

Re: Article – Buying a computer? Ask these 3 questions!

Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.general/2005-07/msg04833.html>

- *From:* "Lil' Dave" <spamyourself@xxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sun, 10 Jul 2005 09:53:44 -0500
-

Seems rather simple approach for "why you need a computer?"

Most new users haven't the vaguest idea what they will do with the PC in the first year. Just a few simple ideas. If they find they want to do more, the minimum PC for their original ideas are out the door.

Yet, you changed that basis as the hardware ramble goes on throughout the OP.

No one has a crystal ball for anyone's potential usage of a PC. You can overbuild, or underbuild a PC for potential usage. Thing is, no one can know what that will be. Including many users that will take possession of same.

All PCs are assembled from parts. What those part performance is, performance in relation to the rest of the system, and its actual use is what matters. Brand name PCs may suffer due to minimal hardware performance, little add-on capability both hardware and bios natured, a buttload of minimum capability software (that you may not want, or is weighing down the system or both), an inability to recover anything but the original OS. Some custom PC assemblers will build to suit. But, most give you a list of what you can have, and the customer chooses from that list. In some cases, some of this hardware may be of the same minimal performance nature of the brand name PCs. So, its not a black and white issue as you portray.

Don't see how you can make recommendations for physical memory (RAM) capacity unless you know its actual usage at anytime. Most PCs have "breathing problems" with video editing, decoding/encoding with 512MB of RAM in an XP environment. Yet, you mentioned in the OP as video editing a possible usage.

Again, the new user doesn't know for sure what he/she is going to do with a PC in the long haul. If they don't get that "loaded" PC, the headache of adding the hardware and drivers can be too technical for some. Especially if its internal to the PC case/enclosure.

The days of the single physical hard drive are gone. One needs 2 minimum nowadays. Personal PC usage recovery environment is still is not an issue with PC customers due to the lack of information here as well. Especially

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name brand PCs. It won't sell either, as the competition will provide only one hard drive, which the competition could not compete with 2 or more physical hard drives. Not hard to implement, just difficult to compete. But, down the road, it sure becomes an issue to the user when he/she has no choice but to new install the OS. Capacity needed, again, depends on the usage.

Tech support may vary from someone who barely speaks English to a seasoned veteran, a phone number that takes two hours to talk to a person to a few minutes, on site repairs, send the PC for repairs, bring the PC in for repairs, repairs that involve warranty and non-warranty (not free) work, remote VPN entry into the system, parts only covered by the warranty, no labor. The amount supports varies widely. Also depends on the warranty package that you may choose to buy. Which, can push the total investment to much more that originally anticipated. Talking with 3 other people about this can give appropriate or inappropriate advice as it varies both with their attitude, the service rendered, the warranty package that each owned, their perceptions of all of this and what they aren't telling you or refusing ot accept.

<adamfletcherone@xxxxxxxx> wrote in message
news:1120999535.106189.246310@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

- > 1. Why do you need a computer?
- >
- > Whether you are a new user or advanced one, whether this is your first
- > computer or second (or even third), be clear as to why you want a
- > computer before you even think of buying one.
- >
- > How will you use your computer? Are you only interested in browsing the
- > Internet and checking e-mail? Do you plan to use your PC as a
- > programming machine? Do desktop publishing or video editing feature on
- > your agenda? Or is it a gaming rig? What is a computer:
- > <http://www.hardwaresoftwarearticles.com/>
- >
- > Consider these factors before stepping into a hardware shop.
- >
- > The basic components of a computer system are the motherboard
- > (containing the processor and memory), keyboard, mouse, monitor,
- > diskette drive, CD-ROM drive and hard drive.
- >
- > In addition, there are several other types of devices you may or may
- > not need. A trackball, joy stick, modem, tape drive, zip drive,
- > printer, plotter, scanner, sound card and speakers, television card and
- > video capture card, to name a few.
- >
- > Whether you buy these will depend on what you need the computer for and
- > which software applications you intend to use.
- >
- > Remember the golden rule: the fastest or most expensive computer is not
- > necessarily the one you need.
- >

