

DECEMBER 2009 NEWSLETTER

Dear Friend,

You might not think of your computer as something that needs to be organized -- but having it so will make a huge difference in your day-to-day life! Read on for more on how to bring calm to your computer!

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Cluttered Computer: A recipe for disaster!

December -- the last month of, hopefully, another productive year. It isn't until the very end of this month that we think to reflect on the past year, and prepare for the new year ahead. It is then that we make resolutions and think about getting rid of clutter and making our lives easier. We don't tend to include our computer in these thoughts.

Daily, we get on our computers, perhaps run the household from it, retrieve and send emails, create documents, and maybe even use it to search for good holiday deals. For many of us, our computer is the tool we used most at work. After a year of working on this can't-live-without machine, we don't give much thought to whether it needs a clean sweep. Like most things in your life, it does.

How well organized are your e-files? How about your email inbox? If you are someone who keeps everything from clothes to keepsakes to things you never use, you might be someone who also keeps every email, word document, and electronic correspondence. Keeping it all creates chaos!

A cluttered computer is for sure a recipe for disaster. If you are running your household (or anything!) from the computer, organization is key! Without it, you will lose things and spend too much time trying to find important documents, much the same way you might looking on a disorganized desk for an important paper or bill.

Clutter anywhere means you are forcing your mind to try to conceive of all that it is seeing and make sense of it. You open up your email and have 35 new emails, on top of 300 that you might have read but haven't "done" anything with. What signals are you sending your mind? If you keep your inbox such that you are always seeing hundreds of emails, your mind will never rest when you log in, or out, and it will be much harder to get that satisfied feeling of having completed anything.

How does your desktop look? Having no order with your documents on your computer means you will waste valuable time searching for that cover letter you typed today for that job that you needed yesterday. Wasting time is wasting energy, and more importantly it's wasting good brain power. We have busy lives; the last thing we need to do is confuse our brains even more.

Make the most of December. Give your computer a good "clean" before you start a new year. Follow the tips below for the recipe on creating calm on the computer and your brain!

HOW TO...Bring Calm to your Computer

1. **Just as you would your paper filing system** set up broad categories in your email. These categories provide a necessary HOME for emails that come in to which you might need to refer at a later date. "File" those emails in the appropriate folder.
2. **Your inbox should only have emails in it that require some action or are important.** Think of your inbox as a temporary home for emails. The folders you set up are more of a permanent home. You should schedule time each day/week to sort through/file emails, and delete those whose tasks you've completed.
3. **When sending an email, put complete information in the subject line so they will be easier to find later.** You should be able to know as much as possible about what the email is about by the subject line. As well, if you send an email that you think you'll need to refer to later, immediately after sending go to your "sent" folder and move the email to the appropriate folder.
4. **"File" your e-documents similarly to the way you would your emails and your paper files.** Use broad but recognizable labels when naming the folder. Create folders in "my documents"(in Windows) or on your hard drive (in a Mac). Include a folder titled "important" for high priority items. Keeping word documents **in one place** will save time, reduce stress, eliminate frustration when looking for something.
5. **When saving a document, try to be as specific with naming it as possible.** This will save you oodles of time when you are searching for something. Including a date, if possible, also saves time. When you get a

document emailed to you, save the document in the proper folder right away.

6. **Keep your desktop clear.** Clutter on the desk top does the same thing to your mind that too many emails in an inbox does. It tells you there is a lot going on -- all at once. You can't do it all at once so why look at it all at once? **Reserve your desktop for items that need immediate attention.** When you are done with them, you can file them in the appropriate folder.

7. **The most common type of computer files that creates clutter are music files.** Music files have shrunk in size over the years, however, they add up fast and you can lose track of how many you have stored on your computer. **You should regularly remove excess mp3's onto discs, flash drives or backup drives to keep your computer clear of clutter.**

8. **Store all pictures in the same place and rename them so you can easily recognize them.** Pictures pile up fast and you can lose track of how many you have. Like your music, consider storing them onto backup discs, flash drives or backup drives.

9. **Back up your files often.** Backing up not only allows you to clear files from your computer, but it gives you peace of mind that important documents/information are saved should anything ever happen to your computer. It is better to be safe than sorry! There are a number of affordable back-up options that will keep all your important files, media and photos saved.

A clean computer desktop and email inbox, and an organized e-filing system will allow for whatever time you spend on the computer to be productive and efficient, and keep you sane in the long run!

Quick Tip

As part of your "closing up for the day routine, allow **4 minutes** to delete all emails you have completed that day, file appropriately those you need to keep, and mark as "unread" any you have which you have opened, haven't completed and to which you need to refer the next day.

You'll start from a fresh slate the next day and redirect your attention to those emails you have yet to address completely.

Looking for the perfect holiday gift?

How about a GIFT CERTIFICATE for verri organized?

If you know someone who is disorganized, overwhelmed, frustrated, get them the gift that keeps on giving! Call 978-337-3614, or email fverri@verriorganized.com to purchase a gift certificate.

ABOUT VERRI ORGANIZED?

Francesca Verri Gove is a professional organizer and coach and owner of *verri organized*. Having a knack for making order out of chaos, and a passion for creating workable systems to improve efficiency, Francesca sees a great need for her talent and services among mothers, businesses, home owners and children.

A former assistant dean for administration at a college outside of Boston, Francesca has spoken to mothers, college students and businesses on how to get and stay organized, and has coached professors, professionals, home owners and doctors on how to experience life in a lighter way by getting verri organized. Francesca believes life should be "light", and in order to experience it in that way, we need to look at what we "have", assess our "systems", and believe in our own ability to become verri organized.

For more information about verri organized and the services it provides, please visit www.verriorganized.com, or call 978-337-3614.