 20 years, several time linked to mafia and other fun stuff, hated in our family

tl;dr: my dad thought sites close after work time

Ah, this must be George Kaplan's desk - /u/scoldog

— —

I work at a large car dealership.

For the last couple of weeks, I've been hounded by one of our branch managers about getting another desk setup for a new salesperson at his branch. Due to a bunch of unexpected delays and other more important problems popping up, I haven't had a chance to get out there.

Today, after another phone call from $BRANCHMANAGER stressing the urgency of this new computer setup, I decided to get it over and done with even though the timing wasn't good. Chucked everything in the car, and headed on over there.

Rocked up at the branch, walked into the showroom and was immediately puzzled as there wasn't any new desks setup anywhere in the showroom. $BRANCHMANAGER wasn't there, so I asked his 2IC what was going on.

Scoldog: "Hey 2IC, I'm here to setup the new desk that $BRANCHMANAGER has been hassling me about. Where is the new guy sitting?"

2IC: "Oh, we haven't got a new salesperson."

Scoldog: "........... wait, what?"

2IC: "Yeah, we're still trying to find another salesperson. So far, no luck."

Scoldog: "Well, OK, maybe $BRANCHMANAGER has just found someone this morning. I might setup the desk anyway just in case. Where is the new desk?"

2IC: "I think that is it over there" *points to a desk jammed in the corner with chairs sitting on top of it*.

Scoldog: "That doesn't look like right. There's nowhere for the customers to sit. Is that where you want it setup?"

2IC: "Oh, we haven't decided where that desk will go yet"

Scoldog: "........... wait, what?"

2IC: "Yeah, we're thinking of moving these desks around here *points to some of the desks around him* but we're not really sure yet"

Scoldog "Well, in that case, I won't bother setting the desk up today.

2IC: "Can't you just setup the computer and we'll move it ourselves when we rearrange the desks?"

Scoldog: "........... No"

2IC "Oh.... Why not?"

Scoldog "Because we have to run cabling to the new location whereever it is. I'm not running cabling in the wall to this location if this desk is going to be moved soon.

2IC "Oh, OK"

Scoldog "Get $BRANCHMANAGER to reorganise the desks first in the way that he wants it, then give us a call and I will arrange the cabling guys to come out and run the cabling. I'll then bring the computer and phone out to install."

2IC "Will do"

It's like trying to start the carpeting in a new house when you've only just poured the cement slab.

My Favourite Things - /u/aNetworkGuy

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kyq2l/my_favourite_

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[Previously (https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/64wlxi/when_push_comes_to_shove/](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/64wlxi/when_push_comes_to_shove/)

So I'm managing a solution on the other side of the world which requires a specialized kit.

Recently, one unit died and needed replacement. So we opened a case with the vendor and had a replacement unit shipped out and sent one of the local guys to do the physical replacement.
Easy enough, only the local guy couldn't do it; he couldn't get the correct IP set up so we could do the rest of the configuration remotely.
Even after we sent him an illustrated guide couldn't he get the IP configured.

Further investigation showed the vendor hadn't shipped the model we asked for but instead their newer replacement model (and when asked for the original model told us they didn't have them anymore). In fact the "new model" was still the same unit, just with a different part number, black casing instead of white and newer firmware.
Unfortunately they also updated the GUI with a nicer look which also included moving all options around so our guide didn't work anymore.

Not a problem, right? It's just a case of clicking through all options and finding the ones mentioned in the guide, right?

No, he couldn't do it.

So I did what any good engineer would do: Have him ship the unit half around the globe (express), did the configuration and updated the documentation, and shipped it back (express).

Good thing we have local guys over there, what would we do without them?

I'm not logged in, what do? - /u/GMMan_BZFlag

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kx8b8/im_not_logge

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Hello! Long time lurker, surprisingly not first time poster (last post was ages ago, though). I provide help to game developers integrating their game with a certain popular gaming platform. I don't actually work for the platform, but many days it feels like I do. Most of the times, the questions that get asked are covered under documentation, and some are obscure and not covered, but then there are those instances where you just wonder, "how does this person know how to use a computer, let alone develop a game?"

Here is one of those instances. "M" will be me, "D" will be developer.

> D: $upload_tool says "Not Logged In"
> M: Because you didn't log in?
> D: Of course not.
> M: Try logging in.
> D: Thanks, it works!

Just... why?

The case of the failing password – /u/keepitsimple77

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kvgep/the_case_of_t

– –

I walk past a group of Tech Support guys, seems like they're all trying to solve a problem...

> **Notepad (me)**: hi guys, whats going on here
> **IT guys**: oh, we're just trying to reset this user's password...

I lean over and see a long chat conversation. So our user has already logged in to Windows and is able to open the internal chat, but is not able to log in to our corporate system.

> **IT guys**: we already reset her password several times, but she keeps saying it doesn't work...
> **Notepad**: I see all the passwords you've tried are variations on CompanyName
> **IT guys**: yeah, it's company policy. We use CompanyName with different Uppercase, Lowercase, add a number at the end, you know...

I see we're getting nowhere, and perhaps we're perpetuating the myth that IT is "clueless"... so I decide to help. I head down to the workshop (I know where this lady is at).

> **Notepad**: Hi, so I hear you're having trouble getting a new password
> **DistressedLady**: yeah, they send me new passwords, but the computer doesn't like them, what am I supposed to do?
> **Notepad**: ok, let's calm down. Could you please show me how you type in your password?

DistressedLady dutifuly tries to log in again, I see her type in the new password and it fails. I even try it myself and yes, it doesn't work. I now take over the chat

> **Notepad**: hey guys, it's me. How long does the password have to be?
> **IT guys**: 10 characters.

I count the "*" at the login screen, 9 characters. Clue? I open up Notepad, and ask DistressedLady to type a couple of passwords she was given. "CompanyName" comes out to "ComanyName".

> **Notepad**: DistressedLady it's ok, you just need a new keyboard. Please tell IT Guys to send you one, tell them I said so ok?

Walk away...

I tried, I really did. My 'first' venture into workplace tech support. - /u/LordSyyn

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ky9ma/i_tried_i_reall

— —

This happened yesterday, and I found it somewhat amusing. But not surprising. Also, first time posting here I think, might be a lot of superfluous content which is not needed to determine accurate context of the situation.

I was working as security for a big box store, and had a stand with camera controls right next to the doors in/out. It's not a huge store, and the next closest counter to me, about 4 metres give or take, is jewellery, followed by cust service, then a line of checkouts.

I work security, and the business has it's own corporate IT department (not in store however). You call up and troubleshoot, like you would for any other place.
Diagnose the problem, attempt a fix if IT suggests it, and if not, an appointment is made where they come in and sort it out.
I was 'summoned' over to the jewellery counter by a lady who while is friendly (depending entirely on how loosely you see that word), is notorious for being somewhat lazy. If there's an opportunity to push a task onto someone else, or have an extra break without being called out by a manager, then there's a good chance of it happening.
I take a peek at the monitor before entering the enclosed counter, and what do you know, I see 'No active signal' – or something very similar to that.
In the time I've taken to have a look at that, and formulate an idea of *why* this message is on the monitor (cause I've never seen anything like it before /s) the lady is on the phone to IT.
Taking a peek around the POS terminal, I find a silver box, and a button. No lights are on at the moment, push the button and presto, lights. Message has now disappeared and all is well with the world again.
Yeah-no.
Still on the phone with IT, or holding, or whatever. I've tuned out and left the area by this point. It's at the log in screen, and since I don't need or know the creds, I'm out.
'Summoned' again, and given the phone.

Talking to IT, and they're referring to the computer as a hard drive, and making sure I don't turn off the external hd. *This increases confusion to 2.*

Eventually, I explain that we're now on the desktop (so logging in has occurred, why tf am I on the phone even more) and the curt reply is quickly forthwith

> 'Cool' *click*

I don't even anymore. But I'm still not surprised.

The old man and the old computer – /u/pizzafourlife

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kw4x5/the_old_man_

This story happened Friday, and constitutes a continuation of my [tale (https://redd.it/6ah83p)](https://redd.it/6ah83p) of working as the only tech-savvy person in a four person firm.

Earlier in the month, while going through old equipment, I found two old computers. And I mean OLD. They are both Compaq Presario PC's. I un-mothballed them at one point to use one to write backups of our mini-server to an external hard drive, as I was tired of using my main computer to do it, and trying to find value in old things and whatnot. Upon finding peripherals to run it, and giving it a liberal helping of canned air, I booted it up. I told myself, well at least Windows XP was a good OS and will be fun to use in a nostalgic way. I hit the power button, and the unholy sight of a Vista boot screen burned my retinas.

So, we hired the now fourth employee of this tiny company to help out coordinating things, a licensed engineer named $Ray. now $Ray is an annoying but well meaning man, and frequently gets on my nerves. His laptop an ancient 2008 $pearbookpro would absolutely not connect to our mini-server or printers or anything.

We tried eveything we could, but we could only get him onto the wifi/internet not the network devices. Then, I realised the other old computer would serve this well. I hooked it up and told him to use it, either using chrome (which still works despite not getting updates) or a thumb drive to move things between laptop and desktop/server/printer

So he gets going, and after a brief discussion of using a mouse instead of a touchpad to use the machine, which somehow was a foreign concept to him. Then, the real fun kicked in. He asked how to get his email app on the computer. I asked him to elaborate.

$Ray: Yeah, I use the $ISP app on my phone and $pear to get into my email (yes, he uses ray.surname@isp.com as his main email)

> $Me: This computer uses vista. Apps had not even been invented yet. Why do you need an app?

> $Ray: that is the only way! how else do you do it?

> $Me: I have the same $ISP and when I pay the bill online, I just log on chrome

> $Ray you can pay bills online?

> $Me [pulls up isp website on the craptop, and shows him the bill pay and email tabs]

> $Ray: Wow! You are really good at computers!

I am not really good at computers, he is just really bad

The bluetooth cable - /u/Mazux2

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ks084/the_bluetooth

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$me is me
$client is client

$client: I bought this new phone and the guy at Apple told me it has a hotspot that I can connect to on my computer with Bluetooth?

$me: Yes. Most new phones allow you to do that. Is it not working?

$client: Well I don't have the bluetooth cable, so obviously it's not working - I can't even try to see if it works.

$me: -facepalm- Bluetooth is wireless sir

$client: Yes. I need to get the cable for it. I do not have the wires.

$me: No. It is WIRELESS. You do not need a cable, it's like an invisible cable. You just turn it on in your settings. Can I see your phone?

$client: I didn't come here for you to snoop around my phone. If you're not going to sell me the bluetooth cable then I'll go and buy it from Best Buy. You lazy tech people never seem to want to earn some money by making a sale!

guy storms out

Many years ago, at a tacobell. - /u/hpwu

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kt2r7/many_years_a

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hpwu -> me

TB-> anyone at taco bell

This...isn't a joke. Many moons ago I placed an order at a taco bell. I pulled up to the drive through and shout "Hello" after hearing some arguing back and forth (bare in mind this is mid week at like 3, so I'm the only non-employee there) I hear

TB:"Yeah, sir could you please come inside, we have to take your order by hand and the mic out there is messed up."

hpwu: "Alright see you in a moment."