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- > Finally, the length of time that you plan to own the computer before
- > replacing it will also help determine which computer to buy.
- >
- > 2. What is your budget?
- >
- > This is the next thing you need to be certain of. How much are you
- > willing to spend on a PC?
- >
- > After you arrive at a figure, keep a margin of a few thousands. It will
- > give you some room for flexibility. If you are short on money when you
- > buy your computer and cannot add all the peripherals you want, be
- > smart.
- >
- > Buy as much as you can afford. Don't cut corners on the main system
- > unit (monitor, processor, memory, disk space).
- >
- > Remember, you want the computer to last at least four years. You don't
- > want to run out of disk space or memory in the very first year, all
- > because you trimmed down on the memory or got a smaller hard drive.
- > Internet Explorer:
- > <http://www.hardwaresoftwarearticles.com/archive/index.php/f-11.html>
- >
- > Hard disk capacity matters a great deal as it takes no time for data to
- > fill the available space. A 40 GB hard disk is sufficient disk space,
- > but 80 GB is the standard recommendation.
- >
- > Random Access Memory is the amount of memory available for use by
- > programmes on a computer. One of the important factors to ensure the
- > smooth running of your system is the memory available.
- >
- >
- > The more the memory, the better it is. Make sure you can upgrade your
- > computer's memory as and when required.
- >
- > The RAM chip comes in capacities of 128, 256, 512 MB, even 1 GB. Most
- > computers function efficiently with 256 MB RAM, though a 512 MB RAM
- > does offer you an edge.
- >
- > Hold off on the printer or a software application and other accessories
- > that you really don't need right away. You shouldn't have any problem
- > installing these after the original purchase has been made. Just ensure
- > you buy components that are compatible with your system.
- >
- > 3. Should you go for a branded PC or an assembled one?
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- > Assembled machines are popular because they are more economically
- > priced.
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- > Branded PCs cost around 35 to 40% more than their assembled
- > counterparts.
- >

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- > Besides, you can choose your own specifications with assembled PCs. You
- > are not forced to accept a rigid component configuration. You cannot
- > customise a branded PC to suit your exact requirements. Hardware:
- > <http://www.hardwaresoftwarearticles.com/archive/index.php/f-21.html>
- >
- > With the same price that you would pay for a branded piece, you will be
- > able to own a superior assembled PC.
- >
- > Make sure the components purchased for the assembled PC are original.
- > Take along an informed, reliable assembler to purchase the components
- > so that you are not fooled by counterfeit parts.
- >
- > The advantage of a branded PC is the reliability of the brand, the
- > after sales service and the technical support. On the flip side, the
- > after sales services and repairs offered by the brands are a tad
- > expensive and not prompt most times.
- >
- > Don't forget to look at the warranty. Generally, a warranty period of a
- > year is normal for all major parts of the PC. But there are good brands
- > that offer either more years or the option of an additional payment to
- > top up the warranty period.
- >
- > Talk to your friends and colleagues who have assembled PCs. Ask them
- > about their experience and recommendations on whom to approach.
- > Question them as to what happened when they had a problem. Was the
- > individual easy to access? Did he offer prompt service? Does their
- > computer give a lot of trouble?
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- > If possible, meet two or three individuals before you finally zero in
- > on one.
- >
- > Spend some time on these three issues and you will be all set to buy
- > your very own PC!
- >
- > Adam Fletcher is the webmaster of Hardware Software Articles
- > <http://www.hardwaresoftwarearticles.com> .
- >

• **Follow-Ups:**

◆ **Re: Article – Buying a computer? Ask these 3 questions!**

◇ From: Ken Blake

• **References:**

◆ **Article – Buying a computer? Ask these 3 questions!**

◇ From: adamfletcherone

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