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Sigh!

It is back again. That phantom error message that occurs when you...well, frankly do almost anything related to hyperlinks. It has been hanging around since Windows Server 2000, has affected every installation of Windows or Office since, and is frankly a major pain in the you-know-what. This time, it got me when I upgraded to MS Office 2010, and drove me nuts for about three weeks.

It occurs when you update to a new operating system. Or install a new version of MS Office. Or try Chrome or Firefox as your browser and then uninstall them. Or wish upon a star. You try to click on a hyperlink in an email, or in MS Word, or somewhere else, and get the message "This operation has been cancelled due to restrictions in effect on this computer. Please see your Network Administrator..."

It will drive you nuts, too, because most of the so-called solutions you find online don't work. Even if you follow the official Microsoft solution, you'll simply get an error message telling you it does not apply for Windows 7 or MS Office 2010. So let me steer you to a solution that might work.

First of all, the problem is neither with Windows 7 or with Office 2010. It is something in Internet Explorer 6, 7 or 8 that loses its way and refuses to open hyperlinks. And re-installing MS Office, resetting the default browser, installing and uninstalling stuff...well, it may not work. So here is what will work (and deep appreciation to the guys at [fixitguy.com](http://fixitguy.com) for doing this):

"This simple batch file should fix the error 'This operation was cancelled due to restrictions in effect on this computer' that occurs when clicking on a hyperlink in an email message after you've uninstalled or removed the Google Chrome browser. I'm still not entirely sure why this problem only seems to occur with Outlook, but not Windows Mail, Live Mail, or Outlook Express. Also, only happen a relatively

small number of users see this error when they click a link in an e-mail. This batch

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Vista & Windows 7 users must right-click on the IE-associations.bat file and choose 'Run as Administrator'. XP users can just run it by double clicking.

Your original settings will be saved to a file called origsettings.txt and the new settings will be saved to newsettings.txt.

Test to make sure that everything works properly before deleting origsettings.txt.

Note that YOU MUST name the folder on your desktop "IE-Associations" or this will not work.

Note: this utility will not circumvent any real restrictions that your corporate IT department or system administrator may have actually set using Group Policy or some other tool.

There are numerous conspiracy theories claiming that Microsoft is doing this on purpose to thwart Chrome and Firefox, but that is nonsense. It actually is just a piece of bad code that affects about one in 10 users and could be fixed. Though trying to find the solution by yourself can be daunting.

You're welcome.

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