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## Choose the right computer for your company

Global commerce has opened a whole new world for owners of small- to mid-sized businesses (SMBs). It has never been easier to find customers for your products or services. But you still need the right tools to succeed. One such important tool is the computer. Which hardware is best for your SMB, a desktop or laptop? Consider the following when weighing your options.

### Portability

Modern desktop computers aren't nearly as immobile as they used to be. In many cases, the screen is thin and light, and all-in-one desktops are easy to unplug, move, and plug in on the road. But there are still places where the desktop cannot go. On the other hand, laptops allow you to go anywhere, even to places without electricity. But this ability to take your work anywhere can be counterproductive; in fact, it creates more stress on employees who think they must work all the time.

### Memory and speed

Before, desktop computers often had

more memory than laptops, and they were faster because they had bigger processors. This has now changed, thanks to improvements in laptop technology. But until high-powered laptops become affordable to the general public, the desktop computer is going to provide your business with more memory, speed, and power for your money. If your employees' work is limited to word processing and emailing, laptops should be enough. But anything more will probably require a desktop.

### Security

An SMB's computer hardware needs to be secure to ensure that company data doesn't end up in the wrong hands. A desktop computer is more physically secure because it's often kept in one location, so it's easier to guard. And because a desktop's internet access is often a single source (whether through Wi-Fi or cable), it's easier to defend it against malware. If you choose the laptop route, make sure to have strict policies on how to protect machines that leave the office, from physical loss (for example, theft) to unauthorized access (like using unsecured Wi-Fi).

## Price

The laptop, especially the smaller notebook-style, is cheaper and available to more people. But desktop computers are becoming more affordable as more people have access to them through local channels. With a capable IT services provider, cost probably won't be a deciding factor.

## Quality

Although laptop computers provide the convenience of portability, over time, they're prone to battery and charging cord problems. They are also easily damaged, especially if mishandled. By contrast, desktops are generally sturdier and stay only in one place. But when they do experience a problem, they can be expensive to repair.

## Final recommendation

The desktop versus laptop debate is an old one, with supporters on both sides touting the advantages of their choice. A growing company usually needs a combination of both types of computers, especially as their needs evolve.

If you have questions regarding the best choice for your company, give us a call. We'll be happy to assist you in improving your business.



## Where to get help with Office 2019 issues

Microsoft Office 2019 is a popular and top-selling productivity suite. A one-time purchase gives you access to an array of applications that you can use to create and edit documents, spreadsheets, and presentations for school or work. While the program is easy to use, there are times when people need help. Here's where to get help.

### F1

Let's assume you have Office installed and an application is running, but you need to figure out something. Put an end to your frustration with any of these options for quick answers to your problems.

First, press F1 to open the help database and search for a solution. Or click the question mark (?) in the upper right corner of any Office program to do the same thing.

### MS Diagnostics

When an Office program crashes or fails to launch, it doesn't necessarily mean that the software has been corrupted or needs to be re-installed. To be sure, consult the suite's in-house physician called MS Diagnostics. This tool tests the program for existing and potential problems and provides repair options too.

### Office Support

If the problems are not solved with MS Diagnostics, turn to Office Support. This is one of the six main tabs on the Office website.

Once you open Office Support, it asks: "What do you need help with?" Select a specific application or product or choose All products in the field. In the search box, enter the keywords that are relevant to the issue. This brings up a list of results that match the words you have entered. Many users normally find what they need on this page.

### Community forums

Sometimes, the information on the Microsoft website is too general and doesn't give you a clue to what's wrong. For a more thorough fix, check out the online Office forums. Many of them tackle various issues about Office and offer solutions. Joining forums can be helpful, especially when you want to learn new things.



## Windows 10 makes backing up files easy

To any business, ransomware means trouble. From operational disruption and revenue loss to total shutdown, it spares no part of the company. That's why it's wise to regularly back up your business data in multiple locations, including the cloud. If your computer is running on Windows 10, you're in luck because the operating system makes backing up and restoring your files as easy as pie.

### File History is back in Windows 10

Users will be glad to know that Windows brought the same functionality of File History from Windows 8 (and 8.1) to Windows 10. Apart from the slight design changes, there really isn't much difference.

