

## Those crazy dings, smudges and drives

### Strange sounding machines, blurred prints and the best back up aren't easy to solve

Barbara from Wadsworth asks, "I have a Dell Inspiron 1000 Laptop that has a dinging sound whenever I am typing and I think it wants me to hit enter. If I'm working in an Excel spreadsheet it barely gives me time to enter information and it is dinging. How can I get rid of the dinging except for turning off the sound?"

Dorrance from Seville asks, "...we have a Lexmark x5150 printer and lately when you scan something the print is smudged or unreadable. The cartridges are new and we don't know what is wrong with it. When we print something from the computer it does the same. Do we need a new printer or the problem is from the computer itself?"

An unnamed questioner asks, "What is your opinion on using the portable hard drives? When it is all set and done, you have all this info on this small hard drive and also a cheaper way of doing it. My problem is not so much pictures as my music files that I do not want to lose since I buy them from Apple. I have been debating about buying one of these portable hard drives and wonder if they do in fact work well."

Thanks to you all for these questions!

Barbara, it sounds like your laptop is behaving pretty strangely. Without seeing the behavior, I'm lost for ideas. Do any of you readers have a diagnosis? Please send them in.

Dorrance, your problem is a broken printer. This is actually a common complaint with this type of Lexmark printer. I do not know of a good fix. I recommend that you contact Lexmark and try to get a replacement printer.

To our unnamed questioner, portable hard disks are a legitimate option for backing up pictures and music files. I suggest that you organize your pictures and music files in such a way that you know which have been backed up and which have not. I often discover confusion in this area which leads to missing some of the data during backup. Also, some of these drives are of very poor quality. I do not have a good recommendation on brand since I have observed failures in most of the brands. Finally, I suggest that you purchase multiple drives. Be sure that you keep all of the drives up to date and keep one of the drives off site.

I have received some feedback regarding the server I described in my last article. I would like to clarify some points. First, setting up RAID 5 in Linux can be difficult. You will probably need help with this. Setting up RAID 5 in Windows XP is more intuitive. Second, RAID 5 with 5 drives gives you the storage space of 4 drives. This is because space is required for keeping track of the replication of the data. Lastly, purchasing a pre-built and preconfigured solution is cheaper and easier.

What do you think? Any other fun ideas?

Please send questions, comments and suggestions to [questions@compusurgeon.com](mailto:questions@compusurgeon.com).