

Tech Times

Solutions Unlimited, LLC



Not To Rain On Your Parade, But There Is No Cost Savings With A Cheap Computer. They Are Just Cheap!

Do you take a coffee break when you open your programs in the morning? Tired of trying to push past error messages just to get through your workday? Have you seen the dreaded blue screen of death a few too many times? It may be time for a new computer. Don't buy a cheap replacement just to get by, it may cost you a lot more in the long run.

Durable products. I'm sure you've noticed the quality of goods at Wal-Mart versus a standard retailer. You can go with a cheaper version of anything these days from paper towels to clothing and electronics. Big box retailers are ready to take your money no matter what. So, how can you ensure you are getting a good quality product that will fit your needs and last as long as you need it?

Assess your needs upfront. Take a minute to evaluate the essentials for your new computer. Do you need a desktop or laptop? Are you looking for increased speeds? More room for storage? Better quality graphics or compatibility? Write down the top 5 items for a wish list and evaluate the features necessary in a new computer that will meet those needs.



Desktop or laptop? If you just need a steady workstation and you don't travel often, think about a good quality desktop computer. Desktop computers are easier to keep cool because they have more room for hefty fans, this will add to the longevity of the workstation and help maintain the performance of your computer. In addition, tower computers are more pliable, you can change parts or upgrade components to keep your machine up-to-date. If you are searching for a perfect all-purposes device you can use on the go, consider a high quality laptop that can handle the programs you need at a speed that won't slow you down.

Features that boost productivity. Basics of economics will prove durable goods generally come with a little higher price tag. Look for a computer that offers you a longer lifetime, something fast and durable. Find a laptop or tower computer with a solid state drive. This hard drive will be

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Make A Moment For Peace

"Technology can be our best friend, and technology can also be the biggest party pooper of our lives. It interrupts our own story, interrupts our ability to have a thought or daydream, to imagine something wonderful, because we're too busy bridging the walk from the cafeteria back to the office on the cell phone."

~ Stephen Spielberg

International Day of Peace

Join us to celebrate the International Day of Peace September 21st. What? You've never observed it before? Check out how you can get involved.

"Partnerships for Peace—Dignity for All" is the theme. The first International Day of Peace was celebrated in September, 1982. These celebrations are devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples. In 2001 the General Assembly, with a unanimous vote, established a set date of September 21 as an annual day of non-violence and cease-fire in honor of peace.

Join a local event to celebrate. Many organizations put together events around the world. Visit: <http://www.upf.org/united-nations/international-day-of-peace> to learn more and join in the efforts. This site has a listing of things to do and even resources to help you get involved.

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Not To Rain On Your Parade, But...

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much more responsive for the operating system and your software. Solid state drives just load faster because the drive responds quicker. You will find that you spend less time waiting for your programs to load and more time productively working. A little added durability will also keep you working more often, reducing the amount of hardware failure over the lifetime of the computer. This will ultimately save you valuable time and money in the long run.

Keep your eye on the warranty.

One clear benefit hiding in some of the more pricy laptops is a better warranty. Asus for example will include a two-year warranty that protects you against defects, but this only comes with the higher-end products. Dell and HP will throw in their extended three-year warranty to butter you up, but again, these are generally additions to the higher-end product lines. However, they are well worth the investment.

Sometimes what is cheap and easy just isn't enough. We've seen it time and time again. As a matter of fact, recently, a company was looking to scale up a bit and add 6 employees. So, they received a quote for

the computers they should buy and took that quote online to comparison shop. They purchased a half dozen cheap computers from an online retailer. The specs were close, isn't that good enough? The real question is, can you really trust a group of cheap towers to keep your company running day-to-day?

Why are cheap computers just cheap?

Because they come with so much excess baggage. Generally, supporting cheaper computers is more difficult. The warranties don't cover as much as you would expect which will mean more work for your IT department to bring your workstation back online. Maintaining a consistent environment allows your support team to keep your network safe more efficiently. Having a standard computer for your workforce can reduce costs when considering upgrades and replacement parts too as well as streamline support since a problem on one workstation can be addressed for everyone upon discovery. No more calling for help over and over for similar situations.

What vendor will you call when you need warranty or manufacturer support?

Is your IT provider a partner? Will you be stuck in a public support queue with no escape from the elevator music? The partner relationships your IT provider nourishes with vendors like Dell and HP allow them to skip the long lines in the support queues. They are not waiting behind every Grandma Mary or Uncle Joe who needs to get their printer working.