TB: "Thanks sir"

So basically the speakers and mic works. Whatever maybe its something else.

In the building I come in and they have a pen, paper, and calculator, out in hand ready to go.

TB: "Whats your order? Sorry for the inconvenience"

Me: [orders] "Whats the problem?"

TB-Manager: "Well they did some updates and now the computers won't do anything." (Hammer fists the screen they enter orders on a few times.)

Me: [noticing that the employee doesn't know how to operate a fucking calculator and get tax back.] "Well I work in IT mind if I take a look?"

TB-Manager: "If you can get this to work. I'll give you your order half off, I've been messing with it all day."

Me: "Deal."

About 3 seconds pass and I look at the back of the computer. The VGA cable isn't plugged in at all, and the power button isn't working. I look at him and ask "Hey did they take these apart?" TB-Manager who is on his smart phone, sitting on a counter listening to music and talking to an employee about how taco bell needs to send someone to "fix this shit" replies "Yeah, stripped them down to stuff I ain't ever seen before."

I follow the cable back to the wall and low an behold the power strip they are plugged into isn't plugged into the wall.

The entire time I was following the cable to the power strip the manager kept saying "I've already checked that, they are plugged in." When I hooked the monitor up he kept saying "You don't need that cable to get the computer to turn on."

Conversation and all it took me a solid 3 minutes to actually 'fix' the 'problem.'

I don't understand a person who can operate an iPhone, but can't plug a few cables in. I mean don't they use headphones and get charged on a cable? I would get it if the technologies were wholly different, but fundamentally they aren't.

Heres the best part: They had been taking orders by hand ALL FUCKING DAY

I've recently made/making the move to programming/Web development, and I honestly think that computers should still all be mostly command line based, and just ever-so-slightly more complex, as well as that there should be the need to check someones computer skills before highering them. Nothing hard just "can you plug a computer up? how do you turn a computer on."

I mean I've heard people bitch about how power buttons are in different places on computers, and thats the reason they need IT to come down and turn their computer on every morning. Despite them using the same computer every day.

Tapes don't last forever - /u/harrywwc

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ks7kc/tapes_dont_la

— —

tl;dr - user does exactly as he was told, and nearly kills his business.

another tape/backup related story, this one from the early 1990s.

I'd been working with computers for about a decade by now, and was quite familiar with PC hardware, even though I was (professionally) a software developer (beware the programmer carrying a screwdriver!)

Anyway, a friend of mine and his wife were (and still are) Architects, mainly for house renovations and such on the Lower North Shore of Sydney (think "expensive houses"). They were one of the more advanced architectural firms of the day, they had a PC with some Computer Aided Drawing tool on it - I dunno what it was called. On the PC was a tape drive, and he had been told to backup his data to that tape drive every night, been given a DOS menu option to do it, and had done the backups faithfully every night for the past 3 or 4 years.

It was time to install a new (faster - DOS-5) machine, and he asked me if I could help move the tape drive from the old machine to the new, install the CAD software and restore all the files across so that it worked just like the old machine - only faster.

I went over to his work one evening after work, we mapped out a plan, and I went back a few days later to do the deed.

All the hardware moved over nicely, the drivers & software for the tape-drive worked just like a bought one. Installed the CAD software, moved the dongle from the old machine to the new, tested it, and it worked. Installed the printer / plotter, and that worked too.

It was easy, too easy...

The clouds now started to roll in...

I asked for the backup tape to restore the data, put it into the drive, fired up the backup software, chose the "restore" option, and the tape whirred away. Success!

Or so we thought.

The restore finishes, we open the CAD software, try to open a file - nothing. No directories, no files, nothing.

Exit back to DOS, do a DIR, no directories that are supposed to be there. Turn to the old machine, do the same DIR, and a squillion (well, several dozen) directories come up, look inside one and there are a bunch of files in there.

Hmmm...

Back to the new machine, restart the restore, whirs away, completes with 'success' status, and...

Nothing, nada, not a sausage.

Hmmm... I pop the tape out, and then open the protective flap to look at the tape surface. Completely clear. Uh, it's supposed to be "brown", as in "rust", as in oxide to store digital data on.

I ask him for one of the other tapes. "There is no other tape."

Uh, Houston, we've got a problem (yeah, I know, it's not the exact quote).

When the (old) computer was installed, he was told to use the tape drive to back up every night. What he wasn't told was that he needed to use a number of tapes over time. Instead, he had used a single tape and had, over the years, scraped all the oxide off the surface of the tape and deposited it in the guts of the tape drive.

After a few minutes of pondering, I checked the back of his machines, and both had serial ports (as was pretty standard, but the potential was the old machine may have needed an expansion card). I just happened to have borrowed a serial null-modem (cross-over) cable to play with at home from a guy at work. I connected the two machines together.

DOS-5 had a data transfer program that would step you through what you needed to do to transfer a 'bootstrap' across to the other non-DOS-5 machine, to then begin file transfers.

A couple of hours later, the transfer finishes, we fire up the CAD program and we have files! Yay!

I then sit with him and write down the following:

- take the old machine home and protect it – it is your **only** current backup
- go to the local PC store (where he bought the new machine) and ask them for a new Tape Drive (DDS) and a box of tapes – and make sure he got a cleaning tape too (there was one in the new tape-drive box)
- I then sit down and show him, with diagrams, a simple Son-Father-Grandfather backup system, with each tape from the last day of the month kept as a backup for that month, swinging in a new tape to the S-F-G mix, with a plan to make sure that no tape is more than 3 months (65-ish write cycles) old

He thanked me profusely, and asked me to come back tomorrow. As it was getting (really) late, and I had a 2 hour-plus train trip, I said it might have to wait.

He then said to me that I could borrow his car, as long as I let him go to his place first, so he could take the now very precious cargo home. A one hour drive in a sporty little Honda vs 2 hours with transfers on the train and then the bus at the end? Oh yeah!

Did I mention it was the middle of Winter? Dang those train platforms get cold at night!

I went back the next evening (and reluctantly handed back the keys ;), installed the new DDS tape unit (removing the old tape drive and binning it) and we made sure his system of backups was up and running, and all was well with restores.

I told him that every few months he would need to buy more tapes as he cycled through the monthly backups, and that he needed to run the cleaning tape through every month, and get a new one of those each year as well (and toss the old one out).

He's still in business 20+ years later - but for a time there, his business was on thin ice. It just needed a disk crash and when he reached for the non-existent backups...

Proof that space is infinite - /u/cspatrik

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kn0wy/proof_that_sp

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Long time lurker, first time poster, yadda yadda

I'm not IT, I just happen to be one of the few in our office who knows his way around the computer, so I often get asked for help. Usually it's just 'My MSWord doesn't work' or something, but this one really stuck with me.

$user: my co-worker; $me: obvious

> $user: help me, I have to complete this doc in 20 minutes but I can't type anything

> $me: what is it?

> $user: whenever I hit a button, Word just starts putting infinite spaces between letters

> $me: *huh.png*
>
> I go up to her computer. Notice at once that something is off. I look her dead in the eye, and without breaking eye contact, I move her phone away from the space button on her keyboard.

She asks me never to speak of it again. 10 minutes later the whole office knows about it ofc.

I thought your were looking at it already... - /u/ironman820

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kqs0o/i_thought_you

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So this one happened the other day and I can finally see the humor in it enough to post.

I work for a $SmallISP that due to our size and the owner's focus on support, we offer onsite computer support to business customers (all billable). This can be as simple as order and install printers to as complex as build and support servers for them. One such customer is the focus of today's ~~rant~~ story.

We installed a Windows domain controller/file server last year. This server on top of handling the computer management, also syncs their documents to it locally, manages the office antivirus (slowly migrating to a cloud system), and their in-house product management system. It is also a Terminal Server for a remote office to be able to access said management system. They had us order a replacement for their last XP computer and this takes place while I was onsite installing the machine.

We purchased a software that backs up all of a users documents and settings to a external hard drive/user share for easy import on new/reloaded machines. Since this computer is XP, it wasn't being synced to the DC like the rest of the machines in the office and I was running the software to back everything up to the samba share on the server when it crashed. Undaunted by a crash that was probably samba related, I just verified with the $SM (Site Manager), who was helping me, and shut it down for backup and restore in our office. I get the new computer un-boxed and turned on, try adding it to the domain, that all goes well until the first reboot...

The *new* computer took 10 minutes to boot into the OS and get our admin profile logged in. $SM and $me (/u/ironman820, the one and only!) are throwing a couple comments back and forth about the time it took when I notice that the computer didn't get the user shares added like it should once on the domain and our profile didn't have anything on the desktop either... That's strange, I try updating the group policy on the machine and it fails after 20 minutes of waiting for it to complete. I reboot the computer and power cycle the router in the back office (set up as a wireless repeater over 150 foot from the main office). The reboot doesn't fix it and it sits another 20 minutes trying a second update before I make sure I have a remote client installed and we get ready to leave for the evening because their closing time is in 15 minutes.

During all of this, we had two employees come back and ask $SM random questions about something, another one even comes and asks about turning off the lights before they leave. We make our way back to the customer's office and I'm packing up to head back to my office when $user stops us.

> $user: Hey, did anyone tell you we're down?
> $SM: No, how long has it been?
> $user: About an hour now, we figured you guys were working on it.
> $me: How much is down, can you get to your documents, or are you just locked out of the management software?
> $user: I can't even open a couple documents I need.

I kick into gear and quickly run to $SM's computer (the server is easily accessible, but runs headless) and try to remote into the server. After 5 minutes of waiting on the login screen to complete, I move to the other room and try to find a monitor to connect to the server directly. Through this, $SM is getting messages from $RemoteOffice two time zones over that can't access the server either. I get the monitor connected, but the server is not responding to keyboard or mouse input. I finally tap the power button and the server starts it's shutdown procedure after the longest 2 minutes I've waited at this office before. The server boots normally back up, I can access all of the file shares and their management system recovered without any noticeable data loss.

From what I can put together, the server's samba crashed, not the local machines, and slowly spiraled out of control while I was trying to adopt the new computer. Three staff members came back and talked to us knowing the server wasn't running normally, stopping all productivity for two offices in two states for over an hour and a half, not saying a word because they thought we were working on it.

Keep that trick up your sleeve for the next time... – /u/centicon

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kpa9s/keep_that_tric

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Email exchange the other day...

> $Customer: Hi. No videos seem to be playing ... on the Guardian site, YouTube, Twitter... Is a player missing, Flash or something?

> $Me: Try clearing the cache in Chrome – hit Ctrl + Shit + Delete – and clear browsing data from all time.

> $Customer: Thanks. Actually, seems to have somehow rectified itself. Odd, wasn't working 10 mins ago, but now all seems fine! Thanks.

> $Me: Well keep that trick up your sleeve for the next time. Anytime Chrome gets antsy I suggest clearing the cache.

> $Customer: "Ctrl + Shit + Delete"? I'm not sure I have that button!

> $Me: Those three buttons together!

> $Customer: I meant the "shit" button...

