

# blue screen of death...

I've been working on Windows machines since the existence of Windows, and I always hated the dreaded blue screen error. It has been quite a long time since I've had one of those, but today I had one. This machine has been fairly stable, the only additions were an extra gig of memory and my cell modem. No programs added or new hardware, except a Windows update yesterday.

The problem with this blue screen was that it flashed and went directly to reboot. Not a chance to read the screen at all. Not that it would have helped, but maybe it would have given a clue. I actually had to cancel a reboot to start from my last known good start. Grumble...

Now back to that blue screen. Back in the day when you could actually tell what happened (early dos for you folks that don't know) it wasn't the terrible trouble it seems to be now. When Windows 3.1 finally rolled in and you could actually do some multi-tasking, the blue screens ominous tone. Since you were multi-tasking, you weren't always sure what task caused the error. Most of the time it was running the multiple tasks that caused the error in the first place. Windows became known for its blue screen of death. For a long time this prevented windows from being used for important functions (think payroll). It took Windows 2000 to finally start getting Windows machines that were fairly stable. I sometimes wonder where computer networking would be today if the early windows machines would have failed with more precise error messages. Would the world of Linux and Unix file servers have taken off as they did. Would Apple have any opening in the corporate world? I really think the downfall of the early Windows machines was that blue screen of death. Even the color made the machine seem 'toy' like. And the messages, well lets just say it took a lot to be able to get anything out of them. If a stable Windows environment existed from the beginning, would

we even have the Virus writers/hackers of today?

I guess we will never know, until the next computer revolution.

By the way, I really think my latest blue screen was caused by the update Microsoft/Windows decided to make yesterday evening.