

GeekSpeak

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Sharing Some Love with the Machine

Here are some tips and tricks for how to share some love with your computer. I assume that you're well-equipped with tools such as antivirus programs and the like, but there are other helpful programs that will make things run smoothly. Most of you will be familiar with some of these (in fact, you might have heard me mention some previously), but I would be surprised if you don't discover something new to put in your tool belt (if you use Windows computers...).

First, you might want to find out what you actually have installed on your computer and whether it is the most current version. The little free-ware download Belarc Advisor (www.belarc.com) is an awesome tool that gives you a helpful and detailed report of all the hardware and software on your computer. This includes information on the operating system, processor speed and memory, printers, controllers, displays, the system serial number, and even passwords for many installed programs and applications that you might otherwise forget. I've found the last item especially helpful. (Who remembers where those pesky installation codes are kept anyway, right?) Belarc Advisor will also provide you with good insights—and

possibly surprises—about what you installed long ago on your computer and what should probably have been removed long ago (or put to use again).

We all know now that true security in the Internet age may be an illusion. One way to stay a little bit safer, though, is by making sure that your applications are up to date, especially when it comes to security patches. Like you, I hate it when I have all kinds of programs bugging me with update reminders all the time. So I often disable those reminders—but the problem with this is that I'm no longer reminded (duh!). The most well-known software that takes care of this in one fell swoop is Secunia PSI (secunia.com/vulnerability_scanning/personal), a free product that detects all kinds of obsolete versions of your software, actually downloads most of the new versions, and asks you only to click to install (you can also ask it only to show you a link to the update site). This includes Windows updates as well as those pesky Adobe and Apple updates, although translation environment tools are overlooked (looks like we still haven't made it to the pinnacle of software development).

Of course, it's important to remember that there is never a guarantee that the most current version is the best choice. So, if you've updated to a new version of a program and would like to go back, what do you do? FileHippo.com is a great place to find downloads of old versions of software.

If you need to do some general computer housecleaning, Ccleaner (www.piriform.com/ccleaner) is the tool of the moment. A few years back, these kinds of tools were all dominated by Finnish developers, but this seems to have changed—the company behind Ccleaner is from Cyprus. Be that as it may, the tool appears to be safe and does a very thorough job of cleaning out your registry, deleting temporary files, uninstalling programs, etc.

A little tip: if you don't use Internet Explorer as your main browser, be sure to open the Applications tab on Ccleaner's main screen to adjust what kind of browser-related files should be deleted and what should be left intact for the browser of your preference. For instance, it might be helpful to keep the "internet history" or "saved passwords."

If you still need assistance despite all of your efforts to keep everything operating efficiently, there's also help for that. Unless you take your computer into a computer shop when you encounter problems, it can be very hard to explain what went wrong to someone on a phone help line. Of course, there are ways to share your computer screen with someone else, but another helpful method is to record your problems and send the recording to someone. Many third-

Information and Contacts

The GeekSpeak column has two goals: to inform the community about technological advances and at the same time encourage the use and appreciation of technology among translation professionals. Jost is the co-author of *Found in Translation: How Language Shapes Our Lives and Transforms the World*, a perfect source for replenishing your arsenal of information on how human translation and machine translation each play important parts in the broader world of translation. Contact: jzetzsche@internationalwriters.com.

party products do this, along with an in-house tool in Windows 7 and 8 called the Problem Steps Recorder (in Windows 8/8.1, this is called Steps Recorder). This tool allows you to record everything on your screen (with the exception of text that you enter). When the recording is finished, it is not saved as a movie file but as an MHT archive file and zipped up. Once unzipped, the MHT file can be opened with most Internet

browsers. (If your computer geek assistant doesn't know how to open it, he might not be worth his job title.) This file gives you a screen-by-screen description of what just happened on your computer as well as a narration of the process and operating-specific information.

There they are—tips and tricks to share the love, guaranteed to enhance and improve your most important working relationship. ■

From the Executive Director Continued from page 6

the respondents said their listing in the *Directory* was very valuable or valuable. Less than half of 1% said it was not at all valuable.

Directory listings are open to all individual members (except students). 72% of those using the *Directory* said they have received work from their listing, while 62% of those who received income from their *Directory* profile said it covered the cost of ATA dues.

ATA Certification: Of the survey respondents who are ATA-certified translators, 80% felt their ATA certification had increased their business or improved the quality of their clients. In addition, 84% of ATA-certified translators participating in the survey rated the overall value of their ATA certification as very valuable or valuable. It's worth noting that no one said it was not at all valuable.

ATA Annual Conference: Over 55% of the survey respondents have attended at least one ATA Annual Conference, with 16% having attended five or more. Those who have attended rated networking (78%) and educational sessions (79%) as the most important factors in their decision to attend, and 69% rated the overall

value of the conference as very valuable or valuable. Only 1% said it was not at all valuable.

ATA Webinars: Most survey respondents have never attended an ATA webinar. Of those who have attended an ATA webinar, 65% rated the overall value as very valuable or valuable and, in parallel with ATA Annual Conferences, only 1% said ATA webinars were not at all valuable.

How to Improve the Value of ATA Membership: Finally, respondents were asked the open-ended question of how to improve the value of ATA membership. There were nearly a thousand responses. While there was no clear consensus, the majority of the suggestions addressed four topics: the Certification Program, *The ATA Chronicle*, public relations, and advocacy—in terms of doing more for translators and interpreters.

The survey results have been shared with ATA's Board and Headquarters staff, and should help guide them in focusing their efforts. Thank you to those who took the time to complete the survey. And, thank you for being an ATA member. ■

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