Procurement & Model Selection

Building The Early Part of the Lifecycle

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This may be a funny place to start, but we're here to talk about the entire lifecycle spot. We have to have the conversation of where these computers come from, how they're decided on, and how many you're going to need.

Start With Requirements

Requirements should be where you start. You need to make a concerted effort to establish a guide for what your users will need. Your organization may have policies related to what you need to purchase, and those will influence your decision as well. Let's talk about what you should be thinking about.

Requirements

- How long do you need to keep them?

- Do you want to be able to upgrade it yourself?

- Is Portability Required?

- This applies to Servers as well as Clients

- Warranty Options

- Purchase Locations

- How long are you keeping your machines? 2 years? 3? 4? Til they die?
- Are hardware upgrades something you intend to rely on? If so, that means your choices do not include the MacBook Air or MacBook Pro with Retina Display.
- Do your staff need to be able to take work home? Are there security concerns associated with data ex-filtration to machines your organization doesn't own or control? There probably are. If you've got road warriors, you're going to know who's hard on their machines.
- For your servers, you need to think about how long they'll last, too. The last thing you want is for your organization to be depending on a server that's past its lifespan. It may be a reality, and you have to cope with that, but that means time and resources spent to support something that should be accounted for.
- Does your organization require specific warranty or purchase situations? These are going to have to be taken into account

So what do you do with all these things? Well, write them down, for one. These are your guidelines that you have to stick to. If upgradeability is key, that limits model choice. If you want a faster refresh, that's going to affect your operating budget, potentially limiting you to lower end models. If your organization requires warranties, that's going to cut into your spares budget.

The Requirements are your roadmap.

Next Steps

- Build a Good/Better/Best Matrix

- Make sure your machines match their users' needs

- Build a clear flowchart for why machines get assigned to which user

Once you've got your requirements, you're going to want to show management options. You want a good/better/best matrix. This should be an instinctively familiar construct, but if you look at how Apple sells their machines, then you're going to see something you like.

MacBook Pro with Retina display

13-inch: 2.4GHz with Retina display	13-inch: 2.4GHz with Retina display	13-inch: 2.6GHz with Retina display
2.4GHz dual-core Intel Core i5	2.4GHz dual-core Intel Core i5	2.6GHz dual-core Intel Core i5
Turbo Boost up to 2.9GHz	Turbo Boost up to 2.9GHz	Turbo Boost up to 3.1GHz
4GB 1600MHz memory	8GB 1600MHz memory	8GB 1600MHz memory
128GB PCIe-based flash storage[1]	256GB PCIe-based flash storage[1]	512GB PCIe-based flash storage[1]
Intel Iris Graphics	Intel Iris Graphics	Intel Iris Graphics
Built-in battery (9 hours)[2]	Built-in battery (9 hours)[2]	Built-in battery (9 hours)[2]
$1,299.00	**$1,499.00**	**$1,799.00**
Free Shipping	Free Shipping	Free Shipping
6, 12, or 18 month special financing	6, 12, or 18 month special financing	6, 12, or 18 month special financing
Select	Select	Select
Available to ship:	**Available to ship:**	**Available to ship:**
Within 24 hours	Within 24 hours	Within 24 hours
Available for pickup:	**Available for pickup:**	**Available for pickup:**
Check availability	Check availability	Check availability

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You may have to make multiple matrices to cover different situations. Some folks will need desktops, some laptops, etc. You're going to need a structure for that.

Most important is the second bullet point. Make sure that your machines match their users' needs. In the current era, a user's IT build (it's not just a computer anymore, is it?) isn't just a tool they use sometimes, it's the lens through which they see your organization. Giving them a substandard machine is like giving someone bad glasses. You don't need to give everyone a ton of processing power, but you may want to give people more memory in this age of tabbed browsing in separate processes.

Lastly, have a clear flowchart for why specific machines get assigned to certain people. The last thing you want to have is a situation where capriciousness rears its head.

How Many?

But how many do you need? One loaner? One repair loaner? Two? This is going to be something you may want to build into your environment. If performance is critical, you can't stick the sales director or the lead teacher with a 2011 machine with 2GB of RAM, right?

Many organizations are going the "self insured" model and buying extra machines to draw from while machines are repaired.

How Many?

- Loaner Pool?

- Repair Pool?

- Spare Parts?

- Sudden New Hires?

So let's think about some numbers here. Imagine you have 50 users. That could be a department, a business org unit, a class, or a whole organization.

Let's say they've got 10 upper end laptops for management, all Retina MacBooks Pro, 10 Mac Minis for admins, and 30 Traditional MacBook Pros for staff.

You can likely get away with not carrying a Mac mini spare, and draw from the MacBook Pro.

But what about maintenance? Have you thought about what the maintenance cycle will be? Service for broken parts? Upgrades?

Maintenance?

- AppleCare?

- Onsite Technician with GSX?

- Upgrades?

If you're planning on AppleCare, are you close to the people at the Genius Bar? Got a local contact that won't make you go through a rigamarole every time you come in? Get cozy with those people and you'll spend less time on repairs.

Are you aware of the Self Servicing Account program? The iOS Direct Service Program? If you qualify for either of these, you will likely benefit from participation.

Vendor?

Lastly, you have to figure out where to buy this stuff.

Vendor?

- DEP (ie, do you have an Apple Terms account?)

- Purchasing Requirements?

If you're in the US (for now) and you want to participate in the Device Enrollment Program (which, yes, applies not to just iOS devices but to Macs as well), you're going to need to buy them from Apple. Apple requires a full chain of custody to enroll a device in the DEP program, so the only way they can guarantee that right now is through an Apple Terms account.

If you don't have one, plan on it taking two to three weeks to get that done, and you're going to need the assistance of your purchasing group to do that. Of course, for that you're going to need more fresh Apple IDs to make that work. Find out more at deploy.apple.com.

If DEP isn't in your current plan (and maybe it should be!), then you need to figure out where to buy this stuff. If your organization has a bidding process that you have to follow, be sure to follow it. The last thing you want to have to deal with is recompete or publicity.