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Computer Shopping Guide

by Scott Toney

► The holiday season is rapidly approaching and many people are considering replacing their older PC this year. Follow these guidelines to make sure you will be happy with your new computer purchase year round.



The primary factor you should consider before your purchase is knowing what you'll be using your PC for. I frequently hear comments like, "I don't want to do much with my PC, just play the latest games, email a monthly newsletter, get on-line, print our pictures and record some home videos." While most new PCs will do all of those things, they probably will not do all of them well. Below are some suggestions for each of these common computer uses:

Digital Pictures – You will need lots of hard drive space and a way to back them up. The newer digital camera picture files are huge! If you are a shutterbug, you can use up your hard drive space in a hurry. Also remember that no matter how good your PC is, you should save those pictures to disk (CD, DVD or USB Hard Drive) for archival purposes.

Internet – You will need enough RAM to run all your security software. The trend towards bigger antivirus programs every year will not be changing any time soon. Even though this software is a burden to your PC, your option of going without an antivirus program is not a good one. (See the *CCS Technologies* June 2008 Newsletter; past issues of newsletters are available at www.ccstech.net/news.htm).

Multiprocessing – If you do multiple things at once, a fast multi-core CPU is for you. Dual Core processors are common now. Even if you are a light computer user, the extra horse power comes in handy when your virus scan kicks in while you are working on a project or just searching the internet.

Games – Dedicated video card is a must. A fast processor with lots of RAM will help also. Video games are very demanding on your PC.

The video card in your PC is the biggest factor in game performance and they have come a long way in recent years.

Newer games take a lot of room on your hard drive, use a lot of RAM and require fast CPUs. Make sure you meet or exceed all the hardware requirements of the games you know you'll be playing.

Work – A fast multi-core CPU (with plenty of RAM) and of course a backup! The type of backup you decide on should match how soon you need to get back to work. This should be measured in minutes, hours or days. Some software will have special requirements you need to verify, but the main thing with your work machine is that it needs to be reliable. Make sure you buy a machine with the version of Windows that you need to run your work software, including *XP Professional* or *Vista Business*. A typical "consumer" PC may have a big hard drive in it and play games great, but will not work well with your business software. Installing dual monitors will help you get things done more efficiently. (See the *CCS Technologies* May 2008 Newsletter.)

No matter how you intend to use your computer, the professionals at *CCS Technologies* can help you choose the right features to get the job done and make your computing experience more enjoyable.

"Relax...we're on IT"

www.ccstech.net



Watch out for these viruses!

- Adam and Eve Virus: Takes a couple of bytes out of your Apple.
- Jimmy Hoffa Virus: Nobody can find it.
- Texas virus: Makes sure that it's bigger than any other file.
- Disney Virus: Everything in your computer gets Goofy.
- Lazy Virus: Asks you to format your hard drive yourself, it can't be bothered with all that work.
- Happily Married virus: Invades only one computer and stays with it for life.

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CONTACT Information

Toll Free - 888.857.8808

Local - 616.997.8808

Fax - 616.997.9317

Email Sales - sales@ccstech.net

Email Information - info@ccstech.net

Technical Support - support@ccstech.net

President

Greg Slater - gslater@ccstech.net

IT Client Managers

Ryan McMillen - rcmillen@ccstech.net

Gary Slager - gslager@ccstech.net

Karen Strickland - kstrickland@ccstech.net

Scott Toney - stoney@ccstech.net

Jeff Verry - jverry@ccstech.net

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- Gigabit Ethernet, 8 USB
- Keyboard & Optical Mouse
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- Keyboard & Optical Mouse
- Windows XP Professional



Quality

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