Playing Nice with Windows

Many of our software applications (such as **911CAD**, for instance), are complex software package designed to be used either as a standalone application or as multiple instances running cooperatively and interactively on any number of workstations in a local area network. This software runs flawlessly for the vast majority of our users.

Some network configurations, however, do not play nice with multiple workstations that need to read/write data to a common data folder.

Further, some Windows configurations do not play nice when two or more users are given individual Windows accounts to a given computer with restrictive user permissions that virtually isolate them from each other's activities, yet need to read/write data to a common data folder.

Finally, some anti-virus software packages such as McAfee, Norton, Symantec, etc., do not play nice with legitimate software trying to perform absolutely ordinary file manipulation functions in the course of managing databases. Unfortunately, many of our software applications are intensively involved in managing multiple databases as it continuously creates and modifies its various datasets.

To add insult to injury, Microsoft has been notoriously inconsistent in its implementation of user security permissions and settings from one version of Windows to the next. Windows Vista was a *particularly* ill-behaved child, but all Windows flavors are bratty to some extent.

Despite all this, our software applications run (miraculously) without issues the vast majority of the time. In a few instances, however, performance issue may arise if

1) A software application is being run on multiple workstations on a local area network that has restricted data path permissions, and/or

2) A software application is being used on a single workstation partitioned with individual Windows account users who are configured with restrictive permissions.

Based on years of working with users who occasionally experience these performance issues, we have developed a list of options, any or all of which will resolve any issues you might have:

- If your computer is running a version of Windows that has the **UAC** (User Accounts Control) feature, please disable it. (Refer to Windows' Help for guidance). Brags Microsoft (obviously without a clue):

   "With User Account Control (UAC) enabled, any time a program wants to make a major change to your computer, UAC interrupts and explicitly asks for permission to continue."

   Actually, it's not only 'major changes'— it's often ordinary file manipulations that are a normal function of legitimate database-oriented software. Moreover, the **UAC** doesn't *always* interrupt to ask you something— sometimes is simply prohibits the action from occurring without asking, causing an unexpected and unexplained program crash.

- If you have not actually *downloaded and saved* the setup installation file to your computer, do so. In other words, don't just *run* the installation file from our website.

  When installing our software for use on a computer that has more than one Windows user account, be sure that

  - o 1) You are currently logged on as a Windows administrator, and

  - o 2) You locate and *right-click* the setup installation file, and select 'Run as Administrator'

  Why should you have to explicitly tell Windows to run a setup installation file as an Administrator when you are already logged on as an Administrator? You'll have to ask Microsoft about that—good luck: I've tried (as a software developer in the appropriate MS forums) several times over the years with no response.

AFTER THE SOFTWARE IS INSTALLED...

- When you want to run this software, <right-click> the desktop shortcut icon on your monitor and select 'Run as Administrator'. (Again— why should you have to select 'Run as Administrator' when you are already logged on as an administrator?)

  NOTE: This is a longer method, but it only has to be done once-- *<right-click>* the desktop shortcut icon on your monitor and select 'Properties'. In the 'Properties' window that appears, click the 'Compatibility' tab, then find and check 'Run this program as an administrator'. Then click the 'Apply' button at the bottom of the window, and then click the <OK> button. From then on, this software will ALWAYS be run as an administrator when you start it normally. (Note: Sadly, some pre-installed operating systems from major manufacturers come with pre-defaulted permission settings that are so restrictive that Windows won't even make this option available to you as a user.)

IF YOU STILL HAVE ISSUES, try the following options:

- If you have anti-virus software running in the background, keep in mind that such software is sometimes a bit over-zealous in its attempt to 'protect you from yourself' and might be preventing our software from performing properly. We have had no reported issues with Microsoft's own 'Security Essentials', but we have had MANY problems with Norton, Symantec, McAfee, and the like.

- *<Right-click>* the desktop shortcut icon and select 'Properties'. Click the 'Security' tab. Click the 'Edit' button. In the 'Group or User Names' box, highlight an appropriate group. Then in the lower 'Permissions for...' box, click the 'Full Control' checkbox. Then click 'Apply' when finished and then the 'Okay' button. Then close the 'Properties' window and try again.

- If you are getting an Error 339 message, or a message that one or more *.DLL and/or *.OCX files can not be found or are not registered, this is probably a Windows issue rooted in the disastrous transition between the 32-bit and 64-bit versions of its operating system. Windows 7 and Windows 8-based 64-bit systems have a **C:\Windows\SysWOW64** system folder instead of the legacy **\System** or **\System32** folders that legacy installation programs are not aware of.

  So you might have to manually register *.DLL or *.OCX files that the error message reports as missing or 'not registered'. For instance, if an error message indicates that the MSFLXGRD.OCX file is not registered, and you are running a version of Windows that has a **C:\Windows\SysWOW64** folder, then first verify that the MSFLXGRD.OCX file exists in that folder. If it doesn't, find and move it to that folder.

  Get to a windowed command prompt (In Windows 7, click the 'Start' button and type '**CMD**' in the 'Search' text field). At the blinking prompt, type '**REGSVR32 MSFLXGRD.OCX**' and press the 'Enter' key. You should get a message the the registration was successful. Type '**EXIT**' and press ethe 'Enter' key to close the prompt window.

SUMMARY…

Unfortunately, legitimate software publishers sometimes have to deal with the frustrations of Windows' **UAC** and other intrusive operating system 'features' that so often cause more harm than good. While Windows 7 and Windows 8 represent a huge improvement in many areas, even those versions still retain some overly strict 'features' and other poorly implemented 'safeguards'.

We at **RAD Software** work very hard so you can 'work easy' with your software-- neither you as a user or we as a software company should have to jump through hoops in order to run well-written software. We apologize for any possible error messages you might receive, and stand ready to help you with our software if necessary. If you have any further questions or comments about these issues, you can contact us anytime at your convenience at contact@radsoftware.org.