

# Computer Solutions

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## Preventive maintenance for computers

Computer Solutions specialises in preventive maintenance. Definitions of the term preventive maintenance include -

1- The care and servicing by personnel for the purpose of maintaining equipment and facilities in satisfactory operating condition by providing for systematic inspection, detection, and correction of incipient failures either before they occur or before they develop into major defects.

2- Maintenance, including tests, measurements, adjustments, and parts replacement, performed specifically to prevent faults from occurring.

(Source: Wikipedia, Federal Standard 1037C, MIL-STD-188, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms)

Preventive maintenance helps to -  
maximise efficiency and effectiveness and  
minimise (as far as possible) the risk of preventable problems and stress.

To illustrate this topic I would ask –  
“Do you at least check the oil and water level in your car at least once a week?”

If you have answered “No” -  
Do you like the prospect of your business (a major contributor to your livelihood) being threatened when you are prevented from following up sales leads, arranging work, issuing invoices or banking cheques – or whatever else the computer is used for?

To illustrate the point a survey of UK businesses by Ernst & Young showed that **70% that suffer a computer failure or theft will go out of business within 18 months.**

It is only a matter of time before a previously unknown issue becomes a real problem. Such issues should be regarded as a threat to the computer and the well-being of the business and the people involved. A business cannot afford to live with such a time bomb. That a problem has not been encountered does not mean that there is no problem. To the principle of Murphy's Law “***If it can happen it will***” should be added “***and possibly at a critical or embarrassing time***”.

Pre-planning how to deal with potentially 'life threatening' situations increases the efficiency and effectiveness of the computer and decreases, as far as possible, the possibility of a failure and the resultant stress on the business and people.

I would suggest that the view “I don't know of a problem so I don't need to do preventive maintenance” is not a viable option. Waiting for and dealing with problems (re-active maintenance) and identifying and dealing with possible issues (preventive maintenance) are as different as realising that yesterday's fire could have been prevented with a fire extinguisher. This bears out the saying “***Failure to plan is a plan for failure***”.

So, what preventive maintenance precautions may be needed?

**Hardware and software security** – *making sure the integrity of hardware and software is maintained*

**Threat prevention (electronic and physical)** – *making sure the computer does not become infected with viruses and that data does not leak*

**Backing-up** – *making sure that there is a reliable resource from which the computer may be restored*

**Business continuity / Contingency planning** – *making sure that the business may continue after a crisis*

**Housekeeping** – *making sure the computer is 'cleaned up'*

**Coaching** – *making sure that the software is being used to its full potential*

### **Conclusions**

Taking the steps outlined above requires some resource. There is a temptation to concentrate on running the business today and put to the back of one's mind the possibility of a 'life threatening' situation. Remember every failed business involves at least one person and, possibly, their dependants who rely on that business as a source of income.

Taking preventive maintenance measures ensures that the computer is available when needed. It also ensures that the computer is working as efficiently and effectively as possible for the benefit of the business.

Most motorists would not think of trying to save money by not having their car serviced regularly on the basis that it's working so why bother?

Preventive maintenance for computers (especially in business) is a necessary evil. The cost is fully justified in terms of benefits to the health of the business and the relief of stress on both the business and the people involved. Preventive maintenance cannot be regarded to be a panacea of all ills. However, it will make sure that the computer is, as far as possible, working efficiently and effectively. Preventive maintenance will also make sure that the risk of the computer not being available (and the associated stress) is reduced as far as possible.

### **How can Computer Solutions help?**

Computer Solutions provides solutions for a wide range of computer issues including maintenance, repair, supplying hardware (new and second user), network installation, support and coaching (especially in Excel and Word). Computer Solutions specialises in preventive maintenance. This is the practice of identifying and resolving issues before they develop into stressful problems. It also helps to maximise efficiency and effectiveness and minimise (as far as possible) the risk of preventable problems and stress.

**If you have any further queries on this subject please contact me.**