> $Me (slowly dawns on me...): Ha ha, sounds like you might really be needing that button someday!

Falling afoul of the first rule of technology. – /u/Liquid_Hate_Train

The Liquid Hate Rules of Technology:
Rule 1: Computers are stupid. They are by far the dumbest thing in any room (yes, even more than lusers). They can only do what they are told, exactly as they are told. No more. No less. Any and all weird system behaviours are because either something mechanical has failed beyond its ability to do anything about; or somewhere in its lifetime someone has told it do that thing, be it a luser, or a programmer.............

So, in my current occupation one of my duties is developing and maintaining a large piece of custom made digital signage. This giant screen used to use a legacy transmission method (circa 1980's/90's analogue cable) to move a signal from a DVD player some 40 odd metres along the underside of a roof.
We'd had some problems with the DVD player and replacing it was turning out to be a nightmare due to trying to find something which supported this kind of video out (S-video for anyone who remembers it).

While looking into this, my immediate boss laments to me:

> "I hate having to author a new DVD every time we want to change something. It's so time consuming. This is why we haven't had any adverts or anything for years. It's just not worth it making a whole new DVD just to update one or two things."

My response to this was, well why not go all digital instead?
So on request I took a simple Rasberry flavoured SBC and rigged it up to play locally stored videos on a loop through it's onboard RCA Composite output, which thankfully this massive panel supported (along with *serial* of all things. No, you read right, not VGA, *serial*).

Now, the majority of people where I work are more mechanically minded rather than computer minded, and out of the few computer people there I am the only one with any Linux experience or programming knowledge. Thus it fell to me to work out how to make this device play videos in a way any old Joe could make work.

I did this by bashing together a script to feed the native Pi video player files from a playlist, then set it to cron that script @reboot. Turn the whole thing on, boots, plays videos. Turn the whole thing off, it dies. TV and Pi on the same socket, one button daily operation. Easy.

Now we have an event coming up, and my manager (a network tech, but no programmer and his experience with Linux is "I've seen it from the other side of a room once") asks me, 'can we do a slide show of photos instead?'
No worries, lets see what we can do.

Does the native video player (omxplayer) also handle pictures? No. Shame, so no reusing the current system. Gonna have to find a new program which will run from a CLI and bash something together with that.

So, in the great way of the Linux community, enter the Frame Buffer Image Viewer. FBI will display things from a terminal with no graphical environment, just like omxplayer does with video and music. Great. How can I do my slide show with this? According to the documentation it'll take a

text file as a command line argument and load images listed in there as a slide show! Brilliant, no janky code right?

Heh.

So I open my SSH link and punch my command in to test: FBI /place/place/slideshow.txt
Nope. Doesn't recognise the file. That's...irritating. Lets just try to get it to show anything at all: FBI /place/place/picture.jpg
Nope. That's an odd error about 'not a Linux console'. Hummm...is this because I'm invoking it over SSH? Google to the rescue!
Seems it is an SSH issue. I need to add an option for which terminal to show it on. Add some '-T 0' and we get a glorious picture. Fantastic. So we can show pictures, that's great. Now we just need to make it a slide show.

Ok, not a problem, I can just bash together the same thing I used for videos, iterate through a file and cat together my command per image. Not ideal by any means, but if it'll get what I need, then hey, I never claimed to be anything other than a hack.
So about an hour later I have my script ready to test. I set it up like it would be in production and give it a punch. Bam, slide show runs. Great!

Then it stops.
Huh.
Seems when it gets to the end of the file, it just stops. That's no good. I need to make it loop, in perpetuity until it's all turned off. One of the key parts of the design spec is that it has to be usable on a day to day basis by people who melt at the first sign of anything with a computation device (yes, our chief mechanic does all calculations on paper. Not shitting). Easy! I know what to do.

So back to my script, and I just decide to add:
I=true
while (I == true)
do
etc etc
done

Poor machine didn't stand a chance.

So something I learned, when I pressed that fateful enter key, was that FBI doesn't hold the terminal while executing, unlike omxplayer which will prevent execution of anything else until the video is finished. FBI...doesn't care.

Yea.

My script opened some billion instances of the Frame Buffer Image Viewer a second (dat 1.2ghz quad core yo) and kept doing that until...well until the poor thing ran out of memory. Which it managed very very quickly.

Well, so much for SSHing in and doing anything else! That thing was more clogged than my toilet that time I took a chance on the cheapest Vindaloo this side of the M4 Motorway. That's ok, we'll hard reboot. Easy.
Ah. Seems I had...well, in my foolishness, my optimism, I had already set my little slide show script to run...you guessed it, @reboot. After a hard reset I was greeted with one hell of a flickbook. It was less a slideshow and more like watching an old reel to reel film being played at a too fast yet inconstant frames per second. That is, right up until it locked up again.

Give the poor thing credit, it managed about four seconds, more than I would have expected.

Crap. So by now it's EOB, and I've run out of time, and I've pretty much bricked our signage. Suffice to say I was having a poor day.

So I took it home, jammed the SD card brain from the Pi into my laptop and broke my script. Utterly. This allowed me to then put it back in and boot the device without it being able to self destruct. Remove the @reboot option and park it try again the next day.

Next day, I'm back on site, SSH open again looking at a single, still image. How the hell do I make it do a slide show without melting!? Add a 'wait' command to the loop? No dice. Add a 'sleep 5'? Weirdly, still no help.

Gods damn it, why won't it just read a text file natively!? All the documentation said if you just add the -l option then it...would...
Yea, I didn't do that first time around. FML.

So now we try it as it's supposed to work: FBI -T 0 -l slideshow.txt
Would you know it? It worked. Perfectly. I hate my life sometimes.
Set that up to run @reboot now I've tested it first, do a few more scripts to change between video and photo modes and show it off to the boss. A beautiful slide show of cats. So many cats. I didn't have anything else to test with.

Of course he loves it, just what he wanted. Hurrah! Of course his boss, the owner, just takes one look at it as he's passing and goes

> "Why is it showing cats? Fix it."

Yea, nice to see you too. Two days of testing and meltdowns, testing so many iterations of command line options and ways to invoke it by script and in the end I just needed to RTFM harder.

So yea. Poor thing, could only do what I told it to do, whether that was display pretty pictures of cats, or have a total meltdown. Sucks to be our tech sometimes.

TL:DR; Machine faithfully tries to do as it is told, regardless of whether it's a command which makes no sense, or a request to loop itself to oblivion.

The computers not working. FIX IT NOW! - /u/Gigabars

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6knepd/the_computer

- -

Hey there TFTS! This is my second time posting. I don't work for any tech support company, but I do have friends, family and teachers at school that have no idea how stuff works.

This tale is about my 10 year old brother, and although he is 10 years old, computers aren't one of his strong points.

Anyway

Me:(in the middle of playing with some friends on my computer.)

Bro: GIGABARS, FIX THE DOWNSTAIRS COMPUTER NOW ITS NOW WORKING FIX IT!

Me: (questioning sanity) alright calm down, what is the problem?

Bro: I DO NOT KNOW THE COMPUTER IS NOT WORKING FIX IT NOW!

Me: (looks at computer, it's on but the monitor is off. Powers on monitor.)

Bro: WELL ITS ABOUT TIME!

Bro: WHY DID IT TAKE YOU SO LONG TO FIX IT!

Me: (realized it only took 3 seconds. Walks away slowly.)

Edit: forgot to add that he did apologize for being such a dick. This was kinda a one time thing.

"Why is this Windows looking ugly and can you install Windows Word on it?" - /u/Mangu93

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6knplb/why_is_this_w

— —

Hi again! In the past I created this post about a tale that happened to me: Feel free to check and mash your head to the keyboard if you like (https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/5nbaoj/the_button_i_missclicked_is_ı

I changed my work after that, and I was lucky to find work in a local town hall. A nice timetable but a low salary (this is Spain, so I'm 'used to' it), and my main responsabilities are creating tech courses and teach them for the unemployees in the town (from basic things as using Excel to databases), but I also cover all the tech needs of my coworkers, as I'm the only IT in my building, that is a bit away from the town hall building, where the other IT people are.

So, the other day, I was told to switch the old computer from one of my coworkers with a new laptop, and give that old computer to a new coworker that just joined us. She was using always the computer designated for the unemployeed, and she shouldn't be using it. As my boss, not hers, couldn't stop her, he told me to install the computer for her and, at least she wouldn't be using the public computer.

So, as I was told in my instruction and anyone clever would do in this kind of job, I formatted the old pc (that had Linux Mint), and as no one gave me a working Windows key, I installed Elementary OS, as I had success installing that OS with other coworkers.

So, this lady comes (1 hour late, as usual), and she turns on the computer and this brief but funny secuence starts:

$me for myself and $lady for the coworker.

```
$lady: Can you check why my Windows is looking so ugly?

$me: Sorry, but I installed a different OS, as I didn't receive any license for
Windows.

$lady: But I really need Windows for my work, can you pirate it for me? You are
IT, you can
```

I know that she doesn't need Windows, or any computer at all for her work, but that's non of my business.

```
$me: Sorry, but I can't do that. Not only is ilegal, but if someone from the
local government finds out, I will be in trouble.

$lady: Well, okay, but at least can you install Windows Work?

$me: You mean Microsoft Office and Work, right? I can install a free
alternative, then again, I don't have any license.

$lady: Well, I will have to talk to $myboss to get this sorted.
```

The next day, my boss told me that I don't have to worry about anything, that she will be "entertained" wit the pc.

There's no place like 127.0.0.. wait what? – /u/TheTallChick

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6klht7/theres_no_plac

‒ ‒

Ok, I'm a manager on a tech support floor offering hardware and minor software troubleshooting. Delving into network settings is out of scope, but some techs go above and beyond. Most of our agents are competent, many have degrees. It's still front line, call center warranty stuff.

Today, I had to step in on one of my agents' calls. I listened in for 20 minutes, this is a transcription of what made me get up, and to put this in perspective, the customer wanted to do his entire home office network as static because the agent told him how unsecure DHCP is for a network. This was a case of the clueless leading the uneducated.

var $da = 'the wonderful agent', $cx = 'the customer';
<time on call: ~1h 45m, with a goal of 30m or less>

$cx : I still don't get why the home page is working, but the internet is not
$da : Well, got your network all setup, but let me double check
$da : I see it is set as 10.0.0.1 and your gateway is 10.0.0.0 which is all right
$da : Oh, I forgot to put in a DNS server, you use 127.0.0.1, right?
$cx : That's what we setup, yeah
$da : Ok, maybe it was being pushed off by another system
$da : There, and no, still can't access google
$cx : Its so strange, I setup everything exactly right
$da : Let me try one more thing
$da : Nope, that didn't work either

... at this point, I got up and walked over to see what's going on and stand behind him. He's sitting there changing the DNS server, trying 0.127.0.1, then 0.0.127.1. Mind you, you're supposed to be able to obtain an A+ for this position, at a minimum. Also, this guy was previously a senior, who helped guide new and weaker agents.

I stop him. I have him put in 'just a single 8' in each field. He tells me that putting in random numbers won't work.

