

Microsoft program will return sound

August 13 2009, By Steve Alexander

Q. I recently removed the Roxio Easy Media Creator program from my Toshiba laptop, but I think the process also removed my system's sound. I've updated the system drivers, but when I check properties for the sound devices, I get the message: "Windows successfully loaded the device driver for this hardware, but cannot find the hardware device (code 41)." Each sound and audio device listed in the Device Manager on the PC is enabled but has a yellow exclamation point in front of it. Is there a way to get my sound back?

A. Yes. Uninstalling Roxio has inadvertently removed some software code that was used by those other devices, but such problems are common and fairly easily repaired.

In this case, the solution can be found at the free online Microsoft Fix It Solution Center, based partly on the company's discovery that the most frequently asked consumer question involves a PC audio problem. Go to support.microsoft.com/kb/314060 and you'll find written instructions on how to fix the problem and, alternatively, an automated fix-it button on the Web page that will perform the fix for you. (While Roxio isn't mentioned by name, you'll find the error code you describe is listed under the heading "more information" and can be caused by installing, uninstalling or updating a program.)

Readers with other problems can find the main Fix It Solution Center page at support.microsoft.com/gp/cp_fixit_main. The limitations of the service are that it's very Microsoft-centric and often deals in technical minutiae.

Q. My HP [laptop](#) running [Windows](#) Vista has a program called HP Total Care Advisor that bothers me. After the PC is idle for a while, I get a message that says "to maximize the [battery life](#) of your product" the program will automatically close, and that to keep using it I should reconnect the PC to the power outlet in the wall. The program flashes this message periodically, even "waking up" the computer to do so. How can I get this program to go away?

A. HP Total Care Advisor is a Windows Vista program that combines into a single location information about computer security, software updates, warranties, data backups and computer accessories such as printers. But if it's annoying, you can change its default setting so that it doesn't start up when the PC does. For details, see tinyurl.com/lbannl.

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