Are the specifications for the cheap tower up to par for your software? Compatibility is a major concern these days. Often, companies use very large industry specific programs or databases that demand a robust machine.

Our best advice. Evaluate what you need and invest in a more scalable higher-end solution that won't be an expensive headache in the long run. Interested in purchasing a new computer for your office? Give us a call and we will work with you to find the right fit for your business.

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Is Your Webcam Secure?

Webcams and home security systems can leave you feeling a bit exposed. Imagine if your cameras were overrun by hackers and published online?

Russian website exposes private images.

While critics are fighting to have the site taken offline and the press is trying to keep it fairly quiet, a Russian website is showing video streams and images online from unsecured cameras. The BBC claims the site is streaming from cameras in over 250 countries around the world including the U.S.

Home security systems, webcam's, and baby monitors?

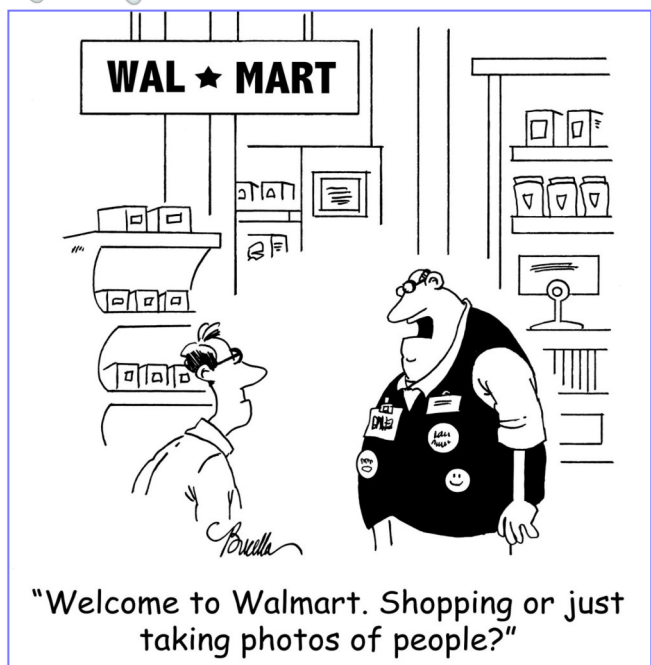
That's right, even baby monitors are being hijacked. The most common camera brands reported by PC Magazine were Panasonic, Foscam and Linksys.

3 easy ways to protect yourself

1. Change the default passwords or consider using a password manager like LastPass or Dashlane to generate really strong passwords for your devices.

2. Disconnect the cameras or cover them when they are not in use. This will eliminate images from being captured when you don't want them to.

3. Keep your device updated. Firmware updates can help fix known security flaws that allow intruders in.



International Day of Peace

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Donations are welcome too. Visit the www.upf.org/united-nations/international-day-of-peace to donate to the Universal Peace Federation, the Religious Youth Service group, or the UPF's Africa Projects. The website InternationalDayOfPeace.org founded by the Pathways to Peace organization also accepts donations to fund their efforts for internal peace-building through education and consulting.

Enjoy with family and friends. Anyone can celebrate Peace Day. It's easy, just gather a few friends or family and light a candle at noon or observe a moment of silence. Or get out there and enjoy a community event.

Day of Peace in Midland, MI. Organizations in Midland, MI pooled together to form an afternoon of fun activities including a Peace Dance performance, live music and more activities.

Day of Peace in Otago, New Zealand. A local artist from New Zealand is photographing a single white rose, the ancient symbol of peace, in the hands of 10,000 different people. See the progress of this project at: PeaceIn10000hands.com and share it with your friends and relatives.

Happy International Day of Peace.

3 Key Features For Windows 10

Time marches on. In computers, that march goes pretty fast. Even if you don't want to switch, you will have to eventually. But should you switch now?

1. Universal applications. The new universal applications allow you to change between devices without losing your place in apps like e-mail, calendar, Microsoft Office programs, and messaging. Your content is stored and synchronized using OneDrive, so you can start your work on your tower computer in the office and quickly pick up your project on your laptop on the go.

2. Enhanced security. Microsoft has plunged into the security game with Windows 10. Windows new Hello and Passport are automated features that eliminate the need for traditional passwords. These systems use biometrics to read a user's

fingerprint, face, or eye to login to applications and content. Device guard is another feature that focuses on security by scanning applications and blocking the ones that have not been authorized by the Windows app store or their partner vendors.