Serving as the main backup utility, File History enables users to regularly schedule backing up of files on their PC and store them on an external drive. That means you can connect your PC to a network or USB drive and make backups as needed.

However, be sure to regularly connect the external drive if you intend to use File History for backups. Otherwise, Windows will prompt you that your files have not been backed up every day. You can ignore this warning at your own risk. If you back up to a mapped network that is unavailable, File History will commence backup in the local disk until the network drive becomes available.

### Setting up File History

Anyone can set up File History. After all, it was designed to make data backup and recovery easy for users. By default, File History backs up the main file folders, but you may also pick which folders you want to back up and bring in folders from other parts of the PC to do this.

From the Start menu, click on *Settings > Update & Security > Backup*.

Once in Backup, it's time to connect an external drive. Click on *Add a drive* to see a list of external hard drives hooked up to your PC and choose one.

When you return to the Backup section, you will see that the *Add a drive* option has changed to *Automatically back up my files* (by default). This allows backups to be created at periodic intervals, which you can set to anywhere from every 10 minutes to once a day (the default option is once every hour). You may also set how long to keep the backups (the default option is forever).

Restoring files that have already been backed up is just as easy as setting up backups. Simply type "File History" in the search bar. Then, you will see the "Restore your files with File History" folder. When you select it, a new window showing the folders backed up onto your external drives will appear.

### Setting up OneDrive backup option

If you have access to a network drive or the cloud, back up to it instead of locally. One such cloud option is OneDrive. You can prompt OneDrive to automatically back up your files. Just click on the cloud icon in the Windows notification area, then select *More > Settings > Backup > Manage backup*. Not only will selected folders sync in OneDrive, new and existing files will also be backed up to OneDrive, so they can be accessed on other devices in case something happens to your PC.

### Making system image backups

A system image is an exact replica of your entire operating system, along with all the programs, settings, and files. If you created a system image backup using the Windows 7 Backup and Restore tool in Windows 7, it will still work in Windows 10.

To use this feature, access the *Backup and Restore (Windows 7)* option from the Control Panel. Click on *Create a system image*, choose where to store the backup (external hard drive, network drive, or DVD), and which drives or files to back up. You will then be asked to make a system repair disc, which you can use to start a PC and restore the image backup.



## 3 Things to consider with virtualization

Virtualization can help boost operational efficiencies like never before, but you have to understand that the benefits aren't always immediate. As with anything IT, the price to pay for perks is proper setup and fastidious implementation. Here are a few concerns you need to address before virtualizing your infrastructure.

### Backup

Incorporating a robust backup system in a virtualized setting can become a huge challenge. You'd have to determine which data you want to store and how often it should be backed up. You would then have to decide whether you should back up all your virtual machines or just some vital ones that have important apps and data.

In any case, you'll be caught in a grueling battle because of the overwhelming amount of data that needs to be backed up. The only way to overcome this is to integrate a powerful backup-to-disk solution offered by a reputable managed IT services provider (MSP).

### Security

Security concerns are more complicated in a virtualized setting since you have to monitor security on two tiers, namely virtual machine security and physical host security.

Compromised physical host security will affect every virtual machine running on that particular host server. Meanwhile, a compromised virtual machine will disrupt the physical server and affect every virtual machine residing on the same host. To address this problem, you need to set up strong network defenses — including firewalls, intrusion prevention systems, antivirus software, and virtual machine security tools — and a hardened physical security system in the form of surveillance cameras, locks, biometric scans, and security guards. Of course, if you don't have the funds to set these up, it may make more sense to leave it to a security-conscious MSP.

### Monitoring

Since your team has to oversee both virtual machines and physical servers to ensure that you have a fully operational environment, it does have a few pain points.

First, running a monitoring software on the physical host server will likely impact the virtual machines' performance since it takes up valuable processing power and memory. That means you'll need to compute the resources used by your monitoring software and make sure they're not consuming too much from your physical host server.

Second, keeping tabs on your virtual machines and making sure they're secure and running at all times comprise a full-time job. So unless you have a team of professionals in-house, you'll definitely need some help from the outside.

Without a doubt, virtualization brings a lot of benefits to the table, but you have to know how it affects every aspect of your business — particularly issues involved in management. Let us show you how you can use it to its full potential. Just give us a call today!