Accounting for New Computers

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Dr.Sara Hitch

Assistant Professor of Business Administration / Dept. Chair, Business Administration

Dear Mrs. Hitch:

Here is an in-depth analysis of three possible choices of computers for the startup accounting firm, Accurate Accounting Inc.

We came to the consensus of researching computers from Dell, Apple, and HP based on PCmag’s article for the top business computers in 2017. The computers all have the same specs, which have been categorized into a baseline performance metric. This metric uses a CPU with a clock speed of 3.5 gigahertz, 1 terabyte of internal storage, and 8 gigabytes of internal RAM. This report describes each computer from the factors of cost, ratings by consumers, and depth of tech support provided for each device.

Based on this research, the report details the most optimal computer that Accurate Accounting should purchase for their office.

If there are any questions about the research, or if anything seemed vague, please do not hesitate to contact me and I will respond in a promptly manner.

Sincerely,

Cale Curry

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Accurate Accounting Inc. has requested the acquisition of new computers for its office employees to help get the startup off the ground. The employees have been tasked with researching three different computers to consider for purchase, and they have also been presented with a baseline performance metric to measure each computer against in terms of specs. The rules for the performance metric are as follows:

1. CPU with a clock speed of 3.5 gigahertz
2. 1 terabyte of internal storage
3. 8 gigabytes of RAM

**Sources of Research**

The employees decided to research computers from the following three companies: Dell, Apple, and HP in that order. The basis for the research originated from PCMag’s article about the top business desktops of 2017, with computers from these three companies making the top five.

**Research Methods**

The research for each computer was conducted utilizing not only the performance metric listed above, but three additional factors of comparison. These factors were the cost of each machine, the ratings of each computer provided by consumers and various outlets, and finally the depth of support provided by each machine when it comes to troubleshooting and repair.

**Dell Precision 5720 All-In-One**

**Apple iMac MNEA2LL/A 27 Inch**

**HP Z2 Mini G3 Workstation**

**Selecting New Computers**

Accurate Accounting Inc. has been in the process of launching a startup for the past two weeks and is now in the stage of purchasing new computers for its office. Based on research conducted by employees in the company, the choices have been narrowed down to three potential candidates for computers: Dell, HP, and Apple. These companies were recommended based on PCMag.com’s choices for the top business computers of 2017.

When comparing computers for Accurate Accounting Inc., the performance for the devices is very similar if not the same across all computers being considered. The specs for each one are as follows: CPU clock speed at 3.5 Gigahertz, 1 terabyte of internal storage, and 16 Gigabytes of RAM for internal memory. Each of the computers chosen for Accurate Accounting will have this baseline performance metric included in the purchasing decision for these new devices.

**Comparison Factors**

The three factors used to compare these devices will be the cost based on the performance metric, reviews given by consumers who have used these computers, and the depth of tech support that is provided by each manufacturer, along with potential features/failsafes that help businesses keep their data intact.

**A Brief History of Dell**

In 1984, Michael Dell began working on an idea that would change the experience between home computers and their consumers. At his off-campus dorm room in Austin, Texas, he invented the company PC’s Limited, now known as Dell. Dell’s approach to computers was to sell them directly to customers in order to gain a better understanding of their needs. According to TheBalance, Dell’s mission statement is to: “... be the most successful computer company in the world at delivering the best customer experience in markets we serve.” To this day, Dell continues to sell products not only to home users, but to businesses of all sizes, and has stayed true to it’s original commitment to customer satisfaction with the highest quality products (Learn the Mission and History of Dell Computers).

**Dell’s Precision 5720 All-In-One**

Dell’s Precision 5720 is a powerful all-purpose machine created for handling very intensive workloads, and has proven to be a reliable option for businesses.

**Precision 5720 Cost**

The price of the Precision 5720 after matching the performance metric specs is $1,620.34. This cost does include a keyboard and mouse with the order, and provides an AMD graphics card for any graphically demanding software.

**Precision 5720 Reviews**

The Precision 5720 has gained an incredible reputation among various outlets that review PC’s and PC software. Some of the outlets include PCMag, which rated it as, “...our top pick for business all-in-ones.”, Computer Shopper, which stated, “The Precision 5720 comes outfitted with a 4K display with Dell’s PremierColor technology as standard equipment.”, and CRN which was quoted saying, “The Dell Precision 5720 Is An iMac Pro For Windows Fans” (Awards and Reviews). In addition to reviews, the Precision 5720 has also been ISV certified, which guarantees smooth performance, as well as error-correcting code memory that helps prevent system crashes (Reliability where it Matters Most).

**Precision 5720 Support Depth**

Dell provides a wide range of features and support for business workstations. One of the business exclusive features are ProPlus Support, which provides priority support at any and all times, and provides damage protection against spills, drops, and surges. Another unique support feature is ProDeploy Plus, which provides software and technology upgrades automatically to business workstations, and, in addition, manages all projects through the same point that deploys the updates (We’ve Got Your Business Covered).

