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## National Clean Out Your Computer Day!

No, that doesn't mean get out your feather duster (although that may need to be done as well). This is a gentle reminder to clear out those old files or emails from 1999.

### Ask yourself...

1. When you need a document, do you waste time trying to find it amidst years of letters, fax cover forms, articles, etc?
2. Have you changed the way you name documents?
3. When looking for a specific photo, do you perpetually search for one photo among thousands named 'DSF2938' or 'IS493'?
4. Have you loaded free programs onto your computer with reckless abandon?

If you answered 'yes' to any of the above you are not alone. A study published by the Wall Street Journal cited that executives **wastes 6 weeks each year** looking for lost items and information. It isn't a stretch to believe that a good portion of this time is spent looking for mislabeled or misfiled computer documents.

### To Do...

Schedule 15 to 30 minutes today to review the documents & programs on your computer.

1. To look at all your files at a glance go to your 'Start' button and press the right button on your mouse. On the list, choose 'Explorer'. If you're unfamiliar with Explorer, it is just like a paper file cabinet, but it lists all of the information on your computer in an outline format. You'll see a file named 'Shared Documents'. This is most likely where you have all of your documents, photos, etc... You'll be able to view the files and by double-clicking the folders you'll be able to view the individual documents in each. You can right-click on any document or folder and rename it or you can click on any file or folder and drag it into another folder. However you decide to organize your files, be consistent.
2. Clear out old email from your inbox. Create file folders in your inbox to archive specific emails you want to refer to at a later time.
3. To view programs that you have loaded onto your computer go to your Start button. Go to your Control panel and choose 'Add or Remove Programs'. This will populate a list of the programs on your computer. To remove a program, click once on the program name and follow the instructions.

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By spending a little time clearing and reorganizing your computer, you'll save time as well as make your computer run faster.

Lastly, but most importantly, remember to BACK-UP your computer. You can do this by burning important documents to a CD or DVD. If you have a lot of data, I'd recommend an external hard drive or online service such as Carbonite.com. You never know when your computer will crash and this will literally save you thousands (of hours and dollars!!). Schedule the time to back-up!

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