

## Selling Your Computer Looking At Alternatives

At some point, your needs are going to outgrow the capabilities of your computer. You may find yourself in need of more hard drive space for all those videos and mp3s that you download, for example. Or maybe that cool new programming language you've been dying to try requires more memory than what your computer currently has. Unless the activities on your computer are restricted to pure textual output (plain text files), your computer is going to get filled with a lot of "stuff" - stuff that can overflow a PC's capacity too much for the computer to function well.

The problem is that while upgrading a computer is always an option, technology advances so fast that newer products (such as memory chips, new drives, etc.) aren't always compatible with the machines that we own. This is a common occurrence when newer pieces of hardware require the programming of a newer operating system. Sure, one could upgrade the operating system to accommodate the demands of a new piece of hardware, but trouble starts when that new operating system requires new hardware in return. If we're not careful, we could end up replacing almost every hard and soft part of a computer that we own - all in an effort to upgrade! Upgrading in this fashion is not only silly to do so, it's also costly - more costly than simply buying a new computer.

But once the decision to buy a computer is set in stone, what can be done with the old one? There are alternatives to selling a computer and this article is going to introduce a few of them.

1. Give it to the kids. This is of course, assuming the kids are too young to whine about not having enough SDRAM or less than a 160GB hard drive. Today's "older" computers are perfectly capable of accommodating the needs of young PC users, and they're excellent machines for playing educational CDs, small multimedia files, or games downloaded from the Internet. And don't forget the most important role they play in a child's homework-clad life: A simple encyclopedia CD on a used computer makes excellent research tool (not to mention a rather fancy calculator!).

2. Donate it to a less-fortunate or less-literate family member. We often joke around the office about the "grandma" who refuses to use a computer until she can afford the "latest" one. Chances are, Grandma isn't ever going to shell out the bucks to buy the latest computer on the market, nor is she going to know how to use it once she gets it. What Grandma doesn't realize however is that a used computer is an excellent training tool that she can use to prepare herself for something "better" in the future. We always say, "'Tis better to screw up

something on an old, used machine than to screw up everything on a brand new one!" A couple of errors on an old, used machine are easier to fix because someone is going to have the experience and knowledge to fix it. Errors on a new machine however can be a beast to fix because we're all knocking at Microsoft's door looking for answers.

3. Convert the machine into a storage area. As another alternative to selling that machine, we suggest that people disconnect it from the Internet and use it to store personal documents, records, or files. This way, personal data (such as bank statements, store receipts, health records, etc.) is protected from prying viruses or hackers, while the newer machine is used to surf the net.

As you can see, old computers still serve a purpose either for you or for someone else. And although selling an old computer is always an option, there are a number of things that you can do with an old computer. All that's required is a little "out of the box" thinking and a grateful recipient.

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