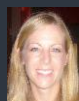


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Editor:  
Sarah Pinel

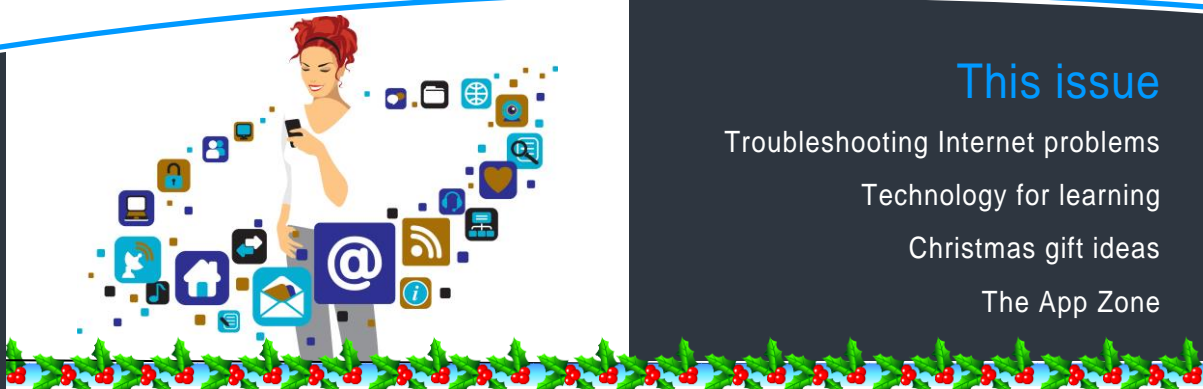
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Seasons greeting to you all, I am amazed how quickly this year has flown past. It has been an exciting year for us, during which we have welcomed two new Technology Specialists into the team and had the pleasure of helping so many people on the brink of technology meltdown! Thank you very much for your continued support and customer referrals. We wish you a fabulous Christmas and a very happy New Year. As ever, we will be on hand to help with your technology issues over the festive period and especially look forward to helping you set up your new Christmas gadgets!

## TEKKIE HELP NEWS

### CERTIFIED APPLE ENGINEER JOINS THE TEAM

We are delighted to welcome Annie, who is an Apple certified engineer, into the Tekkie Help team. Annie is now at your service for all of you with Mac related issues. She really is a Mac whizz and has a natural flare for teaching people how to get the best out of their kit.



## This issue

Troubleshooting Internet problems  
Technology for learning  
Christmas gift ideas  
The App Zone

## Fed up with slow Internet and lack of coverage?

### How to get seamless wireless Internet throughout your home

We have had hundreds of calls this year from people who are at their wits end dealing with snail paced Internet browsing, buffering media content and lack of wireless signal in critical areas of their home. In Singapore, there are a number of factors that can result in slow speeds and Wi-Fi black spots and slow speeds. We'll explain some causes and share a few tricks of the trade to help optimise your home wireless network.

#### Causes of low signal

In Singapore, Wi-Fi is particularly troublesome due to the heavy steel/concrete construction of buildings. This is because radio waves do not penetrate such heavily reinforced walls. They also do not bend well around corners and so further problems are encountered in unusually shaped apartments.

In addition, the high population density in Singapore also contributes to wireless congestion resulting in radio interference. It is not uncommon to pick up the signal of 40 other wireless networks from within a condo.

Another possible reason for low or zero signal strength is that your computer is too far from the wireless access point. This is very common in large houses, particularly where the access point is usually in the basement.

#### How to optimise your home network

So, we have discussed possible reasons why your Internet experience may be pretty poor, what can you do to improve it? We use a number of different

Techniques and equipment, some of them are very simple (which you can have a go at trying) and others are more complex and you may need us to help.

#### 1. Check your wireless router and access point is working properly.

First things first, make sure the router or access point is turned on and that the wireless signal light is illuminated. Try resetting the router/access point by turning it off, waiting at least 10 seconds, and then turning it back on. If it is an old router, it will most likely be using an old wireless standard. Consider upgrading it to one that uses Wireless N (802.11n) or Wireless AC (802.11ac). These technologies will greatly increase the range and speed of a formerly 802.11g or 802.11b network.

#### 2. Do an Internet speed test

What speed of broadband should you be getting? The local providers have a vast selection of different packages ranging from 1MB to 300MB. Find out if you are getting your purchased download speed by plugging your computer directly into the first router and doing a speed test. You ideally need 50MB and above of download speed for smooth internet browsing, the more the better. It is worth remembering that you won't necessarily get the download speeds that are advertised so check the small print of your contract (it is usually 60% and above). If the speeds you are getting are below what you are paying for, give your provider a call to file a complaint. If you have the option to upgrade to fibre (i.e. you have an Open Net termination point in your house or fibre in close proximity), we strongly recommend doing so as this should ensure a superior Internet experience. ( Continued.....)

*If you would like us to come and enhance your home or office wireless network, please get in touch on 81138682 and we can arrange for a network specialist to come to the rescue!*

### 3. Move your router/ access point

In order to achieve "wireless Feng Shui", the physical location of your router is important as you need to allow your wireless signal to flow effortlessly throughout your home, dancing harmoniously with all of the other noise and interference that may be going on. This means positioning your router centrally. Ensure it is placed away from solid walls that may shield its ability to radiate freely in the direction where coverage is required. Also ensure it is away from microwaves, cordless phones or any other device that can interfere with the signal.

### 4. Install wireless repeaters

If you have wireless black spots and would like good coverage throughout your home, consider placing wireless repeaters in strategic locations. A repeater will pick up your wireless network signal retransmit it from that area. For example, by placing such a device on the stairs between floors, it may be possible to "repeat" the wireless signal and provide a strong signal to multiple floors of a house.

