Computer Tips

Buying a New Computer—Part 1

When customers come into our shop looking for a new computer, they are often unsure of what to ask. To help them, we ask them to consider the following before buying:

Is your computer a family PC or just for you? Is the machine used for work or pleasure? Is the computer used for writing documents and emailing, or editing the families' video collection -- the latter requiring significantly more processing power and memory? If the computer is used for multiple purposes, to what extent is your time divided up between those purposes.

Word processing and emailing uses up little computer processing power; however, if you want to use instant chat, Facebook, Outlook, Excel, an antivirus and watch the tennis online, whilst word processing – that'll require much more processing power and memory.

If you use the computer for work, remember that an hour wasted waiting for a slow computer is an hour of free time lost – time is money. In other words, a PC that has a lot of processing power will increase productivity

Similarly, if you wish to use your computer to play games or watch videos, or create engineer drawings, you'll need more computer processing power.

The more often you use your computer the more you should consider investing in something that is above your current needs to minimize time wastage and frustration. Consider your computer an investment for the next 3 -4 years.

Most people keep computers for three years, over this time period your needs and usage of the computer are likely to change – how for example have your computing needs changed over the last three years? For example, you may be watching more video online than you used to, or using the computer more hours in the day. If you plan to keep your computer for the long term, it is better to spend a little more now, to allow for changes in your computer usage over time.

Computers are designed to organize and perform successions of simple tasks; however, often they are a common source of frustration for one of two reasons – lack of technical know-how or a lack of processing power (ie. slow). The former requires more education, training and practice – the latter, a little more investment in hardware. You may not pause for thought about spending an extra few dollars here and there on a lovely meal out or a new video game – but that extra expenditure on a new computer system is normally far more critically considered than perhaps it should be. To our thinking, for peace of usage it is better to invest the extra $150 or so on a better processor and more memory, and buy slightly above your current needs.

To be continued...