Popular Threads on Solosez

Buying Computers—How Often?

I currently use a Dell Latitude D610. However, I am considering upgrading various pieces of software, including Microsoft Outlook, Adobe Acrobat etc. Previously, when I purchased computers bundled with software, it always seemed that I received a much better deal on the software than purchasing it on its own.

The Dell Latitude D610 is less than 2 years old. However, the warranty and support have expired. I am weighing whether to upgrade various pieces of software or to simply purchase a new computer with upgraded software.

How often does the collective purchase new computers?

Michael D. Day, Meriden, Connecticut

A lot of people on Solosez have "upgraded" by switching to Mac

Dick O'Connor

But me laddie, that tis a significant downgrade, every bit as much as switching from Black Bush to Foster's.

Mike Riddle, Nebraska

I have a small network with five desktop PCs (plus a sixth PC acting as a file server). I try to replace one PC each year so that none are older than 5 years old. I replace my notebook PC every 2 or 3 years (they tend to wear out faster than desktop PCs that don't get moved around all the time).

If you watch Dell's factory outlet website, you can sometimes find a reconditioned, canceled order, or scratch & dent PC bundled with MS Office and Adobe for less than it would cost to buy the software.

http://www.dell.com/content/segmenter.aspx?s=dfo

I usually stick with reconditioned Dell Optiplex PCs for the office (they come with longer warranties and are better built than the Dimensions), though I did buy a Dimension last year when I got a particularly good deal on a new one with all the bells and whistles I wanted.
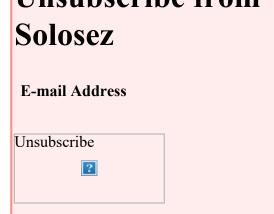
Neal A. Kennedy, Marble Falls, Texas

Now, now,

No need for any theological debates...

SoloSez

Subscribe to Solosez

First Name

Last Name

E-mail Address

Subscribe

Unsubscribe from Solosez

E-mail Address

Unsubscribe

Books

Click on the book for more info

Seth D. Rogers, Longmont, CO

Barron Henley of HMU consulting (http://www.hmuconsulting.com/)
Suggests that you replace all of your computers at the same time, every
three years. Finance the purchase for three years and get three year tech
support contract. That way, all of your computer expenses will be the same
every month, which is easier to budget for.

Christopher Bumgarner, Columbus, Ohio

I have heard Barron talk, and he makes a very strong case. He says, you
must think of computers as tissue paper--use them and throw them away.

Neal D. Fortin, Okemos, MI

Aye, laddie--but no dacent Irishman would evewr switch from Irish (Black
Bush) to scotch (Black

Dick O'Connor

I don't want or mean to start any religious wars, but one nice attribute of
Apple's computers is that they last and last, with pretty good backwards
and forwards compatibility. I voluntarily upgraded several months ago to a
portable, but my 6 year old desktop still does anything that I ask of it, and
runs the latest system software as well as some programs that I have had
for more than 15 years. I suggest that to the extent possible purchases of
computers be deferred at least until the new system software for Windows
(and Macs, for that matter) be released. The version of Vista most suitable
for office networking has significant hardware requirements, and my guess
is that one will be better off if you get the computer with the newer
program preinstalled. Some suggest waiting some months beyond the
initial release date to allow some of the bugs to be sorted out. Today's
Wall Street Journal has an article by Walt Mossberg summarizing his
experience with Vista with 3 different computers and different versions of
the software.

Law Office of Paul Hogan, Sunnyvale, CA

In my experience, Macs do have a longer life span than windows
machines, but that is probably because windows machines compete on
price so that the hardware found in cheaper PCs are, well, cheaper. A good
PC will last as long as a Mac, and generally it's easier to upgrade
individual components. I fail to see any good reason to toss a computer
that is working, especially an office computer that probably doesn't need to
run the latest video or photo software. I can see installing a new hard drive
every few years, but I think that a new computer is only needed when new
software demands new hardware.

Steve O' Donnell

This is also my experience. Although I built a new PC a little over three years ago, I'm still using 3 others that were built by my nephew over 10 years ago. Only one has a 1Ghz chip in it, the other two are slower. All of them run fine. I have no plans to replace my 'new' computer in the foreseeable future.

Like a car, it's fun to drive fast, but most of the time we're stuck in traffic. Blazing speed on a computer in nice, especially if one deals with graphics. But I suspect most of us on this list are stuck in the slow traffic of word processing, something most any computer can do.

As to Apple's build quality, I agree. A friend's iBook failed (turned out the mother board went bad) and I had the chance to see the inside. I was impressed with the build quality. And I would expect the various components themselves are also of a higher quality than what's found in the junk PCs being sold.

Just my thoughts. YMMV

Clarence Behrend, West Bend, WI

Hardware choices are software driven.

I guide myself by the following precepts:

1. Try to use as few different software programs as necessary and upgrade only when I absolutely have to, or the new version has a feature that will really be helpful. If the old software does the job, keep it!

2. Only upgrade hardware when it breaks or if it can't run the software you need adequately. Or when that new wall-size widescreen LCD monitor catches my eye and is on sale.

3. Never, ever, buy a new operating system for an existing computer. Buy a new computer if you need the new operating system.

4. Always buy a step or two down from current "state of the art."

I really think that there is a plateau in terms of PC performance. My Dells are 3-4 years old now and have felt no need or desire to upgrade.

Just my $.02.

Jim Gulecas, Dunedin, FL

[Back to Popular Threads](#)