



Answer Quest Tip Sheet

We Answer Your Technology Questions

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Technology in the workplace: Working at the speed of E!

Do you remember when you didn't have a computer at your desktop? When you didn't have a fax? When you didn't have voice mail?

Technology in the workplace (and at home) is almost a "given" nowadays. This article is about how to find out what's out there and to keep up with the latest and greatest.

I think the biggest and best new technology that we have been given is the Internet and the World Wide Web. I found a great book; "Search Engines for the World Wide Web." It will help you learn how to successfully weave through the vast number of Internet websites available on the World Wide Web. Once you understand how to search the web and locate what you want, you can easily keep up with technology that's available or is coming soon! Some great websites to visit to learn about the newest technology are <http://www.cnet.com> and <http://www.zdnet.com>.

Next, would have to be that computer you have sitting in front of you right now. WHAT? You aren't sitting in front of your computer? If you haven't noticed we are now up to Pentium 4 processors (or equivalent) with speeds greater than 2 gigahertz! That's a far cry from that Pentium 75 megahertz we had back in 1995.

Is all this speed really necessary? If you want to play the latest games or run the latest software, you betcha! And memory! PCs we buy ready made are now capable of holding 1 to 2 gigahertz of RAM (in comparison, in 1995 we had about 16 megabytes of RAM and were happy). If you want to learn more, I recommend going to <http://www.dell.com> and just play with the configurations there (you don't need to buy anything to just see what's available – click on Learn More if you want an explanation for a part).

But, you say you need to take it with you! Well, it's simple, you need a Laptop! Laptops have the same basic configuration as standard desktop PCs but they give you the mobility. Remember though, they do not always replace a desktop PC for everything. Do your research.

Want something smaller? Well I know you've probably heard of the Palm Pilot PDA (Portable Desktop Assistant). And maybe you've heard of the Pocket PC. You can go to <http://palmtops.about.com> to learn more about both PDAs and Pocket PCs. Besides the Palm (the manufacturer), you also have Handspring's Visor and Treo, Compaq's IPAQ, the RIM/Blackberry (www.palm.com, www.handspring.com, www.compaq.com, www.blackberry.com) and more. These handhelds have developed greatly over the last few years. They have their own operating system (Palm OS, Windows CE, etc) and can be used as simple address book/calendaring units to running your favorite Word and Excel.

Speaking of cell phones (and pagers)... Answer your cell phone it's ringing! Made ya look! Now a day, everyone has a cell phone or a pager

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in order to keep in touch with co-workers, family, and friends. Even your kids might have one so you can keep tabs on them. Years ago, someone asked me if I could image a house without a regular “landline” phone. I said “NO WAY.” Boy was I wrong. I know several people who do not have regular phone lines where they live. They have cable modem or DSL for their Internet and cell phones for their voice communications. I’m just waiting for the Jetson’s VidPhone in everyone’s house.

(Hold please, someone wants me on my Internet cam ... just kidding but you get the idea.) A great place to get information is <http://cellphones.about.com> or at one of the vendors’ sites: <http://www.cingular.com>, <http://www.voicestream.com>, <http://www.verizon.com>,

<http://www.sprint.com>. Also, if you were wondering how your cell phones work, check this link out: <http://www.howstuffworks.com/cell-phone-service.htm>.

Have you heard the buzz about wireless networks? Instead of running all those cables, you might be able to just take your laptop and move around the office, into a meeting, or sit outside (if you are close enough to the hub) and do your work. It’s not as fast as your regular cabled networks (although it’s getting there). Also it’s not as cheap either. But we all know that the price will go down as the technology advances! You can visit <http://wireless.about.com/cs/sms> to learn more about wireless communications.

Have a great summer!

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