Medical Office Systems, LLC

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Troubleshooting 102 – Calling Tech Support

In Troubleshooting 101, I relayed some self-help tips how to recover from technology problems. This issue deals with what happens when you call your ISP (Internet Service Provider) or hardware vendor for tech support…

Tip #1: Call the correct "800" number
Get the proper phone number to call and have it handy before trouble hits. Here's two reasons why:
Reason "A": most ISP's have a separate Residential and Business Tech Support line
Reason "B": if you search the tech support number online, you might get a "fake" or "impostor" look-alike site
If you are in a rush or flustered (common when trouble hits) you don't want to be searching for the correct number, you want to be ready right away.

Tip #2: Write down the problem as succinctly as possible before you call
A long and tedious repetition of every facet of the problem will not help the tech support person on the other end of the call. Too many details will confuse the issue. Instead of a long description, write down some short phrases, like "I cannot send or receive email since 9am this morning" then let the tech person ask the questions from there. Trust me, it will be much faster to get to the answer this way.

Tip #3: Get a "Trouble Ticket" number
All reputable ISP's have some form of trouble tracking and ticketing systems. Don't let the tech support person end the call without the trouble ticket number. This is important for two reasons: #1) it is in the ISP's system as a problem, and the tech support people can quickly find it if you need to call back. #2) most tech support people are incented to resolve problems quickly: if you get an unscrupulous one, they won't want to give you a ticket number. Then, even if the problem is not resolved, they can claim it was and chalk up a false "win" to get credit.

Tip #4: Keep a log of each call or chat session
Write down the day/time, name of the tech person, and trouble ticket number of each call. This is very helpful if the problem is not resolved on the first call. You will have a history of what was said, and what was promised.

Tip #5: Some Tech Support People are good, some not…
If you get a Tech Support person who is not understanding the issue, or has to ask the same question multiple times, it might be better to end the call, and re-dial. Hopefully you will get a different, and better tech support person.

-John Becker