Poof, it works.

He's wearing a headset, but the customer immediately shouts 'OH MY GOD ITS ****ing WORKING' loud enough I can hear it a few feet away. The customer immediately hangs up. I have him set himself so he can't take another call and decide to do a quick summary with the agent...

var $me = '/u/TheTallChick'

$da : How do you know everything
$me : Do you know what localhost is?
$da : Yeah, the computer.
$me : Ok, what's it's IP address?
$da : localhost
$me : No, the one with dots
$da : You just put in localhost
$me : Are you familiar with any DNS server IPs? 8.8.8.8 is Google, you can also use 4.2.2.2 from L3, both are well known for testing
$da : *–completely deadpan serious–* No, you're supposed to put in 127.0.0.1, which is the router

At this point, he continued to try and explain the call, but I just walked away. He was speaking entirely seriously, and fully believed he understood what he was doing. I think it's because he really believed it is why I had to hide in the lab to laugh it out and regain composure before finishing the coaching session.

Added bonus! The 'home page was working' was the Chrome 'Start' page; and a desktop, laptop, and phone were all set as 10.0.0.1. Also yes, the customer was contacted again, and things got straightened out.

TLDR: Clueless agent talked uneducated customer into setting up entire home office as the SAME static IPs on every device because it's 'a lot more secure than DHCP' and configured DNS as localhost on every device.

Tech Support in the Swamp – Communications – /u/UrchinJoe

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6klxc2/tech_support_

— —

Of all my tales from my time in the swamp, this one features the most tech support. It happened several years ago, near the start of my career, and features a cast of three:

$Me: Your humble narrator, $UrchinJoe. At the time a very green humanitarian logistician with aspirations to work in 'the field'.

$Hawking: My organisation's Technology Manager, a genius (hence the name for this story) and a friend. Known in HQ as "The IT Guy", **$Hawking** actually hates IT much more of an expert on field technology and communications.

$Manglement: At least five different people sent by the fickle gods of tech support to keep our project in the Dark Ages. Who's who is pretty much irrelevant to the tale, and would probably get too identifiable too quickly, so let's just treat them as a collective.

... and a supporting cast of drivers, field logisticians, casual workers and other awesome people who actually helped get work done.

The tale begins in the UK office of a small international charity. I was working mostly on procurement for a few countries with one Central African Republic (**CAR**) always being the most challenging. CAR is a landlocked, incredibly poor country that simply never got the kind of international media attention that even its neighbours, nevermind emergencies like Syria, Haiti or the Ebola outbreak generated, and for decades the whole country had been struggling along in face of famine, disease, and occasional outbursts of fighting with the Lord's Resistance Army. A few years ago, a loose alliance of mercenaries and warlords from several countries in the region invaded and quickly managed to topple the government, triggering a brutal religious civil war.

We were one of the few organisations already working in CAR, so we immediately started receiving funding from big donors to 'do something'. Orders poured in for essential medicines, vehicles, VHF and HF radios, VSAT equipment, laptops, and everything else you need to run a humanitarian response.

> **Hawking:** "Hey, $UrchinJoe, I heard CAR were buying a load of communications tech. Any idea if they know how to set it up?"

> **$Me:** "Dude, I don't even know if they have the people to get all of this through customs nevermind the capacity to use it. It chaos over there".

> **$Hawking:** "Don't worry. Look – get anything that's small enough to carry shipped here. So everything except the VSAT, that will have to go directly. We'll carry it into country and install it for them. the cost of our flights will be about the same as a courier".

Awesome. A slightly terrifying solution. A week of confused phone calls with $Manglement to clear budgets, arrange visas, and make sure they've really ordered everything they need, and $Hawking and I are sitting on a plane to CAR, with bags full of equipment in the hold.

CAR isn't the most dangerous place I've worked, but the capital was the place with the most visible dangers. On the street between the office and the guesthouse there was always one soldier with a rocket propelled grenade launcher. Movement was restricted and there was a 5pm curfew. So, work had to get done efficiently during the day, or not at all.

$Hawking: "So, we've brought all the equipment you needed. We can setup the HF and VHF base station here in the capital office, and then fly out to the sub-base and do the same there. Then you'll be able to communicate with them at all times, it's going to massively increase your security".

$Manglement: "That's great, $Hawking. I mean you can't go to the north base, that's too insecure, but the south is OK. Only problem is, we'll need to work with the UN to program the radios to the right frequency".

$Hawking: "Well I guess we'll just have to focus on the capital and the south for now. I already have the frequency from my last trip here, and all the software to program the radios. All I need from you is an 8m steel pole to mount it on".

$Manglement: "That might be difficult. I'll talk to procurement. In the meantime, we'll fly you down to the south base and you can get started".

Things weren't looking great, but I was glad to get out of the capital. The militias had previously really wrecked the town where we had our south base, but there was a sort of uneasy peace at the time.

$Hawking gave his same spiel to the field manager, who immediately sent a guy out to find an 8m steel pole. About an hour later a team of five local guys trooped in with one, cobbled together from all kinds of scrap, but good enough for our needs.

$Hawking set them to work digging a hole to mount it in, filled with rocks and concrete for some stability. We bracketed the VHF antenna and a pulley to hoist up the HF onto the top before raising it, and by the end of the day the antenna was up. While this went on, $Hawking and I ran some cables in through a window, and connected up the base stations on a table next to the entrance, where the security guards sat. Lastly, we hoisted the HF antenna (which is kind of like a double washing-line) and tied off its two ends to buildings at either side of the compound.

Next day, $Hawking set to work programming the radios, including all the radios in our vehicles, to the right frequency. This requires a laptop with the right software, and a USB cable. One of the cars wouldn't connect for some reason (I'm a bit hazy on the details of both the problem and the solution, but I remember $Hawking cutting up and splicing together a couple of USB cables for that one; it seemed to do the job).

Next, we taught the security guards and the drivers how to use the radios – charging, sending and receiving, call-signs, the works. They were super enthusiastic. The drivers would be able to call for support if anything went belly up on the road (which is by far the most dangerous place to be in a civil war) and the security guards had a new skill for their resumes.

We were delayed leaving by a couple of days – someone shot a government official in the capital, fighting kicked off again, and simultaneously there was a suspected Ebola case (luckily a false alarm) in a nearby town to us. All planes were grounded. We kicked around the base helping out with what we could. I 'fixed' a printer that had been sitting idle for a couple of years – no-one had

the right driver; I downloaded it onto my laptop, printed a test page, and then installed it on everyone else's. Not a big job, but stupidly satisfying to see a queue of people waiting to print later in the day.

When we'd been there a little less than a week, there was a commotion over by the security guards. They'd had a call come in on the HF radio.

> **$Driver:** "Car 15 to sub-base, we are about 150km out of town and heading towards the project site..."

It was one of the cars we'd tuned, just checking in. That's one of my most happy tech support memories; this sub base was now able to actively coordinate activities over a pretty huge area.

Just needed to connect everything in the capital and the country would be fully connected! Of course, **$Manglement** has to mangle. After a week, no-one had been able to source or fabricate an 8m metal pole. We hung the HF antenna between the building and some trees in an inverted 'V' configuration - not ideal for the location we were in, but better than nothing - and connected up the base station. **$Manglement** didn't want to allocate a permanent radio operator, so not sure how reliably the base would have been able to relay messages to the capital. Still, there was some sort of nominal communications infrastructure and we could leave satisfied in having done our job well. The rest is a tale for HR.

As we left the office on our last day I noticed the VSAT dish had finally cleared customs and was sitting in a storage shed to the side of the compound. "This way up" marked clearly on the side of the box... the arrow pointing almost *perfectly* straight down.

For Christmas that year I bought **$Hawking** a new HF-USB cable to replace the ones he'd sacrificed in the field. Perhaps not the most satisfying conclusion, but nonetheless it's where this tale ends.

Uncle Stan's wiring job - /u/ditch_lily

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ki14q/uncle_stans_w

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In the shop, Uncle Stan is real but apocryphal-we all have one, or know one. You know, the old guy for whom jerry-rigging (everything!) is a way of life. Uncle Stan is married to Great Aunt Edna, which is how I know of him-it's her sewing machines I see after Uncle Stan has 'fixed' it for her.

Enter Marcy. She called early in the week and said, "Hey, so I picked up this sewing machine at a yard sale, and I think it's a nice one, but it's got the weirdest wiring, and I'm sort of afraid of it-it can't be right. Can I bring it in for you to look at?"

Her yard sale find was a Singer 401 (one of my favorites) that was dry and dirty, but otherwise in good shape. Except for the wiring. Whoo boy, the wiring. I took one look and promptly diagnosed an Uncle Stan job.

This particular model has a 3-pin plug in the body; the cord plug is either bakelite or rubber and fits into the 3-pin plug, with holes to fit the pins. Depending on the power/foot controller cord setup, there can be either two or three pins; this one has two.

At some point in the history of this machine, the power cord had gone missing. Instead of buying a new one, Uncle Stan cobbled together this jerry-rigged horror. I can only hope that Aunt Edna never used it like this, but I have a bad feeling.

What did he do? Uncle Stan cut about 4' of lamp cord, split the legs, then soldered one leg to a pin (badly!), and then, for whatever reason, he electrical-taped the other leg to the remaining pin. There isn't even a ring connector, just bare wire.

I didn't even bother. I pulled the connectors from the motor inside, unscrewed the bakelite plug unit from the pillar, and tossed the whole thing. I knew I had sets of both connectors and plug units, so I just replaced everything, and said a quiet prayer that Great Aunt Edna had survived her brush with Uncle Stan's wiring.

Make backups, folks. Don't worry, it ends well. –/u/Intelligoth

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kkxxt/make_backups

– –

So, be me, 2 days ago. Sitting in the IT pit (server room) doing IT things when a wild Developer appears, panic in his eyes and a single bead of sweat trickling down his temple.

His laptop hard drive was failing. Taking 10+ minutes to boot and unbelievably high access times. This on a fairly high end i7 that he bought refurbished.

Explained that he had realized the drive was on the outs and had tried to clone it before things became truly dire. All of his consulting time-logs, financial documents, and legal info concerning a rather ugly divorce were on this thing. Oh, and the screen was shot. He was using a Sh*tpiece(tm) 15" 4:3 external monitor on it. The procrastination in getting it warranty serviced before the policy ran out is another story, but thankfully that wasn't my circus.

He was picking my brain about data recovery services and looking to ship the drive to Ohio at a cost of $500+, and hoping to get some reassurances and recommendations.

"Give the drive to me." As I held out my hand like a benevolent God. Some sputtering and arguing about how maybe I would make it worse if I worked my bag of tricks on it. Child, please.

"Give. The. Drive. To. Me."

I plug a drive caddy into the iMac from my previous tale, socket in his drive, power up, and the drive comes up on the Mac desktop.

"Sit down, browse the contents and copy what you need into a folder on the desktop. When you're done, I'll copy it to a WD Passport that you're going to replace for me."

The iMac read his data with no argument or hesitation whatsoever. Yeah, it was over a slow USB 2.0 connection, but two hours and 80 gigs later, he had all his important docs, photos, pr0n (just kidding, I don't know) safely offloaded. I then helped him set up a Dropbox premium account and showed him how to sync important folders.