**A Brief History of Apple**

Apple’s name in technology has long been synonymized with technological products of the highest quality and reliability, and that same standard can be traced back to their origins in 1971 when the two Steves (Jobs and Wozniak) were introduced by a friend. According to MacWorld, “Jobs and Woz (that's Steve Wozniak) were introduced in 1971 by a mutual friend, Bill Fernandez, who went on to become one of Apple's earliest employees. The two Steves got along thanks to their shared love of technology and pranks.” Thanks to that developing relationship, Apple began to take off, through the two attending a Homebrew Computer Club. From there, Apple was born (The First Apple Computer).

**Apple iMac MNEA2LL/A 27 Inch**

Apple’s iMac 27 inch is a reliable option for business of any size, and with Apple’s services, businesses can sync up documents and software seamlessly to multiple devices, and upload everything they need to the cloud. Thanks to the most recent iteration of macOS, Siri was introduced to the Mac for voice-controlled assistance (Apple iMac MNEA2LL/A 27 Inch, 3.5GHz Intel Core i5, 8GB RAM, 1TB Fusion Drive, Silver).

**Apple iMac Cost**

Matching the performance metric stated previously, the Apple iMac comes to a $1,689 price tag. The cost and build of the computer come from Amazon’s choices for the Macs.

**Apple iMac Reviews**

The majority of the reviews for the iMac on Amazon’s page are five stars, with some consumers regarding this model as a: “Nice machine, and nice incremental improvements from 2015's version”, and a, “Beautiful Apple Computer with elegance!” (Apple iMac). The most recent review, which was from September 3, 2017, outlined some pros and cons of the machine: “Pros:

1. Outstanding screen; likely the best you'll find on any computer package, anywhere, unless you find an extremely expensive specialty monitor.

2. Somewhat brighter and more vivid than the already-excellent generation iMac (I have the 21" Retina version of that one), but not really enough by itself that I'd pass up a 2015 version that was heavily discounted.” … “Expensive compared to a Windows PC, but then, you get what you pay for. I was a Windows user for most of my life and just switched to Macs a few years ago. The Mac OS is much more stable, and the components, even things like the keyboard and mouse were clearly designed and tested to be more user friendly and better ergonomically.

2. Lack of user upgradability, other than memory.

3. Progressive upgrades (processor, bigger HDD or an SSD, more memory at purchase, etc) are extremely expensive and add a disproportionate amount of cost to the iMac” (Apple iMac).

**Apple iMac Support Depth**

Apple provides a wide range of support options for the iMac, including operating system troubleshooting, Apple software installation, user guides, updates, and support from a large community of Apple product users to help with any and all questions (iMac Support). There is also a list of recommended topics for Mac support, and a small widget that displays a helpful hint on their support page (iMac Support).

**A Brief History of HP**

HP started with humble beginnings in 1934, when Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard became friends during a two-week camping trip. After the trip, they began to work out of a rented garage, with only $538 in capital and a used drillpress. In 1940, Hewlett Packard, which was established based on a coin flip, now moves into a rented building in Palo Alto, Calfornia. Later in 1951, HP develops a high-speed frequency counter, which would cement future profits for the company, and set the groundwork for all of it’s products to current day. Fast forward to 2015, and: “With a leading position in the printing and personal systems markets, HP Inc is set to grow in 3D printing and drive immersive computing. CEO Dion Weisler refers to the new company as having ‘The heart and energy of a startup with the brain and muscle of a Fortune 100 company’” (Timeline of Our History).

**HP Z2 Mini G3 Workstation**

The HP Z2 Mini G3 Workstation is a compact powerhouse built for any and all business. The small size means that anyone can pack up and carry these devices around for working on the go, which is perfect for any employees who either travel, or do not have a lot of desk space to accommodate a full-size tower.

**HP Z2 Mini Cost**

The price of the HP Z2 Mini, after factoring in baseline performance specs, comes out to be $993.50, so this option is the cheapest of the three available to Accurate Accounting, but this only includes the computer itself. Monitors will have to be ordered separately, but mice and keyboards are included with the workstation when it is built.

**HP Z2 Reviews**

According to PCMag, the HP Z2 is regarded as: “...the most compact small-form-factor (SFF) desktop workstation you can buy.” In addition, “it's reasonably priced, so it makes perfect sense for space-constrained power users like financial analysts, engineers using CAD/CAM software, and workshop supervisors”. These features definitely make the Z2 a viable option for Accurate Accounting, but there are tradeoffs for such a small form factor. One of the cons of this computer is its limited expandability (HP Z2 Mini G3).

**HP Z2 Support Depth**

For businesses, HP offers a wide array of support and troubleshooting options for computers, along with printers. Some of the options for support and repair are software driver installations, device registration, creating new troubleshooting cases, and finally updating contracts and warranties (Welcome to HP Customer Support).

**Recommendation for new computer**

Based on the research accumulated, and factoring in both the performance metric, along with the other three factors of comparison: cost, reviews, and support depth, we have reached the consensus that the Dell Precision 5720 is the best option for Accurate Accounting based on the features provided and the reviews given by consumers of the device. The device itself is the entire computer, so there is no need to carry around an external monitor, and the safety features for the business workstations, including error-code memory detect and single-point software deployment make this an ideal machine for the new accounting firm. It is more costly than the HP workstation, which is trading expandability for data protection, but it has proven to be a very reliable machine through the reviews stated by various PC outlets.

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