

Tips and Tricks: Trading Computers or Surplus - What should I do?

by Larry Noak, Desktop Support

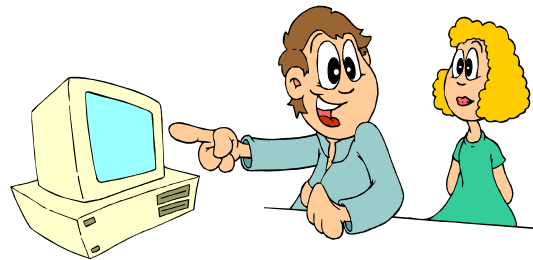
Here's a question for you...

What happened to the information in your last hard drive, when you upgraded to that new model or turned in your old computer to surplus?

If you didn't erase it, DID ANYONE?

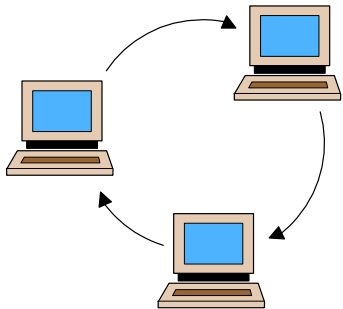
Since then, has your old computer been reissued to another employee? to a student work station? to one of Maricopa's community learning centers? or perhaps been sold at one of MCCD's auctions?

Consider now...WHO HAS ACCESS to YOUR information, your old memos, personal data, etc.????



Did you know that when a file is 'deleted' from a computer, it may not always mean that the file is completely gone? Even after you delete a file and empty your trash or recycle bin, the data remains on your hard drive until another piece of data overwrites it. Programs are readily available on the Internet that allow others to "undelete" or retrieve deleted files from a hard drive.

When another employee takes over a previously owned machine the Desktop Support Team takes that computer and makes all the necessary steps to safeguard personal data. This can be frustrating to individuals waiting for new equipment setups however, you should always consider taking the extra step to ensure that your personal data is not recoverable by someone else. The only safe way to delete a file is to erase it and overwrite it with new data several times so that no traces survive.



Backups are important. Should any information on the hard drive be official records which must be maintained in a department or by individuals in a particular department, such information should be duplicated and maintained on a back-up disk or similar means before the hard drive is erased.

REMEMBER: CORRECT HANDLING AND THE FINAL DISPOSITION OF ALL PERSONAL COMPUTERS supports a very important PRIVACY ISSUE effecting every employee. Please contact your site help desk for further explanations about their policy before you trade computers around and/or surplus them.