Oh yeah, and the ending well part, he left and came back a little bit later with a bottle of Bowmore Islay 18.

Pro tip. If Windoze has issues with a non-grinding drive, plug it into a Mac or Linux box. Neither of those OSes give a damn about Windows file permissions and will happily copy whatever is readable.

What do you mean I need Java? – /u/slyhobo

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kh6h2/what_do_you

- -

Me: Hello! How can I help you?

Customer: My ordering software isn't opening.

Me: Okay, do you know if your java is up to date? Our program runs on java, and it can get kind of finicky if it's not updated.

Customer: Yes, I did that yesterday.

I then went through almost every troubleshooting step in our manual, until I finally decided we needed to just completely uninstall the program.

Me: Okay, go to your start menu and type in "Configure Java." Tell me what pops up.

Customer: It took me to a java download page. Should I download it?

Me: No, you shouldn't need to download it again since it's already installed.

Customer: But I've never downloaded Java, do I need it?

Bonus: I asked him if he had any saved templates. He said no, so I had him delete a folder that could have been causing problems. (If he had any templates, they would have been in that folder.) When we finally got the program up and running, he said "Where are all of my templates? They're not here anymore! Do I have to start all over?"

How does go Home on iPad? – /u/geon106

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kgqjc/how_does_go

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So this literally happened a few minutes ago. I work in technical support for a large company dealing with wireless audio products. So have had this job for 4 years and so think I have got quite good with handling the public and their lack of understanding. But this was something else.

CS = Customer :
Me = Me

Me: May you please minimize the app on your iPad so we can get to the iPad settings?

CS: Ah, you've got me there, not sure how you minimize apps on an iPad.

Me: That's okay, just press the Home key once.

CS: Which one is that?

Me: It's the one on the front of your tablet, has a square symbol on a round button.

CS: Erm I don't have that, just says Back and Continue.

Me: Not on the screen, on the bezel surrounding the screen there should be a button.

CS: I have a power button on the side? I don't have the button you mention.

Me: Not the power button, can you walk me through every physical button you have on your tablet?

- Long Silence (well, about 15-20 seconds)

CS: It just says to go to my tablets settings and has Back and Continue but continue cannot be pressed

Me: What button do you press to go back to the main screen on your tablet?

CS: I am not sure what you mean, I think I might take my system and tablet to an Apple store.

tl:dr, customer has no idea where his home button is or what it is. Will take his product to store to find out

Not sure if the above is something simple or if only a geeky tech person like myself would know...

Yeah we did let them play around and boy they DID play around... – /u/zztri

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kexj8/yeah_we_did_l

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'ello again. Here in my country it's just past the religious feast of Eid, so "Eid Mubarek" to all the muslims around you.

Short preface; I'm what they call an "undertaker" in my country. When a project is at death's door or dying because of manglement or sometimes engineers, I get summoned as a consultant and I either try to save the project or at least try to salvage it enough to be rewarded partial completion and get buried. Even though I'm a programming specialist in bigdata/gis/digital archives/data security, I meet way too many lusers to post in this subreddit once in a while.

My last project was a digital archive slash 3D GIS project for the largest municipality in my country. I already [did the BOFH once (https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/69656c/when_i_do_something_i_sho](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/69656c/when_i_do_something_i_sho) and I was sure they'd be wise to listen to my advice but heh... users.

After they successfully claim for two completions and got paid, I had resigned myself from the project to greener pastures when I got a call from the GIS team leader. I'll call him $ITL, ~~idiot~~interesting team leader and call myself $me because all the cool kids call themselves $me.

> *$me*: Hello $ITL, how is it going?

> *$ITL*: We have a problem. There are whole sections of GIS data missing or wrong. They get destroyed if we restore it from backups in a day or two.

> *$me*: Interesting... I'll have a look. Could you tell me the new password for VPN?

> *$ITL*: It's the same as before.

Yeah, because when I tell you "change the password, even I shouldn't know it, I'm leaving" it means "if you're drunk enough one day, please be our guest and destroy all our data, or sell it, or do whatever you'd like with it".

> *$me*: Oookey... Let's see.. Hmm.. who the *frick* is $usernameImNotAwareOf? He's obviously deleting the data.

> *$ITL*: Huh? Oh.. He's the QA figure of the customer. We sent the customer the username and the extension you coded.

> *$me*: Hmm.. So you gave the user **write** access?

> *$ITL*: *Silence*

> *$me*: Also you sent them my extension, which can mess with the actual archive data and map section files, eh? To everyone in the customer side, including several ~~morons~~users who have too much time and nothing to meddle with?

> $ITL: But they wanted your data filtering tool.

> $me: All right. Tell you what? I'm deleting this user. Make another user with **read-only** access. I'll splice the data filter into another extension and send it to you. Also will contact your network admin to change the password for impersonation. *(The extension I wrote uses impersonation, acts as another user in the network to reach actual scanned map section files. Yeah I'm lazy. Shoot me.)* Your folks will change the password in the settings of the add-in. Give only the QA folks the new add-in with only the view filter and the new user account. But first, send me a new formal request detailing the situation. You're gonna pay for nifty princess dresses my daughters wanted.

TL;DR;

If you give lazy government workers with too much time and too little to do means to mess with your data, they will.

"We need to check this with our IT department" - /u/CptFaustas

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kfmqq/we_need_to_c

— —

Can't remember when this happened, but got a normal ticket that something isn't opening from a client.

Got some tea, came back and found 10 updates on it...

> user1: Hello, i can't open X can you help me?

> User2 through 10: Various nosnence.

Wait what? Why are there 9 other people CC'ed? Remove them, ask to remote in.

> user1: ok, in a sec.

> user: no wait, you can't do that.

Why are they included AGAIN? And why am I in cc too.

> me to user 1 and : hello, it is unlikely that i will be of any help >without actually checking it out. Also you should only keep people in >conversation that are actually needed in said conversation.

This can't go wrong right?

> user1: see, i told you it is ok to remote in!

Ah yes, i got CC'ed to their internal talking now. Great.

> user: NO WE NEED TO ASK FOR IT DEPARTMENT FOR PERMISSION FIRST.

I do applaud sticking to this, but i was their IT department. Not for the first month either.

Guess who got a ticket with giving permission to work on the first ticket -_-

In the end it was something with office which reinstall fixed. Took 3 hours and in the end around 200 emails to get it done though.

Gosh that's complicated! - /u/Joxxorz

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kg90h/gosh_thats_c

— —

Hi - so I'm part of the development team for a medium sized business in my hometown.

I recently had to add a facebook integration into one of our pages, which is really quite a simple thing to do, and you can have it bring forth first name and email - which is exactly what we were using it for.

The user would click 'Continue with Facebook' which would fill out email and first name, but not submit the form in case the user wanted to add any more details (email and name being minimum for form submission).

Enter our marketing team - this nice girl from marketing was 'testing' the page after I'd finished making the changes, and she couldn't grasp that her email wasn't coming through from facebook.

To be clear - if your email isn't verified on facebook, it won't come through. I went through this with her at least three times.

She gets the rest of her department to test it and they have it all working fine, but that's not good enough. If it's not working for her, it's not working...

I start getting questions like 'But why, I don't get it?' and 'Should I google how to verify my email?'

I'm getting frustrated and I think of a psuedo-solution; add a new email address, set it as your primary, remove your old one, then re-add it - to force a confirmation email to come through.

The only response I get is 'Gosh, thats complicated'. I couldn't do anything but laugh at this point – it wasn't going any further than this, I'm not sure what else I could have done to help her. I explained to her manager and the changes are going live now as they were supposed to earlier in the week...

Please be advised you may need to turn your computer on. – /u/MetaMythical

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kahiz/please_be_adv

— —

So, this happened not too long ago. Kept vague for obvious reasons.

I'm currently a contractor on a significant enough contract doing various administration work. I'm going through a spreadsheet in the last few hours of a shift, just adding the last lines needed before I could start working on other things. Of course, this was the optimal time for the power to go out to the facility. Lovely. (Work got saved automatically, thank you temporary Office autocopies.)

No big deal, it's happened before. Wait a few minutes, power is restored, day goes on. At least, until we get an announcement over the intercom about an hour later.

> Intercom: Attention all staff – as you know, there was a power outage earlier today, caused by $GenericExcuseAboveMyPaygrade. Due to this occurance, if your computer is not powered on, please be advised you may need to turn your computer back on.

There was a synonymous *snrrrrrrk* heard across the floor as our group did their best to suppress their laughter. Apparently, there had been enough calls into Help Desk about "computers not working" to warrant a mass announcement telling everyone to turn their computer on after an hour.

The mouse isn't working! At least not here... – /u/rgbasrawi

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kecik/the_mouse_isr

— —

Hey all! I've been a lurker of this sub for a while and I think I just had an event worthy of being thrown in here.

A little background on me: I do T1 help desk work as an actual job at a event planning company. On the side I build and repair computers.

This story is from one of my $client(s).

$client asked for a computer build for her son to play Minecraft with and wanted it to be around $600. So keeping her budget in mind and decent specs (because we all know how much better an 8 bit gaming looks in 4K or 1080p), I threw in a Pentium and a 1050Ti. Basic stuff.

At home I put it all together and made sure all drivers and stuff were installed (making sure to keep all the bloatware and Windows 10 crap removed). I even tested it at work to make sure for the last time that there was nothing wrong with it (both $client and I work in the city, so we arranged pickup around the work day). Finally time comes to get the shiny new desktop to $client.

With the desktop out of my hand, $client and I started talking about games and consoles controllers and she complained about how the accuracy of a mouse was unparalleled by a controller, especially for games like Counter Strike! Yes folks. Counter Strike. The original. So we stuck up good conversation on that and how she missed playing it, so when I told her about CSGO, her eyes lit up. "I think I'm gonna spend more time on this computer than my son is now. Thanks!"

Finally the end of the day is near and I'm getting ready to head out for the night to a friend's house when I start getting texts from $client.

(Paraphrasing)
$Client: hi $me! The screen isn't turning on. What should I do?
$me: is the switch in the back on?
$client: no....
$me: OK turn it on lol
Computer is on, but she's not getting anything on the screen yet. And I start to worry a bit. It later hits me that she made another mistake. She plugged the HDMI cable into the motherboard rather than the GPU.

With that out of the way, we finally get to what this story is about. The bloody F***ing mouse (wireless bastards...).

Initially I thought it was just a special case of "needs wifi to get additional drivers" so because her mouse wouldn't work, I tried talking her through using the command prompt to connect to a wifi network. I also figured once I get her connected, I could remote in to double check for any other problems for her or at least set that up for the future.

With no luck at that, and me being very late to my friend's house, I begin to panic thinking I couldn't hang up the phone until this lady was happy with her mouse working again. A good hour goes by and we're going off of "try a different USB port" or "change up the battery" or even "is the mouse too far away?"

$client: come on, I need to get counter strike on here ASAP!
$client'skid: um mommy?
$client: not right now, honey. Mommy is trying to set up your computer.
$client'skid: but mommy, look!

