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Memory or Storage?

by Eugene Young

Other than the microprocessor ("brains") chip, memory and storage are the two components which determine the capabilities of your computer. They are not the same and both should be considered before purchasing additional software to increase your productivity (or game skills).

The easiest way to understand the concept of memory is to compare it to your desktop. It's a work area and anything you are working on is spread out on top of the desk. Storage is similar to your filing cabinet. Anything you want to keep is stored in the filing cabinet. It's indexed and you can (usually!) find what you need. When you are ready to work on something in your filing cabinet, you find it and put in on your desktop.

A computer is no different. When you want to work on something (use a program), the computer goes to storage (a diskette or a fixed disk) and places the information in memory. A fixed disk is also commonly called a hard disk or drive. Storage is measured in Kilobytes (Kb), thousands of characters of Megabytes (Mb), millions of characters. Buying another or a larger hard disk is like buying another filing cabinet: you now have more space to store programs and data.

Newer programs and updates to older programs have many additional features and take up more storage. In addition, most of these programs require a hard disk in order to run. Before making a new software purchase, perform a simple check to see if you have enough hard disk space remaining. At the C:►(C-prompt), type Chkdsk and press the enter key. The screen will display the amount of memory you have and the status of your hard disk.

If you need additional hard disk storage, your options are:

- Remove programs and/or data from your hard disk to diskettes
- Buy and install a data compression program (e.g. Stacker, AddStor, etc.; about \$100)
- Buy and install another or a larger hard disk (\$200 and up).

Memory is also measured a kilobytes and megabytes. The memory requirements for a program are usually printed on the outside of the package. Most programs are written with a maximum memory requirement of 640Kb. This limit was placed on the design of the microprocessor chip used in the original IBM PC. It could only keep track of 640Kb of program and data at one time, a phenomenal amount in 1981. As programs became larger, some "fooled" the computer into using more memory than 640Kb. Eventually, others were written to use the capabilities of modern microprocessors that can utilize additional memory. If you are buying a program that needs or can use "extended" or "expanded" memory, you will need to:

- Determine if your computer can utilize additional memory
- Determine if your computer has additional memory
- Determine if you can appropriately configure the additional memory.

If your computer can utilize additional memory and either doesn't have any or the additional memory can't be configured appropriately, you will need an expansion board (\$200 and up) and memory chips (\$50-\$100 per Mb) to populate the board.

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(continued on page 12)

However, if you want to buy more memory to eliminate an error message from the computer which includes the words "Insufficient memory...", this purchase may not solve your problem. The message is probably the result of a configuration conflict which should be reviewed by your computer consultant.

Memory and storage are two components which are critical to the operation of your computer, but they can also generate confusion. If you have any questions or need more details regarding this or any other computer related topic, call me at (708) 843-2849 or contact your computer consultant.

Perfection

by Jon Scott, Consulting Agronomist
Jack Nicklaus Golf Services

Thorndike and Barnhart define the noun perfection in their **Comprehensive Desk Dictionary** as "1. perfect condition; faultlessness; highest excellence. 2. a perfect person or thing. 3. a making complete or perfect: (the perfection of plans). 4. to perfection, perfectly." Can any of us lay claim to having achieved that level of utopia? Has anyone even caught a glimpse of it? Since the term itself is relative and fluid, changing with the very time within which we exist, perfection becomes a pursuit which can at once propel us to great heights of ecstasy and great depths of despair. Pursuit of perfection can consume tremendous amounts of energy and other resources which logarithmically multiply the nearer one gets to the goal. How you manage yourself and your resources in this endeavor can determine whether you succeed or fail in your profession.

There are two types of perfection in the world today. The first is fashioned by the impressions of others around us, and the second is created by ourselves. Frequently, the latter feeds on the former, so that no matter how much our accomplishments are acknowledged and appreciated by others, we still are not satisfied. We reach one level only to yearn for the next. Because we have more intimate knowledge of our environment than those who judge us, we frequently focus on the faults and not the achievements. While golfers, managers, and peers may be exploding with compliments and pride on a given day, we may be looking at the sod that has broken away from the bunker edge, the wear at the end of the cart path, or the neglected trimming around the irrigation controller. To a point this is good. Complacency breeds trouble in management. However, when pursuit of perfection becomes the driving force in our lives, it is time for a re-evaluation.

How and what does one re-evaluate? Several areas come to mind. First, where are you in your life plan? Do you even have one, or are you just hanging on for the ride. If you find yourself trying to remember what it is, the time has come to sit down and re-write the plan. Many times, we can be so wrapped up in the mechanics of achieving a personal goal, that the goal is passed or lost. Look back and ask if there was a point where you were better off than you are today. Was there a time when you had more personal time with your family, enjoyed your work more, spent more time with your friends? If the answer is yes, compare it to today and begin to evaluate why.

Second, how real are your goals? Are they actually achievable given the position you are in. The Great American Dream is that everyone can be anything and do everything. Sure, but there are limitations, some within your control and some not. For example, if a six figure salary is your goal, have you looked at a recent salary survey? Nationally, only the top 10% of golf courses and related industry jobs pay more than \$60,000, annually. One can safely estimate that this number steadily decreases the closer one gets to \$100,000. Depending on your connections, the chances of you even getting an interview at one of these top jobs is slim, and landing the position in the face of strong competition is even more unlikely. The point is, the odds are not in your favor. Therefore, is this goal realistic? In the great majority of cases, no. A more realistic goal would be to attain a level of comfort for you and your family which includes more job security, a good place to live, and the promise of modest gains as recognition for your hard work.

Third, is your pursuit of perfection consuming all of your resources, leaving nothing for the future? In other words, are you headed for, or even now experiencing, a "burn-out"? We could take a lesson from the country's present economic plight. The drive to be all things to all people in the 1980's while still chasing that American Dream of a perfect society consumed more resources than either we or the country could provide or afford. Now, in a sense, the economy has "burned out", and become stagnant. Some say it will stay that way until someone or something provides the right stimulus. Within the turf industry, that frequently means a job change. Is that what you want? Do you need the trauma of relocating yourself and your family into an unfamiliar environment which may be less desirable than where you now live? If the answer is no, you'd better take stock of your own resource consumption and set up a manageable plan. A long distance runner outlasts the sprinter every time.

Fourth, ask yourself if your vision of perfection matches those who are footing the bill. Yes, you were hired to provide leadership and initiative. Everyone wants to excel in their profession and their product. But, when you push beyond the budget, even if to briefly touch the tail of perfection, you have that much less with which to maintain the momentum that existed before the push began. Is it worth it? Frequently not. In many cases, the only person who sees that an acceptable level of perfection has not yet been achieved is you. Once you open the door, the demons are let out. What was not achievable becomes standard, yet the budget remains the same. Keep the demons behind the door and let them out one at a time; on a leash.

Finally, do you admit to and learn from your mistakes? For many in the pursuit of perfection, this isn't easy. In fact, the closer one gets to the goal, the fewer mistakes are permissible. The smallest gaff can have the most damaging of consequences. As a result, a perfection chaser may be less likely to recognize or acknowledge when a mistake is made. It can be easier to rationalize that the fault lies elsewhere. The problem with this is that no lessons are learned or corrective action taken leaving one open to repetition. A good example is the manager who finds that the dead turf on the first green was the result of the chemical spray tank not being properly cleaned of herbicide before switching to a fungicide. Naturally, he blames the operator who "should have known better". But, did the

(continued on page 14)