



BUG-BYTES

THE MONTHLY ONLINE NEWSLETTER OF *COMPUTERBUGS*

VOL. 4, ISSUE 09

SEPTEMBER 2005

SUCCESSFULLY LOCATE MISSING DEVICE DRIVERS

DON'T LET ERRANT DRIVERS GET YOU DOWN



Device drivers, called drivers for short, are small computer programs that tell your operating system how to communicate with specific pieces of hardware. Think of drivers as Windows' operating manual for your particular hardware.

For instance a CD burner driver tells Windows the manufacturer of your drive, and how to interact with the drive. Common devices include floppy drives, hard drives, CD drives, printers, video adapters, network adapters, sound cards, digital cameras, mice, keyboards, and scanners.

Typical drivers are files that end in DLL, VXD and VDD, DEV, SYS, and DRV.

FIND MISSING DRIVERS

From time to time, software installation error messages may pop up saying that the operating system cannot find a particular driver, or that a driver is bad. The reasons why that may be so are many.

Some of the reasons may include the following:

“An installation program did not copy the required file correctly to the location that it referenced in the Registry.”

“The required driver was not included

on the installation disk.”

The required file was inadvertently deleted by the user.

The wrong driver was selected, or one that is not optimal for your system.

FOLLOW THESE STEPS

Write down the filename of the driver or drivers that are missing exactly as shown in any error messages you receive. If possible, determine in which folder the driver is to be located.

For instance, I recently reinstalled Windows 98SE on a test machine. The OS could not find (among others) the driver for a spare monitor I use that was manufactured after the Win 98 operating system was released. Windows told me which driver it could not find, and where to put the file when it was located.

Start by using Windows, Device Manager to automatically search for better drivers, or use the rollback option if you encounter a bad driver. If you still need to locate a driver, follow the following tips.

Go to www.driverguide.com Join Driver Guide; it is a free service. Then search for the missing driver by filename or by device. For example, msanalog.vxd, or Epson Stylus

CX5400, that is missing.

Click on the Basic link and enter your search string. Then click on the Search Database button.

Driverguide is the source for about 200,000 drivers. If you can't locate the driver you want on their site, they provide links to the manufacturer's site for your device. **Carefully choose the driver that is specifically designed for your operating system.**

Driverguide shows user ratings for each driver and information on the number of downloads.

Download the driver or drivers you need. Save them to the location or locations specified by the installation error messages, or by other information provided by the programs. In general, the drivers will be installed to a location such as c:\windows\system or to c:\windows\system32. However, there are many other locations as well that may be used, including to your Program folder and to your vendor's subfolder.

Follow the installation directions for software step by step and exactly in the order given. The failure to do so is a major reason installations fail. This is especially true for printers and scanners.

SOFTWARE REVIEW - SENDPHOTOS GOLD 4.0



ITS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE OE FORMATTING BAR WITH INSERT PICTURE

It is fun to share photos via the Internet, and Novatix SendPhotos Gold 4.0 is a feature-rich alternative to the formatting bar in Windows XP, Outlook Express (IE). It makes sending photos a little easier because of its what-you-see-is-what-you-get options. The product ships with its own selection of stationery backgrounds. Try it at www.sendphotos.com from Novatix, the manufacturer, but buy it

at www.Broderbund.com. They sell version 3.0 for \$9.95 or version 4.0 for \$19.95 via download. If you buy a Broderbund download version be sure that you download the product within the allotted 60 days.

After 60 days you will not be able to download the product even though you paid for it, unless you buy a time extension. Note that Broderbund sells

different vendors products at a discount as downloads. First, check the original vendors web site for the product that you are considering to see which version is the latest and to compare prices and features. If you buy a download version, be sure to make a backup in case you have to reinstall the product at a later time.

Q and A

HOW CAN I CHANGE WHICH PROGRAM OPENS MY MP3 OR OTHER TYPES OF FILES?



During installation, software vendors often present a list of file types that their product can open. They give you the choice to make their product the default application to open those particular types of files. For instance, Irfanview™ presents a dialog (Options, Set file associations, Extensions) with a list of file types that it can open. For each checkmark you select, it becomes the default application for that type of file.