Her mouse was moving on her work laptop every time she tried using the mouse that was "connected" to the desktop...

She had her work laptop mouse, trying to use her home computer's mouse receiver. Absolutely dumbfounded, I mentally closed this ticket and told her to switch receivers. FINALLY it was working again and she was able to get connected to the wifi and all that good stuff. All because of a bloody f***ing mouse.

At least now I know another possible reason someone's mouse won't work!

TL;DR
Client was trying to use the mouse of a different receiver in a desktop that had the receiver of a different mouse. And now she can play CSGO.

Thanks for letting me share, folks!

I thought the tapes were lasting longer than normal – /u/shiverslinky

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6keacv/i_thought_the

– –

Many moons ago I worked for a large website in the UK as a senior dev / junior sysadmin (large website, small company so start-up mentality). This tale relates to a late night upgrade to one of our Solairs servers.

The company in question had an intriguing setup but the long and short of it is that the people who knew Solaris and the website were in the north of the England while the servers (and the people who knew NT) were in the distant south. In this situation if anything needed updating / replacing / fixing a few of us from the north would rent a car, drive 4+ hours to the server room, spend all night fixing then hotel (+beer!) and then drive back if everything was tickety-boo in the morning.

Players:

$me – 'ello!

$bob – technically my supervisor in situations like this

$nt – one of the boobs from Sector 7-G (although nice bloke, not a Solaris bod)

I forget what exactly we were doing this particular night (it may have been a RAM upgrade in which case we were there while $sun engineer took 2 hours to do something that we usually did in 4 minutes) but the usual MO was to take the server down at around 1am, perform magic, perform checks and then bring everything back up for 4am.

The upgrade itself was uneventful (or I'd remember what we were doing) however as we run through the post-restart checks, $bob decides now is a good time to run the backup job to check that it's working.

```
root$ ./backup.sh
```

And the backup script completes immediately.

$bob: hmm... that's not right

$me: the tape drive didn't even spin up

(queue montage of checking that the drive is mounted and that it checks out with the hardware check tools)

And so our sleep-deprived heroes edit the backup script after running out of other options.

```
root$ vi backup.sh
```

...

actual-backup-routine()

...

$bob | $me: what the?!?

$me: did we comment that out during the last upgrade?

$bob: we must have... I think... it was 3am so *maaaaayyybeeee*

$me: xx :wq

```
root$ ./backup.sh
```

And lo, the light on the tape drive did illuminate and verily the tape did spool and thus the backup was performed

$bob: hey, $nt, we haven't been backing this server up in the past 3 months – do you guys check the tapes?

$nt: well, we did wonder as the tapes have been lasting longer than normal

```
cd /pub; more beer
```

tl;dr: the backup script wasn't backing up and hadn't been for 3 months (at least), local sysadmins never checked the backups but were surprised that the tapes were lasting as long as they had been.

IF I Was a Computer, My Eyes Would be Showing Blue Screens Right Now... – /u/404SoulNotFound

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kcamb/if_i_was_a_co

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Long time lurker, first time poster, still figuring things out, so formatting is null.

Not actually supposed to be tech support where I work, but I'll get to that.

A little background on my job: I work Student Support for a popular $OnlineSchool that helps adults finish High School and earn their diploma instead of settling for a GED. That being said, most of our students are middle aged/older, and many are less than comfortable around computers. Most of the time their kids or someone will help them with basic tech stuff, but when it comes to using our online classes, things can get a little complex for them. That's where they call us. If the problem is with the website, we escalate to IT, but if it's something simple like a password reset or how to open a file, we generally help them instead. Here's one that happened earlier today:

$me= me (duh)
$stu= student

$me: Hi, thanks for calling $OnlineSchool, my name is $404SoulNotFound, and I'll be your Student Support Specialist, how can I help you?

$stu: Hi, I was told by one of your other people about an hour ago that I could open my study guide in one page, and my practice exam in the other, so that I can use my study guide like it says in the notes. But every time I open the study guide, it closes the exam, and every time I open the exam, it closes the notes. Can you help me?

$me: Well first I have to verify your account (blah blah, verification). Okay, is it okay if I remotely log into your account and take a look? (We can remote into and shadow the account, but nothing else, can't even see what browser the student is on.)

$stu: That's fine, I just need this fixed quickly so I can get this done. It's due tonight.

At these words, my stomach shrivels, having read things similar on this sub. Whenever a user says it needs to be "fixed quickly" there's almost always a fight ahead. This feeling was not wrong.

$me: (Looking around the website) I don't see anything wrong with your account, can you walk me through what you're trying to do?

$stu: Well, I click on the study guide and it opens, and then I click on the practice exam button in the study guide, and that opens the exam, but now the study guide is gone. And if I click on the exam button on the dashboard (yes, we call the home screen a dashboard, executive team thinks it sounds "Super Modern and Fun!".), I can't find another button to open the study guide. How can I open both at once?

At this point, I'm thinking "easy fix." Just have the guy open two different tabs, one with the study guide open, and one with the practice exam open, then he can switch between them. I overestimated the user's computer knowledge. Badly.

$me: Okay, I think I know what we can do to fix this for you. Open up a new tab on your browser and log into your account again on that tab. Then, you can open the study guide on one, and the exam on the other, and switch back and forth every time you need to look at the study guide for help. Can you try that for me?

$stu: ...

$me: $stu, are you still there?

$stu: What's a "browser?" And what's a "tab?" I'm really confused and in a hurry here, can't you just fix this for me?

Red flags go up. All of my TFTS reading has prepared me for this situation, or so I thought.

$me: Okay, sir, the browser is what you are using to access the internet. Look at the top left of your screen and tell me what logo you see.

$stu: it's red, I guess. Looks like some kind of animal I think.

$me: ("great, Firefox," I think to myself, "I haven't used Firefox in years. Hope it's still the same.") Okay, sir now look to the right a little bit, until you see a little box with the name of the website that you're on. Tell me when you find it.

This was a mistake. Not telling him to look for it. Telling him to "tell me when you find it." I sat there for, I kid you not, 3 minutes and 37 seconds (yes, I kept track and wrote it down), while this guy tried to figure out where the open tab was.

$stu: Okay, I think I found it. It says $OnlineSchool on it, is that the one?

$me: (ready to take a long walk off a short pier), yes, sir, that's the one. Now I need you to click on the little box next to it with the "plus sign" on it to open a new tab.

$stu: But won't that close the page I'm on?

$me: (thinking I've got his concern figured out) No, sir, it will just open a new page in addition to the one you have open now.

$stu: Okaaaay (yes, he did the sing-song, up and down pitch, long winded "Okaaaay"). It DID close the page, what are you trying to do? I told you this needs to be done quickly!

Alarm bells start ringing, psychological firemen start sliding down mental poles, and I start praying to the IT gods to let me out of this one. I check the Instant Message System that we use to contact our 1 (count him, ONE) IT guy for our department of almost 50 people, but he's busy with someone else. I'll have to go it alone.

> $me: Are you sure you clicked the "plus sign" and not the "X" next to it?

> $stu: Yes I'm sure, now I'm looking at a page with a search thingy (exact words) on it, and my whole dashboard is gone! How do I get it back?

> $me: (see title of post) Sir, you've successfully opened a new tab. Now you can log into your account and I can walk you through the rest of the process.

> $stu: Where is the account I was just on? Why do I have to log in again? I just want to use my notes to take this practice exam, and you people are screwing me around. This is ridiculous! (Hangs up)

I sat there a moment, shocked at how rude this guy is, when my phone goes off again. Same number. Now we don't have direct extension phones, but the VOIP we use will remember what phone location (desk) a number last called, and route it there if it isn't busy, so I got the guy again.

> $me: (opening spiel, not wanting this guy to think I knew who it was.)

> $stu: You again! I want to talk to somebody that knows what they're talking about!

Check IM, IT guy is still busy.

> $me: unfortunately, there is no one else available. I could put you through to another support specialist, but you'd have to wait on hold.

> $stu: Fine, just fix what you did!

Deep breaths, $404, you can do this.

> $me: Did you log into your account on the new tab yet?

> $stu: Yes, because we CLOSED the other one, so now I logged back in so I can do my work!

> $me: Okay, we're almost done fixing the problem then. Can you look up where we were before to find the new page? You're looking for another little rectangle that says the same as the one you are on right now.

Cue a wait of nearly 5 minutes this time of listening to him mumble, grumble, and otherwise - umble through finding the ONLY OTHER TAB on his Firefox session.

> $stu: Okay, I found it, now what? (Insert rude tone here)

> $me: Open the study guide in that page.

> $stu: Done. (Very curt)

> $me: Now find the other page that we just opened.

The wait time is over 9,000

> $stu: Okay. Got it. (I can hear him grinding his teeth. This is not figurative.)

> $me: Open the exam on this page.

> $stu: Yeah. Got it. (My patience is about to be rewarded!)

> $me: Now, switch between these pages every time you want to go from the study guide to the exam, and you'll be golden! Is there anything else I can help you with today?

I believe myself to be a Student Support GOD. I will be teaching training classes in no time. This guy will mention me in his graduation speech when he makes valedictorian. I have truly ascended.

> $stu: This is all just too complicated for me. I think I'll just copy and paste the study guide into Word and do it that way. (Hangs up)

Head. Meet desk. Try not to leave too big of a crater.

TL;DR: Student can't switch between tabs, would rather copy/paste an entire e-book, one page at a time, into Word.

EDIT: Thanks for all the feedback (and Upvotes!), I guess I could have done a better job here with helping $stu open a new tab. It can be difficult to even remember shortcut ways of doing things, especially when, like me, you aren't necessarily a computer wizard. I am ashamed to say I didn't even know about middle mouse button clicking to open a new tab until someone in the comments mentioned it. I will never open a tab the hard way again, thank you mysterious stranger!

Hold me closer, fancy dancer - /u/StopherDBF

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kc7h5/hold_me_clos

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When I was in college, I took a class where all we did was run a tech support room where anyone from the community was able to bring their computer in and get it fixed for free. As you can probably imagine, this room attracted many senior citizens who mostly needed dust cleaned out and to have their 12 toolbars they installed removed. It got pretty monotonous most of the time, as we would usually have 5 different computers hooked up running different programs that would take forever to run on their old machines.

But one day, I met the fancy dancer. He came into the room, computer in hand, and set it down telling me that it wouldn't turn on. I go over how we operate, hand him a clipboard with the paperwork he needs to fill out and start to look over his computer. I immediately see that the switch on his power supply is flipped off and get ready to tell him as soon as he hands the paperwork back.

It takes him a good 5 minutes to fill it out, and he hands it to me. I look down and see some of the most beautiful handwriting I've seen in my life.

As I'm checking it, he interrupts me and in the most flowery and authoritative voice says, "You may notice that my email is Fancy Dancer # @ old people mail dot com. Now the reason that my email is Fancy Dancer # @ old people mail dot com is because I love dance. I teach dance. Dance is my life. I've been involved with dance for over three decades. When I went to sign up for Fancy Dancer @ old people mail dot com, it was already taken by someone who presumably loves dance as much as I do so I had to add a number to it."

