Computer Tips

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Buying a New Computer—Part 2

Once you know what you'd like to use your computer for, you will find it easier to establish what sort of computer to buy. Here are some key things to remember regarding computer parts for your desktop or laptop computer.

For most users a standard mid-priced computer will do everything you require. Most users do not need the latest/fastest computer, the increased price not justifying the small gains in performance….but please don't buy the cheapest! The cheaper computers run slower, older technology, and work harder to do the every day tasks.

The processor in a computer determines the overall speed the computer will run. There are two main manufacturers of processors, Intel and AMD. Both of these processors are great, as long as you understand their strengths and weaknesses.

Intel processors by their design are better at data-processing. Intel processors are ideal for database, spread-sheet, and office related uses. AMD processors are ideal for graphic intensive uses, such as gaming. AMD processors rate at lower Ghz than Intel, but are usually equal in speed once they are up and running. Here in our shop, we usually recommend Intel processors for most general purpose uses.

Your computer system memory, or RAM, is also a very important component for performance. With the introduction of Windows 7, 4GB is the suggested minimum for a new computer. Some higher systems have 8GB which is ample for nearly all computer applications.

If you use your computer for playing games, editing home videos, or CAD drawing, you should get a computer with a separate graphics card rather than an inbuilt graphics card. In built graphic cards rely on the processor to do most of the graphic work, and slow the entire system. A separate graphics card takes this load away from the processor. This way you won't be disappointed by slow graphics and poor image quality.

When looking to buy a new computer, check that your existing hardware, like your digital camera and printer, will work with your new computer. Also check that any existing software you use, such as finance packages, stock market programs, and DVD editing software will work on the new PC.

Another important factor to consider when buying a computer is the case. Apart from being a frame to secure the internal parts, the case is responsible for cooling your computer. Cheaper cases have few air vents and fans, while more satisfactory cases have full mesh fronts, with a good number of fans. Gaming cases are ideal for even general purpose computers, as they allow for better cooling, and will extend the life of your computer. Gaming-type cases do cost a little extra, but are worth it in the long run.

To be continued...