Emerald ICT
Complete Computer Solutions

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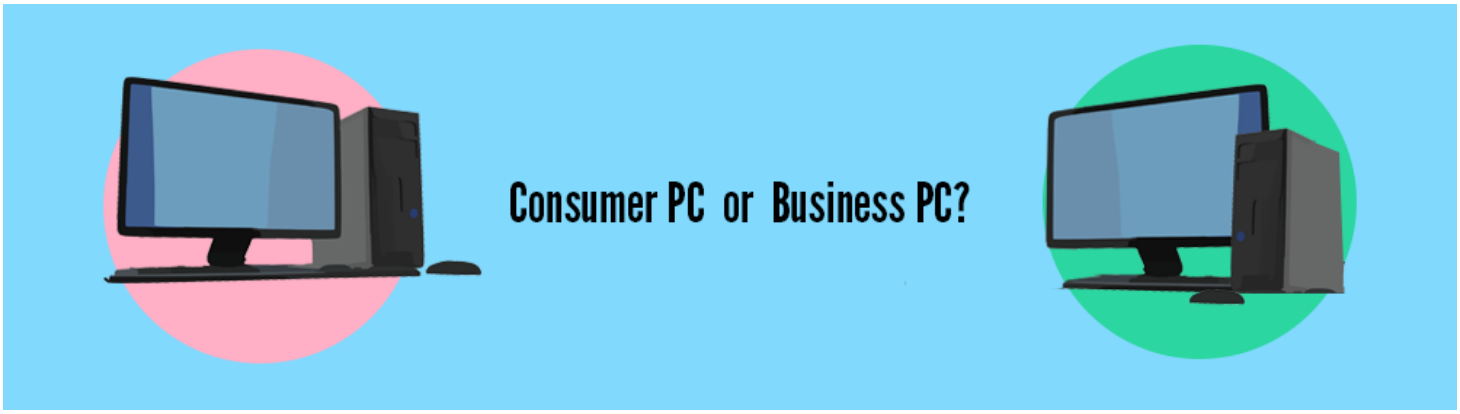
NEWSLETTER



Should You Buy A Consumer or Business PC?

Before buying a computer for work, it's important to consider whether your best bet is to get a consumer model or one built specifically for business use.

You've probably seen business computers with the same brand name that you have at home, but that's where the similarities end. Investing in the right system now will pay off long term, saving you time, money and a whole lot of frustration. Here's what you need to know to make the best choice for your business and budget.

Business-class Features

When you invest in a computer, you want certain inclusions built-in and ready to go. For a business, those include features that will make your network more secure and staff more productive. For example, fingerprint readers, remote desktop software and data encryption tools.

The operating system that comes pre-installed on a business-class computer will also have features the consumer options don't, including the ability to join corporate networks. Computers designed for home use come with Windows Home or Starter editions, which may require hours of expert assistance to link into a secure business network.

Usage Requirements

Work out how often you'll be using the computer for business. If the computer is mostly for home use and only occasionally for work, then a consumer PC with the appropriate work software and settings will be fine. On the other hand, a computer that is mostly for business use should be a business-class computer, not just for security but also build quality reasons.

Durability and Reliability

It's probably no surprise that consumer PCs don't have the same build quality as business ones. In fact, consumer models only have an expected lifespan of around 2 years. They just aren't built to last. Business-class computers are built to last several years, with higher quality components and rigorous testing at every level. Most parts (if not all) are name-brand with an emphasis on reliability and long term durability.

Warranty and Service

Unfortunately, when a consumer PC fails, the burden is on the owner to send it away for repairs. The terms of the warranty will usually state that any other attempt to repair it will void the warranty. Repairs can then take weeks and often involve a frustrating process of paperwork and following up. Contrast that with what happens when a business computer needs service – the technicians will come to you and fix it on the spot, often within hours. Business users enjoy a professional experience with priority status and a dedicated support line, all designed to reduce down-time and get you operational, faster.

Talk to us today at 0113 2579992 about choosing the right computer for your needs.

In this newsletter, we talk about getting the right hardware for your business to keep it safe and running smoothly.

"Your business is still an attractive target for hackers"

Why Your Business Needs A Strong Firewall

You may not be storing military secrets or running a billion-dollar empire, but your business is still an attractive target for hackers. You need a firewall - a guard standing at the door of your network to stop the bad guys from getting in while still letting your staff come and go without interruption.

A surprising number of businesses are operating without a firewall, or with one unsuitable to the requirements of a business network. For most, it's a risk they don't know they're taking because they assume all systems have built-in protections. Unfortunately, by the time the lack is discovered, it's far too late.

A firewall is actually a special type of hardware or software that acts as a protective shield between the computers on your network and assorted cyber dangers. Data is constantly passed through at lightning fast speeds, invisible to the user experience.

A firewall designed exclusively for business offers more robust, custom features:

Filtering: A strong firewall actively looks for known viruses, phishing emails and spam, and then blocks them before they can get in the door. Its internal knowledge of threats is updated regularly and search patterns quickly adjusted. Business firewalls also monitor data in both directions. When a computer goes online, all the data coming in and out is inspected to see whether it's safe or not. If it doesn't pass the test, the firewall instantly blocks it and records the details in a log.

Performance: You can use your firewall to set network traffic priorities. For example, it can make sure a Skype call gets all the resources it needs to allow for flawless video and voice quality, while someone watching YouTube videos at the same time will receive reduced resources. Rules can be set to allow certain applications to be treated as a higher priority than others, certain departments or even users. You can tailor your network performance to meet your unique business needs.

Management: Business firewalls allow you to see who's doing what and when over your network. You can create rules for specific users, devices and times. For example, you might allow your employees to access Facebook during lunch breaks only, while at the same time keeping it completely unblocked for you or your marketing team. Thorough logs are kept automatically and can be used to troubleshoot problems. For example, your firewall logs might show that a computer inside your network connects to a third world country at 3am each night, which would certainly be worth investigating.

Connection: A strong firewall allows your remote workforce to access your servers with ease and security, while at the same time keeping cyber-attacks out. Remote work arrangements are growing in popularity and necessity, often requiring server access at a moment's notice. You can set your firewall to authenticate the identity of users before allowing access, and create a virtual private network (VPN) that keeps any transferred data safe from interception.

We can install, configure and manage your business firewall - Call us at 0113 2579992 to start protecting your network today.

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