It was the most beautiful and ridiculous statement I've ever heard in my life.
Actual email address obscured to protect the Fancy Dancer.

Edit: paragraphs

"My account is locked!" - /u/Sonicman1

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kc5uh/my_account_i

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Background: In previous tales I was working for my college's helpdesk. I've been hired for the summer (woo!) to do mainly the same job as the school year, along with some additional tasks that they give me.

With required forms to fill out before they come to campus, a bulk of my calls are from incoming freshman who are having difficulty accessing these forms, and most of the time they don't know their log in information, even though we mail it to them.

Surprisingly very few helicopter parents have come my way. Fingers crossed.

Today's call is an interesting one in the bunch

> $me: College student working at $college helpdesk

> $student: Incoming freshman

It was a bit of a slow morning when my phone rings

> $me: $college tech center, this is $me, how can I help you?

> $student: Yeah hi, I can't get into my account to complete this form, I've tried everything, am I locked out??

After a grueling process, I found out she was typing in her email address in the username field, instead of her actual username.

She then asks me how she can change the default password to one that "she can remember". I point her to that section of our site, and she thanks me and hangs up.

An hour goes by and I receive another call

> $me: $GenericGreeting

> $student: Hi, this is $student, I changed my password an hour ago, and now I can't remember it.

I checked my logs to verify that this was in fact the same student I talked to an hour ago

> $me: So you were able to change your password successfully?

> $student: Yeah

> $me: Are you sure that you don't have caps lock on, or that your password didn't have any capital letters?

> $student: Well yeah, but I can't remember it. Is there something wrong with my account? All the ones I've tried won't work

Cue the internal screaming as I have to hand this off to one of our full time staff, as I don't have the privileges to reset a password to the default.

As we're in the same office, I could hear him slowly, and repeatedly, tell her to change it to one that she can remember.

Hopefully she doesn't call again.

Hopefully I don't have a class with her.

Password problem - /u/organichewn

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6k9tol/password_prol

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Hello everyone, first post here. So I'm still studying, and as a part-time job I do technical support at my university. I resolve basic troubles, and when it gets too technical I transfer the tickets to our specialist. So basically 90% of my work consists of installing software, and resetting passwords. I'm sure you've all been there, but for me it's still fairly new and it baffles me how non technical savy (or just incompetent) some people can be.

Anyway, today I (**$me**) went to some **$teacher**'s office to deliver him his freshly reinstalled MacBook. I went over what we had done with it, and then it was time for him to log in to the Wi-Fi network, his e-mail, etc. Everyone on campus has an account they use for all those kind of services.

$me : Alright, now I just need you to put your password here so you can log in to the Wi-Fi network.

$teacher : Let me think... You know, I have a lot of passwords... Oh yeah I think that's the one.

Computer logs into the network

$me : Perfect, that was indeed the one. Now let me launch our backup software, and you need to put your password again... here.

$teacher : *thinks*

$teacher : I can't remember it.

$me : No, it's not another password, it's the same one you just put 20 secondes ago.

$teacher : Yeah, yeah. I can't remember it.

$me : I'm not asking for another password, you *literally* typed it less than a minute ago.

$teacher : I can't remember it.

I waited a little more to see if his memory would come back but it obviously didn't, so I left after showing him how to log in when (or if) he remembers his password. How is that even possible?

Printer Not Working - /u/jhodgkin

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6k8z3l/printer_not_wo

– –

So, I have been reading the tales here for a little while now, and thought that I would share one from a number of years ago about a printer.

Players: Me & User

I was working as Desktop Support that also did phone support. And it, was just another day at the office, was not slow but just enough to keep busy. Then the phone rings.

Me: Tech Support this is Me. How can I help you?

User: Yes, the printer in our office suite is not printing.

Me: Okay, no problem, is the printer powered on?

User: Yes, printer is powered up and it was working earlier this morning.

Me: Okay, when you print does the print job go to the queue?

User: No, when anyone prints, it just goes dissapears in computer land.

Me: Okay, what is the printer name?

User: Printer12

Me: I will do some digging around and see what I can find.

The call ends, and I log into the print server to see what I can find. I find the printer and I can see that it show the printer is offline and because the printer server sometimes gets weird and will show printers offline, I try to print to the printer. And sure enough it never hits the queue.

Scratching my head, I decide that it time to take a walk to the office and check out the printer. I needed the excerise anyway. I make it to the office and go to the printer. Sure enough it has power. Within a minute the user walks over.

> User: So, got the printer working?

> Me: Not yet, just got here.

> User: As you can see the printer is plugged in.

> Me: Yep, sure is. Give me a few moments.

> User: Be at my desk.

As the user walks off, I look at the printer and just think, this is interesting. Just then a person from the cleaning staff walks by pushing a vacuum cleaner. I think to myself...no, there is no way that happened. I climb under the printer table/desk and find that the media converter (all the printers have them being that they did not have a fiber card in them) was not plugged into the power strip. I plug it back and just shake me head as I stand back up. I walk over the user's desk.

> Me: Welp, the printer is all fixed. Give it a go.

> User: Great!

User tests the printer and it works like a charm.

> User: That's great, what the problem?

> Me: Well, here is the thing. The printer was working this morning right?

> User: Yes

> Me: How about since the cleaning staff has been here?

> User: Now, that you mention it, it did stop working soon after they got here.

> Me: It would seem that when they vacumed they unplugged the media converter to plug in the vacuum and never plugged the media converter back in. Just a friendly suggestion, might want to mention to the cleaning crew to not unplug things. Have a great day.

"I don't know how they got on there..." - /u/Gnobodyuknow

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kaq1o/i_dont_know_

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Tech Support for Tech Support

Let me start by giving you the back ground of where I work. I am a SysAdmin for a Tech Support Center of a software company. I am responsible for not only all server and network issues but also all tier 1 & 2 issues for the 80+ "Tech Support Agents" on the floor. Mind you they are supposed to be tech savvy as they are Tier 1, Tier 2 and even Tier 3 tech support for company's software product.

Most of the agents are decent techs and won't bug me about mundane issues, most. Then there are the techs that have no clue about IT and probably have no business ever touching a computer let alone telling someone else how to fix software issues. This brings me to my installment for today.

$Tech 1 – Myself

$Tech 2 - Tech in another office having to deal with $Agent from my office

$Agent – Tech Support Agent being less than helpful or smart about everything

Day 1

Agent was in another office for training and decides today is the day he is going to get in touch with IT to fix all the problems with his laptop. Agent heads down to the IT office and is greeted by Tech 2.

$Tech 2: Hey $Agent how can I help you today?

$Agent: My laptop is always slow. I don't know why. Can you look and see what you can do? $Tech 1 has tried to make things faster but it is still having issues.

$Tech 2: Sure, let me see what we have here. (He then proceeds to find that $Agent has installed all kinds of "helpful" software on his laptop.)

$Tech 2: Why do you have these programs installed on your machine? Do you even need any of these?

$Agent: I don't know and I don't know how they got on there in the first place. ($Tech 2 later tells me it was about 30% of what is installed on this machine)

$Tech 2: I'm removing these items and if that doesn't help them we are going to re-image.

$Agent: Sounds good to me. If that's what you need to do, then go for it.

$Tech 2 did end up having to re-image the machine and even replace the HD since it was discovered that it was having read\write issues.

Day 2

$Agent takes it upon himself to go to the IT Directors office and ask about how he is supposed to work now that his machine has been re-imaged and the VM he used on this machine was never re-installed. $IT Director tells him we will be discussing this in our meeting this afternoon and it will get straightened out.

$Tech 2 calls me

$Tech 2: Hey bud, your boy $Agent is at it again.

$Tech 1: What's he doing now, I swear.

$Tech 2: He went to $IT Director and told him he couldn't do his job since we didn't install his VM back on his laptop.

$Tech 1: Didn't you pull that off his old HD and move it over?

$Tech 2: Yes sir, and I told him all he must do is install something that will play it.

$Tech 1: Then what's his deal? He knows his team installs what flavor of player they prefer and this isn't something we do for them.

$Tech 2: I don't know. Just heads up we will be talking about options in this afternoons meeting.

$Agent's manager pays me a visit asking about what's going on. I explained to $Agent's manager that his VM hasn't been wiped he did have it moved to his new machine and he needs to pull his head out and install the player he prefers and quit being a pain. She smiles, explains that that's what she thought and thank you for looking into this.

I will be implementing, soon, a new AMA program on a regular basis to try and alleviate some of these situations since it appears there may be more non-tech savvy "techs" than I realized.

Phones are not working! - /u/sunlovecats

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6kbwdl/phones_are_n

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So this happened earlier today. A bit of a backstory first:

I work in a call center and was recently promoted to a team lead position. This was only a couple of weeks back so I'm still pretty new to this job. Considering this is a call center we have this VoiP software that handles all the queues that all go to different departments depending on what extension you punch when you call. Now each morning the opening team lead or manager has to open all the queues, which is both inbound and outbound for all the departments. However, because nobody in the company knows all the nuances of this software as nobody was fully trained on it when we bought it so there are some sort of issues with it on almost a weekly basis and most of the time this happens in the mornings. Typically whenever something goes wrong our head of IT just tries to poke around a bit or call the software company itself to find out what's going on. Well, today was one of those mornings.

I come in later than most of the company employees as I have an afternoon shift among a few others. As soon as I get in I see the manager and the other team lead standing in between rows of cubicles and most of the employees looking up waiting. I ask the nearest girl whats going on, she says the phone system cannot make any outbound calls since 9. I turn around and I see our IT manager running around from computer to computer frantically trying to solve the issue and at the same time talking to the software company with no avail. At this point I see that it's gonna be a long day, I get my coffee, settle in and check my emails. After 10 minutes I decide to take a look at the VoiP software just to see if I can help in any way. Now, I have no IT training or education whatsoever but I'm always curious about these things. As soon as I open up the software I see the reason for the problem that a manager, a team lead and the IT head of the department could not solve. What was the problem, you may ask?

They never turned on the outbound queue in the morning and nobody could make outbound calls for over two hours. They literally did not think to check that first and click one button. And these people have worked here for years!

I don't know if I should laugh or cry, but I saved them the embarrassment by turning it on and pretending somehow the issue resolved itself.

IT Newbie and The Game - /u/Selben

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6k3wfe/it_newbie_and

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Do you like to read in Chronological order? Here is the Index (https://www.reddit.com/r/Selben/comments/60r5ps/timeline_for_tfts_stories/)

$Selben - Tier 1 tech support - earlier on in his career but totally ready to go that extra mile!

$Slick - IT Director for the company, had some IT background but mostly a suit.

$Tech - Tier 1 tech support - at the main corporate office.

$Soda - Tier 3 tech support / IT Manager and mentor of $Selben - Extremely knowledgeable IT guru. Was the IT Director for a short time as $Company grew, but rejoined the ranks as the politics were not for him! Also an amazing friend! Also had a never-ending supplies of 48oz soda's constantly on his desk, in his car, literally everywhere!

$Lead - A team lead at one of $Companies locations.