3. Windows 10 was designed for business. Windows 10 offers extended built-in mobile device management (MDM) capabilities to help businesses better account for all the new devices using their networks. Business owners will be able to better track and implement security policies for the entire company.

Interested in Windows 10? Give us a call today. We will make sure all your key programs are supported by this new operating system before you take the plunge.

Need A Personal Assistant? Alexa Is Ready To Go!

Amazon's 'Alexa' speaker enters the personal assistant race. Want to give her a try for free? Check out our offer below.

Who is Alexa? Alexa, the voice inside the Amazon Echo speaker has debuted as a competitor to Apple's Siri, Microsoft's Cortana, and Google's new personal assistant.

Echo is a 9 1/4-inch-tall Bluetooth speaker that's shaped like a container for a small, rolled-up poster, according to tech writer Edward C. Baig, who recently tested it. Alexa makes the speaker a different kind of device. She can play music on request via Pandora and other services, read an audio book via Amazon-owned Audible, and deliver news, sports scores, traf-

fic and weather information, or handle a to-do list.

Echo has an array of seven microphones with sensors that can detect voices from any direction and do it in spite of background music or noise. It even hears you across the room.

Alexa can even help you at home or in the office. Alexa, which is connected to the cloud, is integrated with Belkin, WeMo and Philips Hue products. That means you can ask her to turn on a fan or heater, or control a light switch and dim the lights.

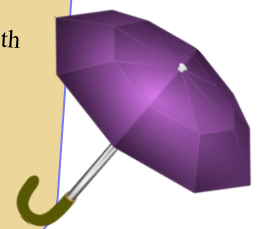
Amazon wants Alexa to get even smarter by encouraging third-party developers to bolster its skill set.

Refer A Friend For Your FREE Echo!

We thrive on serving loyal customers and friends just like you. Do you have a friend with 5 or more computers who could use our services? Give us a call today.

When you refer just one friend in the month of September and they sign up for services with us, they will receive a FREE Network Security Assessment and You will receive a FREE Echo.

To refer a friend, give us a call today (864) 599-8678



“We make all of your computer problems go away without adding additional full-time I.T. staff!”

Ask about our fixed price service agreements — Computer support

Inquiring Minds...

Skip Making The Same Leadership Mistakes Again. Tripwires! That's what Robert Galford calls them. He says even with experience, feedback and coaching, you can make the same mistakes again.

Our own triggers. Repeatable mistakes fall into three categories, the largest of which is identity, which is triggered by your own traits and idiosyncrasies. The second is clarity, and the third is your delivery.

5 reactions. These traits cause people to react in one or more of these five ways, says Galford, a teacher of executive education programs at the Center for Leading Organizations.

1. Resistance. Your people don't embrace your cause, your ideas or your demands. They might challenge you directly or indirectly, and they will do their best to keep your initiatives from taking off.

2. Submissiveness. They think they'll let you win because they're tired of ignoring or fighting your requests. They hope that you'll abandon them.

3. Avoidance. They postpone, forget, or ignore your requests or directives, thinking that, over time, you will too.

4. Deflection. They delegate your request to others or tie it up in excuses.

5. Escape. They give up on understanding you and find a job elsewhere.

Tools to help. Galford says these tools can help.

- Get a truth-teller to analyze your request or directive, not a friend or family member.
- Know yourself. Consider characteristics that might get in your way. Try using the Myers-Briggs Type Inventory (MBTI) or the Killmann Instrument (TKI).
- Speak up. Learn to say things like, "This isn't easy for me, so I'm going to do X to make sure this gets done."
- Build in consequences. Writing in INC.com, Gilford says one executive hired an extrovert to help her compensate for her wishy-washy communications.

Remember, the first few times you use any of these tools will be difficult, but not as difficult as the consequences of hitting the tripwire again.

Questions to ask silly Siri. A few questions for the iPhone's voice helper, Siri, are going viral. Ask Siri: What is Zero divided by Zero. A variety of answers are possible, but one involves cookies. Or, ask Siri: Can I throw you away? Go ahead give it a whirl!

Don't Fall Into Bad Backup Habits

Office Manager: Oh, of course the backups ran last night.

Owner: Great! I need to retrieve some of the files from my workstation backup, I was just hit with the CryptoLocker virus. Let's look in the backup?

Office Manager: What do you mean?

Owner: Where IS the backup?

Office Manager: Um, on the server?

If you don't know where your backup lives or how to access it... give us a call for your **FREE Network Security Audit!** We will conduct a full audit of your network and present you with a fresh plan for more accessible backups.

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