### 5. Install wireless access points

You can try adding additional wireless access points (APs) to your network. The traditional and generally more reliable way is to buy access points and run ethernet (LAN) cables from your router to each additional AP. If you don't already have Ethernet LAN/wiring around the property, you can try utilising your existing electrical outlets. Plug in HomePlugs into the electrical outlet and connect one end to the router to bridge your network over the power supply.

As you can see, wireless optimisation isn't an exact science; there is no one universal solution as there are so many variables. What is good though is that generally, there are solutions; you shouldn't have to put up with poor functioning wi-fi. You may just need to make simple adaptations or it may be more complex using a combination of methods. If you need help, Tekkie Help can come in and analyse your wireless environment and devise a plan to achieve fast running and seamless wireless throughout your home.

## Using technology to help preschoolers learn

### Tips to help your kids to learn and have fun using your smart phone or tablet

Children under the age of 6 years old have an uncanny knack of using technology. It is not uncommon to see children as young as two, intuitively swiping screens and confidently pressing buttons.

Technology is everywhere and the attraction for kids is obvious. Used properly, technology can be an amazing teaching tool. Here are some tips on how to ensure your child's experiences with technology are both fun and educational.

#### 1. Choose quality Apps

It's not just a case of handing over your phone or tablet; it's finding the right quality of apps that is important. Pick ones which feed your child's interests and strengths, while pushing the boundaries to support them to explore and learn new things. Take the time to do the research (or just take our advice!) and test them out. Choose a variety of activities: stories, puzzles, music, phonics, maths, role-play, art etc.

#### 2. Get involved

Although handing a phone to a wailing child maybe an easy way to get a few minutes of peace whilst you get a job done. Try to dedicate some time to use technology together with your child. Watch your kids playing a game or navigating a website. Ask them questions to spur their learning and encourage critical thinking. If they are stuck

on one level that's become too easy, ask if they know how to move up and help if necessary.

#### 2. All about balance

As with anything else, moderation is the key. Scientists still say the best way to develop a young mind is hands on exploration and interacting with people. No matter how educational the app claims to be, technology is not going to turn them into geniuses – it will just help them get a little information. Ensure technology doesn't replace more active pursuits and set limits on screen time at an early age.

#### 3. Be a role model

Your attitude towards IT is important in influencing the relationship your children will have with it. All too often, parents can become so absorbed in a device that it becomes a barrier to communication with their children. Think about the message you are sending next time you answer the phone in the middle of a game or surf the internet when you are on the bus with your children.

*Need some great recommendations for educational, yet fun apps for young kids? Check out our recommendations in [The Asian Parent](#) by [CLICKING HERE](#).*



## THE APP ZONE

A quick review of the apps we are loving at the moment.

### SINGAPORE MAPS



Such a useful app.

Powered by Street

Directory it does far more than just maps.

**What it does:** As its name suggests it is a great map and gives directions. What we love is that it also lets you know when your bus will arrive you click on the bus stop symbol. When you click on buildings, it gives you a list of all businesses within it. The added bonus is that the mapping also works offline.

### SG WEATHER



Don't get caught

out in the rain

without your umbrella!

**What it does:** It does what it says on the tin (and very well actually!). Singapore weather with 3 hourly forecasts, 7 day forecasts and the latest 20 minute weather and radar map display. It even has a 24hrs raining alert by any location in Singapore, and a PSI alert.

# All I want for Christmas is a.....

Check out these great technology gift ideas



Struggling for Christmas gifts? Search no longer with these great ideas.

#### ▪ New tablet or smart phone

Portable devices just get better and better each year. We think the hottest ones on the market include Google's Nexus 7 FHD tablet, as well as the Galaxy S4. Another impressive tablet is the Kindle HDX 7. This e-reader is flying off the shelves with its fast Wi-Fi for and the "beyond HD" screen to make movies and videos come to life.

#### ▪ GoPro HD Hero3

Capture your extreme activities with this very cool high quality camera. It can be used with the gear you wear and can be

mounted for a more professional shoot. It is waterproof up to 197ft and features a 170 degree wide angle lens.

#### ▪ Fitbit Flex

Whether you're a fitness fanatic, trying to lose weight, or just want to manage your calories, the Fitbit Flex will be a winner. This little device keep track of steps, distance, calories burned and active minutes and displays LED lights to show you how you are doing. One light lit means you have reached 20% of your daily goal you are able to set on a customised dashboard.

#### ▪ Rokono BASS+ Mini Speakers

The quality playback of these compact

speakers will surprise anyone, both because of the sound and the cost (around \$20). They are a perfect gift for people with a laptop, smartphone, iPod or MP3 that want to make their music known! The speakers can produce 10+ hours of continuous playback from a single charge. It comes with a splash-proof travel bag.

#### ▪ Tekkie Help gift voucher

If you buy any of these gadgets or another bit of kit, why not give them Tekkie Help to get them up and running with their new toy. Also, an ideal way to help someone you know who is having an IT meltdown.

# tekkiehelp GiftVouchers

## The perfect accompaniment to new Christmas gadgets!

This Christmas give the gift of support.  
Tech support gift vouchers from \$95.

[www.tekkiehelp.com/gift-vouchers](http://www.tekkiehelp.com/gift-vouchers)

**To purchase: Call: +65 81138682 or email: [support@tekkiehelp.com](mailto:support@tekkiehelp.com)**

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link: [www.facebook.com/tekkiehelp](http://www.facebook.com/tekkiehelp).

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