

Re: Guidelines please

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- *From:* Bert Verhees <bertX.verheesX@xxxxxxx>
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Mark J. Wallin wrote:

One famous sentence in a supportdesk is, and you read it a lot here to: "Works fine at my computer".
This is not very helpful.

That's a phrase I also use too often with the people using my application at the office. However, many times when I investigate their complaint further, I find a problem but not what I expected, because the user did not clearly explain the problem. This is to be expected; the ability of the average user to properly describe a problem in precise terms is not very good.

But I too have given some poor tech support people fits. I recently had a problem with a commercial product, a new video capture board that I bought to replace an old one I was dissatisfied with. First, I was getting error messages on startup which indicated some weird licensing problem. After sending many complaint message to tech support and getting suggestions that did no good at all, I finally decided to uninstall the old video board's software (yeah, I know, I should have done that first). That helped somewhat. The startup error messages disappeared. However, I found another problem: when I tried to record captured video on the 'VCR', I got another cryptic error message, which I dutifully reported to their tech support. Shortly after that, the capture board stopped working altogether. In desperation, I uninstalled all of the new capture board software and reinstalled it again. Voila, after that, everything worked fine. Just shoot me. In the meantime, I had berated some poor technician in India day and night, who was probably thinking "It works on my machine".

The point I am trying to make, by the above example, is that a lot of problems with software are due to the horrendous design of the O/S WHOSE-NAME-SHALL-NOT-BE-MENTIONED and its never-ending DLL Hell. If others are like me, they have countless applications installed over many years and have made many updates to the O/S. I would guess that many (not all, of course) of the software problems people complain about are due to the conflicts which can arise with the morass of .DLL's and

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drivers people have on their systems. This might explain, at least partially, why some people think D2005 runs just fine and others think the same product is brain-dead. Unfortunately, those kinds of problems are not Borland's fault. Maybe they should insist that D2005 should be installed on a pristine machine.

That depends, a lot of DLL-Hell problems in Win32 can be avoided, keep away from the windows-system directory, do not register COM-objects, do not use the Windows-path in your application but let your application know where to find things,

Oops, I forgot that this is a non-technical list

Mark J. Wallin, Ph.D.

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