



I'm always running for you!

I frequently find that my customers are surprised when I tell them that they should run their computer all the time. Even as relatively short as fifteen or twenty years ago, running all the time certainly was not recommended. Neither the hardware or software was designed for that kind of use, but today, things are very different. Hardware has become very efficient, software (especially operating systems like Windows XP and Windows 7) very reliable, and administrative functions very schedulable. These advances were driven by businesses and the Internet, as real time, 7 x 24 operations became a reality.

If you are the type of person that only uses the computer once a week, then certainly you should not leave it running all the time. But, if you are like most people these days, you use your computer at least once a day, and you should leave the computer running. The amount of power consumed is very minimal. Here are my top 5 reasons for leaving your computer on all the time:

- 1) Antivirus software: as most people are aware, new viruses are being created all the time. To keep up your protection, your antivirus software must periodically download an update to its internal database that provides the instructions for how to protect your computer from a virus infection. This update can be scheduled to occur at specific times and specific days. I have mine run every morning at 2:00am. At the same time, I have it do a virus scan just in case something has sneaked through. You should do the same.
- 2) Ready-to-server: I am an impatient person – when I want to do something on my computer (e.g., check email, the stock market, the news, the weather, traffic conditions, etc), I want to be able to do it right away. I do not want to have to wait for my computer to start up. Similarly, I leave my email and other critical applications running all the time so that I don't have to wait for them to launch.
- 3) Windows updates: much like the antivirus software, Microsoft is constantly issuing updates to fix problems or close security holes. These can be set up to automatically download and install. On my computers, this process runs every morning at 3:00am. Note that if you have things set up this way, depending on the type of update being installed, a restart of your computer might automatically occur.
- 4) Backups: there are many different ways to set up backups, but most people like to have them run at a specific time. Just like with antivirus and Windows updates, the middle of the night is a fine time for that activity.
- 5) Defragging: defragging can be a very time consuming and computer intensive operation, but is important to keep your computer running at top performance. I run mine at midnight once a month.

If you are going to follow my recommendation, then several things are very important:

- 1) Be sure your computer fan(s) is dust free and operating properly. This is always important, but even more so if your computer is going to run all the time.
- 2) Be sure your screen saver is enabled.
- 3) To minimize energy usage, set up your power options so that your monitor display turns off and your hard disks spin down.
- 4) Set up your computer so that it never enters standby or hibernate mode.

As always, I hope you have found this information useful. If you do not wish to receive these emails in the future, let me know.

All the best!

Steve (650-222-4140)