

DECISIONS, DECISIONS, DECISIONS...



The annual gift-giving season is upon us and no doubt high on the list of “must haves” are Smartphones, tablets, E-book readers, and laptops. Leaving the cost and towers out, the question is: which is better? It seems that smaller devices do so much already. But there’s more to consider.

Advantages of **Laptops** over other mobiles:

1. Operate similar to a tower unit with Windows, Apple or Linux systems, without the bulk or space requirements, but still are not equal
2. Can be transported easily from room to room, house to office, city to city
3. Have regular, full-sized keyboards and can use mice if required
4. Most play CDs/DVDs and have multiple USB ports for other devices
5. With an Ethernet connection, it is the safest way to conduct banking or purchasing transactions online
6. Complete software programs can be installed and used as needed
7. Most peripherals, like printers, are compatible

Mobile devices include E-book readers (they do more than just house books), tablets (all sizes), and Smartphones (all types and sizes). Here’s why people want them:

1. With a 3G/4G or Wifi connection, be online all the time, everywhere
2. Lightweight and relatively small, fitting into pockets and bags easily
3. Great for basic functions such as doing E-mails, listening to music, watching videos (albeit on small screens), taking photos, videos and instantly share them, reading books, magazines and newspapers, and if a Smartphone, use the phone function (some companies offer both)

4. These are personal devices, not to be shared and are set up to each person's desires and idiosyncracies
5. Access to thousands of APPs – many free, others at a small fee
6. They're the latest gadget and have become universally ubiquitous

The disadvantages for mobile devices are:

1. Dependent on wireless connections, these are not secure devices to do banking or purchasing – regardless of what the manufacturers promote; no truly effective anti-virus program exist yet.
2. Software programs for work cannot be installed in the same way as on a tower or laptop; APPs don't do it.
3. Small and tactile keyboards are not for everyone especially if you are used to a full-sized keyboard; keys are too small.
4. The majority of these devices do not accommodate USB connections.
5. One must have a strong and stable 3G/4G/Wifi connection to “live” stream, watch online videos or use “Skype”.

BUT, there is no turning back. Used with good judgment, mobile devices are very useful in conjunction with – not a replacement for - a tower or laptop. For sensitive transactions or using programs (e.g. Word, Excel, Photoshop), a tower or laptop is the answer; when traveling or for daily quick access, a mobile device is great. The key is knowing **HOW** you'll use it and what kind of internet connection you'll have – always bearing in mind that with more mobility and open-air connections, nothing is private or secret – from anyone.

We wish all our readers, customers and friends a happy, healthy and peaceful Christmas and bright New Year!