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Staying Connected



Do you expect your internet connection to work when you want to use it? Do you depend on this connectivity to run your business? Unfortunately, the internet consists of millions of smaller domestic, academic, business, and government networks, which are out of our control. It's amazing that everything seems to stay up most of the time! This month we explore problems which can impact your connection to the internet.

If you use an ADSL-based broadband connection, you are transmitting data over the traditional telephone lines and that's where the problems can start. Assuming everything is good with your computer, there will be some cabling (or a wireless connection) to an ADSL modem, which plugs directly into your phone line. Failures can occur anywhere along that connection chain, with the cables, the modem itself, or even from interference cause by devices on the same line (such as phones and fax machines). Make sure that any other devices use ADSL Line Filters, if required. If you are experiencing a problem, try restarting your broadband modem, which can be achieved by pulling out the power cord if it doesn't have a power switch. If you have other dependant devices (such as a separate wireless access point, switch/hub or server) they may also need to be restarted in a particular order.

Next in line is your internet service provider, as they provide the gateway for you to join the other internet networks.

Unfortunately, their gateway may be carried over another telecommunication company's lines, so a perceived problem with your ISP may actually be a problem at the telephone exchange, out of their control. Usually a call to your ISP and some troubleshooting procedures will identify if this is the case. These procedures will involve determining how widespread the problem is (e.g. is it just one, several or all websites that give you a 'page cannot be displayed' error or similar? Is it impacting email too? Is it working on any of your computers?), checking cables and rebooting things.

If email communication or website presence is critical to your business, you may want to look at a high quality business grade internet connection. This may be more expensive than your current standard internet plan, but it may include options like backup satellite connections, guaranteed availability rates (e.g. 99.9%) or even rebates for outages within your ISP's control.

If you are hit by an unexpected outage, you may have to revert to traditional business practices, like going into the bank branch, finding a stamp and an envelope or calling people on the phone.

Talk to your local Computer Troubleshooter about how you can improve the quality of your internet connection. They may also have some self-help tips (like what to reboot) that may get you back up and running again quickly.



**Contact your local Computer
Troubleshooters**

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