Welcome to the inaugural issue of Tech Talk℠! We hope to provide you with practical tips for your Windows® operating system computer.

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Rid your hard-drive of un-needed files. (XP, 2K, ME, 98)

An easy way to give your hard-drive more free space and reduce fragmentation is to run "Disk Cleanup" on a regular basis. Disk Cleanup is found under: *Start – All Programs - Accessories - System Tools – Disk Cleanup.* First select the drive you wish to clean, then check the boxes for the file types you want to delete. Temporary files and temporary internet files as well as the Recycle Bin are always good choices. Of course you should also schedule your disk defragmenter to run on a regular basis (once a week) to keep your disk in tip-top shape. By the way, while Windows® comes with a disk defragmenter, there are several 3rd party defragmenters available that do a faster and better job – more on that in a future issue.

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Minimum Hard Disk Size. (ALL)

If your hard disk has less than 20% free space it is slowing your system down. When a Hard Drive is nearing capacity, files become more fragmented even after using

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a disk defragmenter. It takes considerably longer to retrieve a fragmented file than a contiguous file. To check your drive, open Windows Explorer® and right click on the drive (in the left panel). Select properties. With the price of hard drives falling there really is no reason not to upgrade to a larger hard drive. Ask us for information.

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Keyboard shortcuts can save you a lot of time over using the mouse for repetitive tasks. (XP, 2K, ME, 98)

Alt-Tab Cycle through the open programs in Windows® – hold the Alt key and tab through the icons to select the program you want on top.

Shift-Del to permanently delete files or folders without them going to the Recycle Bin.

Ctrl-A Select all: Very helpful when you want to change the font of an entire document or move all of the contents of a file folder.

Shift-Arrow key Select a contiguous list of items from a file folder or list.

These shortcuts work in all versions of Windows®. There are MANY more - if you would like a free list of keyboard shortcuts for "your" version(s) of the Windows® operating system(s) please drop me an email at Tech_Talk@b-b-inc.com. The lists are available for 98, 2K, and XP in doc or pdf format. They are 6 to 9 pages in length.

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Prevent unnecessary programs from starting with Windows® (XP, ME, 98SE)

When some programs are installed, they add small programs that are started with Windows often without your knowledge.

One of the most notable ones is RealPlayer. Windows® versions after 98 (except 2K) have a program called msconfig.exe which will allow you to choose which programs start with Windows®. To stop a program from running at startup simply uncheck its box on the startup tab. To run the program click *Start - Run* and type *msconfig* in the run dialog box.

There is a freeware program called Startup Monitor that aids in choosing which programs are allowed to run at startup.. This program is very small (60k). If you would like a free copy emailed to you - please drop me an email at Tech_Talk@b-b-inc.com and ask for Startup Monitor. This program will operate in **98, ME, 2K, and XP**.

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Coming up in the next issue of Tech Talk℠: **Viruses, Worms, Trojans, Spyware and Hoaxes - What They Are and How to Protect Your Computer: Part 1**

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