The point that I'm making is that you may inadvertently authorize the current program you are installing to become the default program for many different types of files. For instance, you may have authorized Adobe Elements to open JPG, GIF, and PNG files as well as the PSD file type associated only with Adobe.

To change the file association for any program do the following:

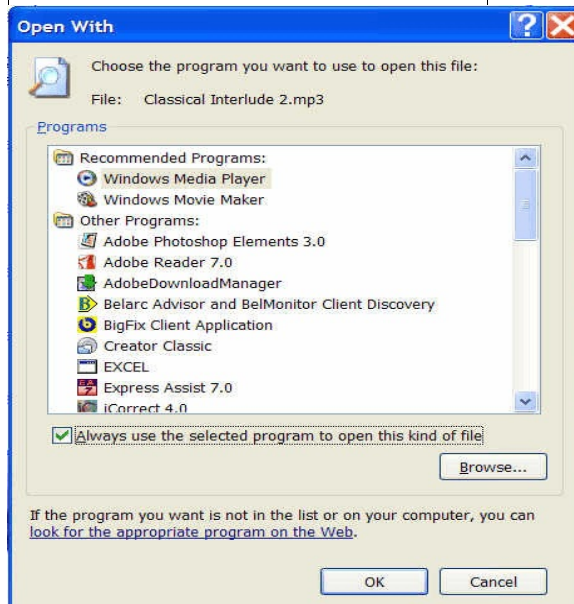
Search for a file of the type that you want to open, i.e. avi, mp3, jpg, gif, or

whatever. Right click on sample file of that type and select Open With from the drop-down menu. Pick the application that you want to be associated with that particular filetype. **Click the box down at the bottom of the dialog box if you want the same program to always open that type of file. See the screenshot of the Open With dialog.**

For instance for music or video files, you might select Windows Media Player, Wav, or MIDI files, MusicMatch, RealPlayer, Roxio, WinAmp, or any other favorite music player software you might have.

In the future, whenever you double click a file with that extension, the file will open in the player that you selected.

Use the same general technique to change the file associations for other applications, such as photo editing applications. Pick the application that you use most often and make it the default application. Don't let the last program you install make that decision for you. If some other program opens your favorite photos, you know that you need to change the file association.



THE PROS AND CONS OF CRTS VERSUS LCDS

Weigh the advantages and disadvantages of each before making a purchase



Cathode-ray tube monitors (CRT) have been around a long time for use in television sets, and in computer monitors. Their display tubes have a very long neck that requires a deep enclosure to contain them. Liquid-crystal displays (LCD) use a different technology to display data on a very flat screen. CRTs take up a lot of room on a desktop front to back, and LCDs take up very little room. CRTs are bulky, and LCDs are sexy. Is that all that there is too it? Not by a long shot.

CRTs

ADVANTAGES

- Give you the option of running at a wide range of resolutions thus giving you greater control over the font size and size of images displayed on your monitor.
- They produce very dark blacks and are easily seen in dim room conditions.
- They are viewable from off-axis.
- They produce the very best color and grey-scale for calibration
- They have fast response times with little or no motion artifacts
- They are less expensive than LCDs or other display technologies

DISADVANTAGES

- Their images are not as sharp as those of LCDs
- They produce some moire effects.
- They may produce some distortion at the edges of their screens.
- They are generally not as bright as

LCDs.

- They give off electric, magnetic and electromagnetic fields. Studies show that these are not health hazards, but some people remain unconvinced.
- They are bulky, produce heat, and consume much more electricity than do LCDs.

LCDs

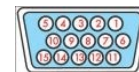
ADVANTAGES

- They are thin. They can be used in a confined space because they have a small footprint.
- Images are perfectly sharp at native resolution (the maximum resolution of the monitor).
- There is zero distortion at native resolution.
- There are no moire patterns.
- The screen is perfectly flat.
- Images are very bright and easily seen under bright light conditions.
- Low power consumption and no heat.
- You can see more on the screen at one time.

