

**WARNING!** Following these procedures could potentially harm your computer. You should not perform any of these steps without a full backup and a thorough understanding of what you are doing. Use this information at your own risk. Ever have those drivers or devices that just *won't* go away even though you're

*sure*

you've uninstalled them? Or, say you replace your old 100Mbps network card with a faster Gbps adapter. But, you can't re-assign it the same IP address because your system insists there is still an adapter installed with that same IP address and you forgot to remove the driver before removing the old card (which is now in your little brother's pc)?

To get rid of that unwanted driver, device, or service:

- 1) Open the "Start" menu and choose "Run..."
- 2) Type in "cmd" (without the quotes) and click "ok".
- 3) At the cmd prompt, type in "set devmgr\_show\_nonpresent\_devices=1" (without the quotes) and press enter. (Note that nothing seems to happen—this is ok. We are actually setting an environment variable which is going to help us to see hidden devices)
- 4) On the next cmd prompt line, type in "devmgmt.msc" (without the quotes) and press enter. This will launch the Windows Device Manager Console.
- 5) In the Device Manager Console, from the "View" menu, select "Show Hidden Devices". Now, as you expand the different drivers and devices in device manager you will see not only the items that Windows currently detects as installed on your pc (these are the usual items displayed), but you will also see drivers, devices, and services which have been loaded in the past but were not uninstalled or are not currently started. You can find your offending device, right-click, and choose "uninstall" to remove it from the system completely.

Be careful though; you should note that non-loaded devices, drivers, and services are "grayed" out, but that doesn't necessarily mean that you should delete all of them. Only remove items you know you don't need. And, be careful that you don't change too many devices or you might need to re-activate your Windows installation.

Last thing, if you accidentally exit the Device Manager Console you will need to start over again at the cmd prompt. To close the cmd prompt window, type "exit" (without the quotes).