

Tom Foolery

*By Hap Hansen*

I am pretty much a fool when it comes to my personal computer. Thousands of other 'fool-hardy' folks also have problems understanding their computers. A friend of mine and I recently discussed things we had heard about foolish people and their computers who are, like me, 'technologically challenged.'

Compaq is considering changing the command, 'Press Any Key' to 'Press Return Key' because of the flood of calls asking where the 'Any' key is? Another customer was asked to send in a copy of his defective diskettes. A few days later, a letter arrived from the customer along with photocopies of the floppies! A Dell technician advised his customer to put his floppy back in the drive and close the door. The customer was heard putting the phone down, getting up, crossing the room and closing the door to his office. Another Dell customer called to say he couldn't get his computer to fax anything. After 40 minutes of trouble-shooting, the tech discovered the man was trying to fax a piece of paper by holding it in front of the monitor screen and hitting the 'send' key. Yet another customer was enraged when he called a technician to say his computer had called him 'bad' and an 'invalid.' The tech explained that the computer's 'bad' and 'in-valid' responses shouldn't be taken seriously.

Maybe there should be a 'fool-proof' command on every computer. A confused caller to IBM was having trouble printing documents. He told the tech that the computer had said 'it couldn't find printer.' The user had tried turning the computer screen to face the printer, but his computer still couldn't 'see' the printer. A customer called tech support to say her brand-new computer wouldn't work. She said she had unpacked the unit, plugged it in and nothing happened. When asked what happened when she pressed the 'power' switch, she answered, 'What power switch?' She was living in 'fool's-paradise.'

My friend informed me that all of those calls could have come from me. However, my computer ignorance is not quite that bad. After hearing about all those computer users' troubles, I now consider myself to be only 'semi-technologically challenged.'

As you now know, all of this was a bunch of 'tom foolery'!