How Much Data Do You Use?

Recent news of Verizon, following a change by At&t in May, ending their "unlimited data" plans have sent certain people into a frenzy of trying to calculate how much data they truly use on a monthly basis - after all no one enjoys opening their cell phone bill and seeing they've incurred overage charges thanks to the extra text messages from Aunt Mildred or from attempting to download movies and music from websites we"ll leave unmentioned. So, for those whose carrier is Verizon here is a breakdown of what you can expect under the new tiered monthly data pricing:

- $30 for 2GB of data
- $50 for 5GB
- $80 for 10GB

Of course you can contact Customer Service and discuss how the new tier pricing will effect you and they will offer a suggestion as to which data plan you should choose. However, for those who prefer to be a bit more hands on here are a few steps you can take to better understand how much data you use on a monthly basis and from there make a educated decision as to which data plan best fits your needs.

To begin, you need to gather a few pieces of information from your Verizon bill. Under the "Data" section there will be an area titled "Kilobyte Usage" followed by a number used. This is the total amount of data you use when surfing the web, checking email or downloading apps.

Here are the guidelines were using to convert our Kilobyte usage to Gigabytes as used in the tier pricing:

- 1 Gigabyte = 1,048,576 Kilobytes
- 1 Gigabyte = 1,024 Megabytes
- 1 Megabyte = 1,024 Kilobytes

Lets say your bill reported 402,050 KB used. If we divide 402,050 KB (our usage) by 1,048,578 (number of KB in 1 Gigabyte) we get 0.38342403 which is the same as saying we are using roughly 38% of 1GB. If this were the case choosing the monthly plan offering 2GB would suffice given you don't expect a large jump in your data usage.

If your bill reports you are using close to 2,097,156KB (which is equal to 2GB)or above every month then we'd advise you to consider the 5GB monthly plan.

How's Your Memory?

Here's a little memory test for everyone...

Most people know that you can right-click on the MY COMPUTER icon

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Holiday Schedule

Big Blue Water will be closed the following dates:

- September 5 for Labor Day
- November 24 & 25 for Thanksgiving
- December 26 for Christmas

Geek Speak

Megabyte - A unit of computer memory or data storage capacity equal to 1,048,576 (220) bytes.
Gigabyte - A unit of computer memory or data storage capacity equal to 1,024 megabytes (230 bytes).

Everyone Loves TRIVIA

RAM, which stands for "random access memory," is considered "random access" because you can access any memory cell directly if the

Most people know that you can right-click on the MY COMPUTER icon, choose PROPERTIES from the menu displayed, and see how much memory is in your computer.

row and column is known.

But there is another way—and the other way will give you a little better idea whether or not you have enough memory.Even if you're not a computer whiz you can do this.

- 1. Click START > RUN(Normally in the lower left-hand corner of your screen). Type in msinfo32
- 2. Click OK(This opens up the SYSTEM INFORMATION utility installed on every Windows computer; the system summary shows you all kinds of things about your computer)

In the right hand window pane, scroll to the bottom until you see TOTAL PHYSICAL MEMORY. This tells you how much memory you have installed.It will probably say something like "1024.00" MB or "2048.00" MB or "1.0GB" or "2.0GB" (MB = Megabytes; GB=Gigabytes).1GB is the minimum that you should have installed. 2GB or 3GB might be better depending on what you do with your computer; but you should have at least 1GB. Windows uses about 400MB (40%) -leaving about 600MB for your programs. If you are running a memory hog antivirus program (you are running an antivirus program aren't you?), it may use 100-200MB more.

Now here's the more important part … Look below the total physical memory at the AVAILABLE PHYSICAL MEMORY.If this number is above 300MB (or .3GB) you are probably doing okay. If it's above 1GB (or 1000MB) you have plenty of memory to do almost anything you want to do.

But if this number is BELOW 300MB (.3GB) you have a problem. If it is below 200MB (.2GB) you probably experience some pretty severe computer slowdowns. If it is below 100MB (.1GB) the computer is all but unusable and you are frustrated with it. The computer is crawling. You think it's broken. It chunks away, takes forever to do anything, and sometimes gets confused.Good news! Your computer is not broken. It's just overloaded. It doesn't have the resources to handle what you are asking it to do.So how to fix that?

Upgrade the ram. If you have 1GB or less, add at least 1GB (if it will hold it).

If you don't want to upgrade the ram then just run one program at a time and you may be okay.

The thing to remember is that windows—all by itself with nothing else running– uses about 1/3 of the memory you physically have installed. We recommend a minimum of 1GB if you run XP. If you are running Vista or Windows 7, we recommend a minimum of 2 GB; especially on a 64-bit machine.