

Securing and Protecting your Computerized Hamilton Thorne Systems

Hamilton Thorne Inc. (HT) products are designed to operate with Microsoft Windows™ operating systems. Therefore, as the owner of a Hamilton Thorne system, you have a great deal of freedom in determining how and whether to connect your system to a network, load other programs on the computer, and manage and protect your data. There may also be regulatory standards which pertain to your environment such as risk management for IT networks.

General Use:

First and foremost, this is medical/research equipment and needs to be treated as such. Overloading the system with unnecessary programs, exposing unprotected systems to the internet, inserting virus-infected memory sticks and other similar actions which routinely cause problems on personal computers are also risks to your HT system. It is recommended that additions or modifications be limited to those required for proper operation of your HT system. It is strongly recommended that you backup your system periodically and prior to making any changes.

Data Backup:

It is recommended that important data be externally backed up frequently to a location such as an external hard drive or a cloud backup service. Microsoft Windows includes backup utilities and there are also third-party backup and restore solutions available so that data you create as well as the “state” of the system can be backed up and then used in emergency situations to restore the system to a previous operational state.

Networking:

Hamilton Thorne ships most of its systems “network capable”. Hamilton Thorne is not responsible for networking the HT system. To connect to a network, contact the system administrator for that network. There are some basic guidelines which are recommended.

- a. First, the HT system operation should be validated prior to network setup.
- b. The system should be backed up/stored at this state. Only then should the networking steps be pursued.
- c. Be aware that although networking is the easiest way to share data, joining a domain can alter performance, especially if the HT system is trying to boot from or run programs from a domain. HT programs typically require administrator access to the local hard drive.
- d. A preferred method of network operation is to map a shared network drive that the HT programs can access.

Virus and Malware Protection:

Unless an HT system is secured and isolated both physically and electronically from sources of computer virus or malware (sandboxed), the use of an anti-virus anti-malware program is strongly recommended. Windows Security Essentials and Windows Defender are compatible with HT systems and are free to download from Microsoft or included with Windows. Hamilton Thorne may opt to pre-install anti-virus software on HT systems.

HT Software Program Note:

Many HT programs must install or run with Administrator privileges and may require custom Windows User Account Control settings.

Third-party Hardware and Software:

1. Ensure that third-party software, such as anti-virus programs, do not use excessive CPU resources during times which may interfere with HT system use (e.g. running virus scans or live updates during the day).
2. Installing third-party programs such as spreadsheet, database or PDF capabilities is possible on HT systems (e.g. Open Office, Microsoft Office). This is generally acceptable but it is recommended to minimize the installation and use of additional programs to only what is required to run with the HT system.

Software Release Announcements

When Hamilton Thorne releases new software, a Software Release Announcement (SRA) is generated. The SRA contains a summary of changes to the software including new features added and changes to existing features, as well as any known issues. These announcements are typically included on the software update CD and may also be downloaded from the Distributor and Customer sections of the Hamilton Thorne website. Please read the appropriate SRA before updating to new versions of Hamilton Thorne software.