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# Chrome Security Software Bug Fixed



By John Lister on January, 5 2021 in "Infopackets.com".

Chrome and Edge are to get a fix for a problem with saving bookmarks and other files. The glitch is the result of an incompatibility with some anti-virus software.

The problem involved security tools which were set to scan files on a computer in real-time. Often this involves "freezing" a file immediately as it's written to disk so the security software can check for threats and neutralize them before they have an effect.

Unfortunately the way this works means it didn't always go smoothly with Chrome, resulting in the browser "freezing", then simply giving up on saving the file. This caused problems both with saving files from the web and with updating bookmark files when the user added a new page.

Specifically, the glitch affected ImportantFileWriter, a component of Chromium. That's the open source software which Google Chrome is based on.

## The Incredibly Annoying Race

It created what's known in computing as a race condition. That's where the computer needs to do two important things at the same time (in this case, creating/saving a file and checking it for virus risks), but the way the processor operates means it has to do them in sequence. In this scenario, which way the processor does the two tasks affects whether they both work as scheduled.

This was a particularly unfortunate problem as it left users having to decide whether to avoid downloading files and adding bookmarks, or switching off anti-virus software, neither of which is particularly practical.

## Browser Refines Own Fix

While it took a few weeks to create and implement the fix, it's a simple enough process in concept. The browser will now automatically retry the file creation and saving several times until it works, which will likely be after the antivirus software has confirmed there's nothing amiss. (Source: bleepingcomputer.com)

The code change means the browser will keep note of how many times it takes to attempt the file save and learn patterns over time. The idea is for the browser to come up with its own maximum which will be balance of having a good chance of successfully saving the file but avoiding the risk of ending up in an infinite loop of failed attempts. (Source: googlesource.com)

The change affects any Chromium-based browser running on Windows systems. That means updates will roll out to Google Chrome and the current edition of Microsoft Edge in the coming weeks.

## What's Your Opinion?

Have you experienced this glitch? Do you find your browser and security software play nicely together? Have you ever disabled or uninstalled security software because of glitches?

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# DEAD MOUSE

My mouse stopped working and I was unable to select anything on the screen. The LED light was still on bright but the pointer was dead.  The mouse uses two batteries, one for the LED light the other for the wireless connection which was almost dead. I changed both just to be safe. Now the mouse worked, Why the one battery died I don't know.

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# Microsoft Tackles Video Call Background Noise

By John Lister in "infopackets.com".

Microsoft is releasing a tool that uses artificial intelligence to block out background noise during video calls. The Microsoft Teams tool aims to distinguish between human speech and other sources of sound.

The need for such a tool will have grown for many users this year given the increase in those working from home. Previously, videoconferencing was more commonly associated with business settings where staff could make calls in ideal settings such as dedicated meeting rooms with no sources of unwanted sounds.

Now, many people are using the same videoconferencing software in conditions where background noise can leak even through microphones. Traffic going past a house, unruly children and barking dogs have all become familiar but unwelcome backdrops to many calls. Perhaps based on user experience, Microsoft's demonstrations of the technology involve a man crumpling up food packaging such as a potato chips bag.

Users will have three settings if they turn the feature on. "Low" aims to filter out persistent background noise such as air conditioning and computer fans while still allowing music to get through. "High" is more aggressive and tries to block anything that isn't speech. "Auto" is the default setting and aims to adjust what is and isn't filtered based on the specific and changing condition. (Source: tomtalks.blog)

## Feature Simulates Brain

Microsoft says it is using artificial intelligence to distinguish between speech and other sounds, specifically a neural network. That's where software aims to recreate the way the human brain operates to not only create rules but to refine those rules over time as it learns from more data.

The feature won't be available to everyone right away. It only works on the desktop version of Teams (not mobile apps) and only where the computer's processor supports a feature called Advanced Vector Extensions 2. That includes many, but not all, processors built in the past few years.

## Processing Demands Higher

The feature does use additional processing power on the computer, so it could affect performance on some machines. If this happens, the software may automatically revert to the "Low" setting. (Source: microsoft.com)

To switch on the function, if available, users can click on their profile picture in the top right corner of Microsoft Teams, select "Settings" and "Devices" and then choose an option.

## What's Your Opinion?

Is this a worthwhile project? Have you found background noise annoying on video calls? Is software a better solution that simply asking people to remove the source of the noise?