DISADVANTAGES

- They are much more expensive than CRTs.
- At their native resolution, text on the desktop may be very small and hard to read.
- Fonts are slightly blurry and distorted at other than native (maximum) resolution.

- Motion artifacts may be visible while watching moving objects.
- They have slower response times than CRTs. Gamers are more apt to notice the difference.
- They are best viewed straight on and not from a side angle.
- DVI versus VGA
- LCD flat panels are best used with a DVI digital cable (digital video interface) when the monitor is so equipped and your graphic card has a DVI connector. VGA (analog) cables are designed primarily for CRTs. The connectors are quite different for these two standards as can be seen in these two images showing their pin arrangements.



VGA



LCD FONTS

If you are an LCD user, you are encouraged to turn on *Clear Type* and to set your font size to large if you are using native resolution (maximum resolution) and a DVI cable. This makes fonts even sharper and easier to read on your LCD flat panel display.

In Windows XP, right-click on your desktop, select Properties, Appearance, Effects. Select Clear Type and large fonts. Review the other options as well. You can come back and change the settings if you do not like some of the the results.



WIPE THOSE FILES AWAY

SANITIZE YOUR DATA PERMANENTLY



Protect your personal data when giving a computer away

When you buy a new computer, are you concerned with the personal data that is on your old computer? You should be. This is especially true if you want to donate or pass your computer on to someone else. Deleting the files or reformatting your drive does not prevent savvy users from restoring and reading your data. The best way to prevent recovery of your data is to

“wipe” all of the areas occupied by your data, or the whole disk. Wiping is the process overwriting all of the data on your hard drive with ones and zeros many times. You can wipe your disk with the program that comes with Norton SystemWorks, or with one of many third-party applications designed for that purpose. You can obtain a free evaluation, or a paid version at <http://www.zdelete.com/zdwizard4.htm>. The free version works from a

bootable DOS disk. It can work with DOS to Windows XP.

*Zdelete*TM prevents **deleted files** from being recovered unlike programs designed to make all data on a disk unrecoverable. The evaluation version is good for 30 days and the paid version costs \$19.95. Compare it with *Killdisk*TM at <http://www.killdisk.com/eraser.htm>.

SOFTWARE REVIEW: WHEREISIT!

CATALOG YOUR REMOVABLE AND STATIC FILES



As hard disks and other media get bigger, the problem is not in storing your data. The problem is quickly finding the files that you have and need.

Easily manage your extensive collection of data on floppies, hard disks, removable drives, DVDs, CDs, networked drives, Zip disks, and tapes. Any media that is accessible as a drive. *WhereIsIt*TM can do that for you by creating a catalog database of all of your data. *WhereIsIt* provides searchable information about your data even if the media is not currently present on your computer. <http://www.whereisit-soft.com/>. The present version is 3.68 and you can download a trial copy from the software author.

Disk Name	Media Type	Capacity	Free Space	Last Updated	Disk #	Description
98 Emergency Disk	Removable drive	95.7 MB	50.6 MB	8/21/2005, 12:27 PM	9	
Articles	Removable drive	95.7 MB	74.7 MB	8/21/2005, 3:35 PM	22	
Bulletin_1	Removable drive	95.7 MB	640 KB	8/21/2005, 3:56 PM	31	
Bulletin_2	Removable drive	95.7 MB	5.98 MB	8/21/2005, 3:59 PM	32	
Corel Clipart	Removable drive	95.7 MB	2.42 MB	8/21/2005, 12:22 PM	7	
Extra_10	Removable drive	95.7 MB	49.2 MB	8/21/2005, 3:17 PM	19	

The screen shot above shows a part of a catalog of my Zip 100 disk collection. Each disk is numbered and includes a brief description. I can search the catalog using filenames, a word from a description, or a sound alike words. The results show me the number of the disk, and its title.

WIRELESS CONNECTION WON'T INSTALL?

YOU GET WINDOWS ERROR KB871122



In Windows XP, wireless connections depend on having *Wireless Zero Configuration* enabled in Services.msc. Run Services.msc and scroll down to Wireless Zero Configuration. Select it, right click and set it to automatic, and click start.