

## Protect Your Work - Lock Your Computer

Anyone who has put in many hours, or at times even weeks of effort into work, may know what its like to lose a part of that work, but the worst thing you can do is to be the cause of your own loss. When you leave your computer, lets say for a bathroom break, an emergency meeting, or even to discuss something away from your machine, it may be natural to just walk away and do what you have to do, but I know from experience that this is a habit you should engrave into your computer work ethic just the same as being polite to the CEO of your organization. Allow me to go deeper, it will make more sense by example:

A few years ago, I took a course called 'Drafting/Design Tech I'. This was a basic CAD (Computer-Aided-Design) class where we learned how to use the software and along the way, the concepts of good CAD-work, understanding of views, and being able to draw anything we saw in any variation. It was a good experience. One of the few things my instructor told the class immediately after explaining how to log in with our user accounts was to lock our computers.

"Hold down the 'windows' button, and push 'L'. This will lock your computer and protect your work."

Now why would you want protection? Look at condoms and you'll see why...Okay, so you won't get AID's if you don't lock your computer, but those of us who didn't heed the advice of my instructor learned the hard way to lock it up. By good nature, lots of us used to love to walk over to each other's workstations and talk, hang out, and mess around. By the time we came back, one of several things generally happened to our computers:

1. Our directories were cleared out of any and all work we had in them (hours, or rather weeks of hours, of racking your head over something has just gone down the drain), or
2. Our current drawing file was modified (i.e. a few lines being offset, stretched and skewed, thereby throwing off all dimensions, which is especially bad when being graded on dimensions. Even worse is when somebody scales your entire project, so when you actually build a model of your project, instead of a 1/8 scale between the model and full-size, you have a 19/128ths scale. Firsthand experience sucks.)
3. All of our file names were mixed and mismatched, so when we sat down to work, we faced the unique issue of figuring out each time which of the twenty files is which. Lots of fun when you have an upcoming deadline.
4. Any other creative mischief (i.e. turning the screen by 90 degrees, making windows look retro, or even hiding parts of our drawings so they appear deleted and we appear to be redoing it when we come back)

Besides an annoyance ranging from mild all the way up to a promise of an a\$\$s-kicking after class, locking your computer is important for security. From my experience with multiple private networks, leaving your console unattended while in full access can cause many problems for you and the network. One of your peers with lesser access rights may decide to play a joke on another and it doesn't turn out funny to the one it was being played on. He reports it to his boss. If the 'joke' was in any way decided as unacceptable by the boss, guess which two guys lose their jobs? Or even better if there is a visitor from somewhere and suddenly he has access to all of the top-secret files which are sworn by all employees to only stay on facility? Let me express it in one word: espionage. A car just doesn't sell as well when every other major car-maker sells exact knock-offs of it because some idiot in your business left the designs and assembly plans in easy access.

Windows Button + L

OR

Alt+Ctrl+Delete , then 'k'

For this to work, you must have a password set on your account. If your account is not password-protected, here is how to make it so:

(All instructions assume that the user has full administrative access rights)

For Windows XP:

- 1) Click on the 'Start' menu
- 2) Click on 'Control Panel'
- 3) Double-Click on 'User Accounts'
- 4) Click on your user account name
- 5) Click on 'Create a Password'
- 6) Follow the on-screen instructions

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#### About the Author

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