First Day

Finally after a nervous weeks wait $Selben received the call letting him know he had been hired and would report to the main office the following Monday. He celebrated by having two ramens for dinner that night, he had finally landed a "real" I.T. job and with his schooling plus previous experience this should be no problem... Or so he thought.

That Monday he parked his car and headed into the office building, had a friendly enough greeting with the front desk then was led to the I.T. bullpen, a decent size tech group sat on their phones along with dual displays, all were working on phone calls and very professional sounding – he wondered which desk would be his as they went into a side office.

$Secretary: $Slick will be right with you, along with someone from $HR – please have a seat while you wait.

He sat and waited a few minutes, there was a glass window and he was able to see each of the techs working. One of the techs (*His name was $Tech*) came walking in carrying a laptop, phone and extra headset – he plopped them down on the conference room table, then looked up at $Selben with a bit of surprise.

$Tech: Are you the new guy?

$Selben: Uh, I am new yes.

$Tech: Are you the uh new tech?

$Selben: Yea.

$Tech: Which group are you in?

$Selben: Uh… I dont know, I was told to wait for $Slick and someone from $HR?

$Tech: Oh… Do they know what team you are on?

$Selben: I really don't know yet…

$Tech: Well where are you sitting?

$Selben: …I don't know yet…

$Tech sighed and looked down at the laptop, clearly in deep thought.

> $Tech: I'll leave these here!

> $Selben: Okay!

$Tech then left, a minute later someone from $HR came into the room and went over some extra missed documents and other normal $HR policy stuff, sign this sign that etc… $Slick came in and sat quietly, while flipping through some paperwork he had, nodding then shaking his head occasionally. $Selben became a bit nervous, hoping the paperwork wasn't his resume – but they had hired him and were going over paperwork so what was there to be worried about… First days on the job can be so stressful, and he hadn't even started working yet! Finally $HR was satisfied enough documents had been signed, ~~blood oaths sworn~~ and double-checked then left, leaving $Selben in $Slick's care.

They went on a mini tour of the facility, it was a pretty nice office – $Selben was introduced to one of the IT managers who had $Selben sit with $Tech and listen in on some phone calls. By lunch $Selben had actually caught a few errors on $Techs part – preventing him from changing the password for the wrong user, as well as spotting an incorrect IP address while attempting to remotely connect into the wrong computer. $Tech meant well, but he was a little slow – finally lunch came. $Selben ate his leftover hamburger helper in his car – he watched as groups of the phone techs came out in their groups going off to lunch, leaving him a bit envious. After lunch he returned to $Tech and the rest of the day went by fairly mundane, still catching some errors as $Tech worked – they developed a bit of comradery and $Tech introduced $Selben to other members of the team between calls.

When it was nearly 5 O'clock $Slick pulled $Selben aside.

> $Slick: So I've gotta be frank with you.

> $Selben: Oh I'm sorry, I thought I was helping $Tech, it wasn't trying to step on any toes… Am I getting let go?

> $Slick: Oh no no! But we don't have any desks open for you here in the office…

> $Selben: O… Okay, so what does that mean?

$Slick handed $Selben a paper with a map printed on it.

> $Slick: You will work from our remote office with a different IT manager, his name is $Soda.

Second Day – The Work?

Pulling into the parking-lot of the remote office, $Selben looked up at the company building – it was a bit smaller than the main office but he was still keeping himself pumped, he would meet this team and prove his worth! He walked inside and was greeted by the front desk person, who was confused when he asked where the tech area was. After a short discussion and $Selben provided the map he was given and the name $Soda – saying the name made the front desk employee perk up and become a bit more friendly, they lead $Selben out the front door and around the building – they walked about 500 feet to a double-wide trailer with a van parked in front… $Selben thanked them after triple checking this was the remote IT Office.

$Selben knocked on the door… No answer, he tried the handle and the door opened – he stepped inside, the room had rows of benches with computers humming along in various states of brand new to ancient and half disassembled. Some boxes were piled in the corner, with another door next to them.

> $Selben: Hello?..

He heard someone respond through the door.

> $Selben: What was that?

The voice became more clear, but the door was still shut.

> $Soda: Who's there, do you have the pizza?

> $Selben: Um… No pizza, I was sent over to work here in the remote I.T. office?

> $Soda: Oh yea duh…

$Soda popped his head out of the door with a grin on his face.

> $Soda: Good then!

He pointed at the pile of boxes next to his door.

> $Soda: There is a desk under those boxes, go ahead and clear them out –
> dumpster is behind the main building, then run a network cable to the desk, and
> setup…

He paused, looking at the bench – then pointed at one of the desktops.

> $Soda: Setup that computer on the desk, let me know if you have questions.

> $Selben: Okay, I…

$Soda pointed at his headset and mouthed that he was 'on a call' and closed his door. $Selben set off dragging the boxes out to the dumpster, he uncovered the desk fairly quickly – then setup the desktop. Not wanting to bother $Soda he found a spool of network cable and crimped it, then found the cable tracks around the room – he plugged it in and the desktop was on-line. $Selben knocked on the door to what he assumed to be $Soda's office – who opened the door enough to poke his head out.

> $Selben: All done!

> $Soda: Go over to the office and ask them for an office chair, one of the nice
> leather ones in the storage room… Tell them I sent you.

$Selben performed the task as quickly as he could, he came back to the double-wide to find $Soda leaning over one of the desktops, glaring at the screen. He beckoned $Selben over as he pushed the chair in through the door.

> $Soda: Disk cleanup keeps freezing, thoughts?

> $Selben: Reinstall the OS?

> $Soda: I want to fix it, faster than a reinstall.

> $Selben: Well… Maybe…

Someone knocked at the door, $Soda went over while $Selben pondered. $Soda spun around with a pizza box in hand and a two liter sugary beverage.

$Selben: Try clearing the temp files?

$Soda had a mouth-full of pizza already.

$Soda: Try it!

$Selben went and deleted all the Temp files and ran the disk cleanup – after a few minutes it went past where it had been freezing before, he was rewarded with some pizza as well. After that $Soda told him he had been setting up his own desk – then forwarded an email from $Slick showing the user account reports that he was to work on. The rest of the day was fairly uneventful – $Soda was on a call when $Selben headed out, but still waved and smiled – maybe the remote office wouldn't be so bad.

The Game

The next morning $Selben sat and worked on the report for a couple hours, until $Soda popped his head out of his office jingling keys. $Selben raised his eyebrow in confusion.

$Soda: Want to go for a trip?

$Selben: Uh… Sure?

$Soda: To the van!

The van was full of IT Equipment and tools, rattling as it headed down the highway – some food and old soda stains were on the carpet, but it was comfortable. $Soda filled in $Selben on the issue that was happening and that the T1's and T2's in the main office had been unable to resolve the issue – so he felt a hands on approach was needed. The main issue was the mouse and keyboard would not work on one of the computers in the office, they had replaced it with several others but to no avail – they could remote into the machine, but at the location the input just would not work. $Soda hinted that he knew what might be the problem, and wanted $Selben try take a guess at the solution – if he figured it out, he could take the lead – $Soda would just follow and do as commanded. But if he could not figure it out, then he would crawl under desks, open doors and be a good little subordinate. Wanting to prove himself, he launched a flurry of possible solution at $Soda as they drove.

$Selben: Did they try the keyboard in another computer?

$Soda: Yes, they all work fine.

$Selben: Are the pins bent or broken?

$Soda: Nope.

$Selben: Did the keyboard work in the BIOS?

$Soda: Tried that and nope, can't get into the BIOS.

$Selben: Is USB disabled?

$Soda: PS2 Keyboard and mouse, and we're here!

$Selben: Blarg!

They pulled up to the office and walked up to the door, $Soda stood in front of the door with his arms folded… $Selben took a moment to remember the deal, he sighed and opened the door. They walked inside and $Soda overly pleasantly asked for the $Lead – Once the $Lead came storming out they started ranting:

$Lead: This should have been resolve in the first call! I need my new computer working ASAP, but this POS wont even…

$Soda faked an overly dramatic sneeze.

$Soda: I'm sorry the spring weather always gets to me.

$Selben noticed $Lead was carrying a box of tissues, she pulled one out and handed it to $Soda.

> $Lead: Oh yes, my sinus' always act up this time of year!

> $Soda: Heavens, I know it – but at least you can get those Apricot smoothies at that place over on 4th!

> $Lead: OMG – I know! I always tell them to keep them year round, but they claim they are "Seasonal" or something!

$Selben realized they had begun walking and were now in $Leads office... Before he could figure out what voodoo had happened, $Soda pointed under the desk where the troubled computer was located, obeying he crawled under the desk.

> $Soda: Go ahead and remove $Lead's old computer and plug the keyboard and mouse into her new one please.

Sure enough $Lead had plugged in everything into her new computer... Except for the Mouse and keyboard which was plugged into her old desktop...

> $Selben: It needs a smaller PS2 adapter.

> $Soda: We have some in the van.

In the end, it turned out they only had the older keyboards and mice with the larger PS2 connectors – $Lead had gotten mixed up while troubleshooting with the helpdesk trying to get her computer working and inadvertently plugged in her mouse and keyboard into her old tower during testing, while keeping everything else plugged into the new one. The issue was mostly caused by her saying "My keyboard wont fit in my computer" to be interpreted as "My keyboard wont work" – she also left out the crucial piece of "This is my new computer." – $Soda had one of those diffuse any situation attitudes, and $Selben knew this was the man he wanted to learn as much as possible from!

Mom learns the ropes. – /u/quilladdiction

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6k565q/mom_learns_

Just a quick one. Normally I'd be the one playing family tech support, but my mom knows enough, and she's the one that picked up the phone. I overheard her conversation with my grandma about an hour ago, she was apparently having tech trouble with her cable.

> Mom: Okay so you replaced the remote batteries... maybe try unplugging it, look for the power cord in the back.

Simple enough, right?

Five minutes later...

> Mom: [The error message] is still there? No, that should've... wait, you are unplugging the cable box and not the TV itself, right? Okay yeah, no, you wanna unplug the box, mom... yeah, the power cord.

At this point I start listening closer because she's trying to do tech support and fix the kitchen sink at the same time. I can't help grinning slightly because I work at a helpdesk and do this same thing every damn day, minus the plumbing.

> Me: Um, should I be doing one of these for you?

> Mom: *answering grandma first, looking slightly exasperated* No, mom, the *power* cord.

> Me: *snorts* Yeah, welcome to my life...

> Mom: *rolls eyes in agreement, still speaking to grandma* The one plugged into the... okay, look in the back, do you see two cords there? One goes to the TV and the other goes to the wall so it has power. Yeah. Unplug the power cord, plug it back in. The *power. Cord.*

> Me: *trying to go quietly if I have to die of laughter*

> Mom: Oh good, it worked? *now holding back giggles* Yeah, all else fails, unplug it and plug it back in, it'll restart that way, you should be good to go.

At this point, she hangs up, looks over at me and asks, verbatim...

> Mom: How do you *do* that every day!?

> Me: With excessive amounts of fake patience.

Mom: I don't know how many different ways I can say "power cord..."

Me: Right!?