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"Business computers offer
more features for

Are you considering a new computer? Will the same computer that you use at home be adequate for the office as well? Dave talks about the difference between consumer and business line computers to help guide you in your decision. This month, John discusses how a service level agreement can be used to create a common understanding of your network services, priorities and responsibilities.

PC & Laptop Purchase - Retail vs Business

An important consideration when buying a laptop or desktop computer for work purposes is whether you should purchase a consumer model or a model specifically designed for business.

Many computer manufacturers offer what appear



to be the same make and model in both their home and business divisions, but they are actually not. Business computers are built to last, with higher quality components that are tested more rigorously. Parts used for consumer computers may be

more generic or even cheap, while computers designed for professional use more often include higher grade materials and name-brand parts. This emphasis on durability means that the business class laptop or desktop you buy now should last you many trouble free years.

These computers offer more features for professional work, such as fingerprint readers, remote desktop control software, data encryption tools plus high quality mice and keyboards. The professional operating system version that comes

professional work"

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Service Level Agreement



"Create a common understanding of your network services, priorities and responsibilities"

on business PCs is also more suited for workers than the home version; Windows 7 Professional, for example, has features -- which Windows 7 Starter and Home editions do not have -- for easily joining a corporate network and using Windows XP software.

They are also bundled with business tool software such as ...



Click [here](#) to finish reading the article.

- Dave P, Senior Account Manager

The Pros of a Service Level Agreement

An SLA is a negotiated agreement between two parties designed to create a common understanding about services, priorities and responsibilities. Here are some ways to use an SLA to benefit your business.



- Use the SLA as a communications tool. The value of an agreement may not be just in the final product. The very process of establishing an SLA helps to open up communications and identify areas that need improvement and clarification.
- Use the SLA as a conflict-prevention tool. A good agreement helps to avoid or alleviate disputes by providing a shared understanding of needs and priorities. And if conflicts do occur, they tend to be resolved more quickly.
- Use the SLA as a basis for gauging service effectiveness. An SLA ensures that both parties use the same criteria to evaluate service quality. Use it as an active agreement that has reviews on a predetermined basis to assess service adequacy and negotiate adjustments as

necessary.

Northern Computer uses SLA's as much as possible with our clients and find they are an excellent tool for helping two parties improve communications, manage expectations, clarify responsibilities and build the foundation for a win-win relationship.

- John G, Operations Manager

Tips & Techs

Cleaning Your Laptop

Cleaning a laptop computer is a simple process that can help to improve the overall performance of your notebook. It's an important maintenance task to do regularly - yearly or more frequently as needed, to get rid of dirt and dust that can damage your display or other parts, affecting your laptop's performance.

Materials

You'll need the following things to clean your laptop:

- Isopropyl alcohol. Because it evaporates quickly and doesn't leave a residue, isopropyl alcohol is safe to use on electronic equipment and LCD displays. Do not use: ammonia, tap water, mineral water, and household window cleaners.
- Distilled, purified water or bottled water. Do not use: tap water (can leave permanent mineral spots)
- Can of compressed air, commonly available at office supply stores.
- Lint-free cloth, like the kind used for cleaning eyeglasses. In a pinch you can use a soft, 100% cotton cloth. Do not use: paper towels, facial tissues, or scratchy or abrasive cloths.

Prepare to Clean

- Make sure the computer is off and unplugged, and remove the battery.
- Make a 1:1 cleaning solution using the water and alcohol.
- Dampen the cloth with the cleaning solution--it should be slightly moistened rather than very wet. Also, never spray anything directly on the computer; the liquid should go on the cloth first.

Laptop Parts to Clean - The general parts of the laptop you should keep clean are: the case, the LCD screen, the laptop keyboard (and touchpad), the ports, and the cooling

vents.

1. Clean the Laptop Case- Use the damp cloth to wipe down the exterior of the laptop. This will help you make it look brand-new again. Then open the lid and wipe the areas around your keyboard.
2. Clean the LCD Screen - Clean the display using the same cloth or a new moistened one if the original is too grimy (again, don't spray any solution directly on the screen). Use gentle circular motions or wipe the screen from left to right, top to bottom.
3. Clean the Keyboard and Touchpad - Use a can of compressed air to loosen and remove dirt, crumbs, and everything else that may be stuck in the keys. Alternately, you can use an old toothbrush to loosen debris.
4. Clean the Ports and Cooling Vents - Use the can of compressed air to clean the case openings: the ports and cooling vents. Spray from an angle so the debris is blown away from the computer, rather than into it. Finally, use the damp cloth to wipe the keys and the touchpad.

Also, be careful when spraying the fans with compressed air. If you spray too hard liquid may get in the fan blades. To prevent the fans from overspinning while you're blowing the air on them (which can damage the fans), place a cotton swab or toothpick between the fan blades to hold them in place.

Last But Not Least - Make sure your laptop is completely dry before turning it on.