

There are a number of aspects that should be considered when purchasing a new system, and from personal experience, these are the ones that Limephusion looks at first.

1. What do I want to use my system for?
2. Do I want the portability of a laptop or the use of a desktop based system?
3. How much do I have to spend?

We'll discuss some other factors later, but for now, we'll focus on the first three.

### What do I want to use my system for?

Internet? Email? Photography? Genealogy? Finances? Watching Videos? Creating Documents? Video Editing? This is just the start, and what's important is deciding what will be the main use for your system. For the areas we've mentioned, both the PC and MAC will serve you well, however, there are some areas in which one system has the edge over the other, for example.

### Digital Photographs

In Limephusion's opinion, the MAC has the edge when it comes to managing digital photography due to the out-of-the box software that's bundled with every new system. With Apple's iPhoto software, you have a creative tool that can manage, manipulate, and present your photographs in an easy and convenient manner. In comparison, Windows File and Picture

viewer is less intuitive and lacks some of the nice features of iPhoto.

### Internet, Email & Video

For Internet, email and video, both systems have web browsers, email clients and media players built in, all of which do the job as well as each other. It is worth noting that both systems out-of-the box can't play all video formats that are currently available, however, third-party plugs can be downloaded which enable additional formats. Both systems will play DVD's without any problems. It's also worth noting that for on-demand TV services such as the BBC iPlayer and Channel 4's 4OD, no application program is available for the MAC platform at the time of writing this article, and is only fully supported on Windows XP and VISTA systems.

### Digital Music

With music software available for both the PC and MAC, such as iTunes and Windows Media Player, connecting your iPod or other Mp3 device to play music or video is relatively stress-free on both systems, Both the PC and MAC will play CD's without any issues.

### Gaming

Gaming is a big deal for some, and if you're looking at a system to work well in this area then the PC definitely is the winner. The PC has many more hardware options than the MAC, it is highly configurable from a performance boosting perspective, (which is



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by Neil Farrimond, Limephusion - November 2008

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very important to a gamer), is better equipped, and perhaps more importantly, has the greatest number of software titles available. It's worth noting that this is not to say that you can't play games on the MAC, just that the purist gamer will most likely always opt for the PC platform due to it's flexibility.

### **Video Editing & Music Production**

Limephusion's choice for video editing and music production, if that's what you're into, would lay with the MAC. Apple are known in the industry for great multimedia applications, and big production houses, like the BBC, use many of Apple's applications like Final Cut Studio for video and Logic Studio for music production. For the home or small-business user, a new MAC comes pre-installed with iMovie and Garageband both of which are great applications for Video Editing and Music Production respectfully.

### **Office Applications, Word Processing, Spreadsheets**

Another consideration when looking for a computer system, could be the suite of office applications that maybe of particular importance to you. Whether it's word processing, spreadsheets, databases or accounting, both the PC and MAC have packages for all of these requirements. The likes of Microsoft Office, is available for the MAC, in the form of the recently introduced Office 2008, and for PC's the latest version is their Office 2007 suite. There are alternatives such as Open Office which is obtainable from

the Internet, and supports both the PC and MAC. Another alternative for MAC users is iWork, which features a spreadsheet, word processor and presentation software, and has the ability to import and export Microsoft formatted documents, which is useful in a cross-platform environment.

### **Laptop or Desktop System?**

The choice between purchasing a laptop or desktop system is an interesting one. Recent statistics show that laptop sales for both PC & MAC's are gaining more market share than their desktop cousins; this is due the advances in the performance of laptops, coupled with improved battery life, reduced size and larger displays. Both Desktop and Laptops are on par with each other in terms of performance, but you will pay more for a Laptop than a Desktop for the same performance specification. Again, choosing a Laptop or Desktop system is a matter of personal choice, and the convenience of a Laptop may outweigh the cost difference.

### **What software do I own already and what am I going to use?**

The answer to this question alone could determine which computer system you decide to buy. If you already have software for a specific platform (Windows or MAC) then you need to decide if you wish to continue using it, and if so, will it actually run on a new system? What I mean by this is that some older software may not run with the latest version of operating systems, also it's



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defiantly worth checking if there are upgrades available.

### The User Experience

At the end of the day, you are the one that will be using your computer system, day in, day out and your experience should be a good one, and not blighted with system crashes, hanging programs and unreliable hardware. Limephusion therefore recommends a dedicated pre-built specified system from the likes of Dell or Apple that has the hardware and software matched to run efficiently.

To summarise, each system, whether it be a PC or MAC both have their pros and cons, and not one system is suitable for everyone. Microsoft Windows, be it VISTA or XP is used in a large percentage of home and office environments, now that doesn't make it the best; it's just the most common at least for the moment. The alternative, Apple OSX is also used around the world and is gaining market share in the home consumer environment and as we've mentioned earlier, is wildly used in the creative markets, design studios and has a great user community, following and culture. Let's also not forget that the Apple II, was the first consumer system to adopt the now ubiquitous Windows and Pointer Graphical User Interface (GUI) seen on all computer systems today. So you see, it's all a matter of personal choice and can be somewhat daunting if you're new to the world of computers and technology. If you're looking for a new

system, list your requirements, decide on the portability and flexibility options and understand what you can afford. Talk it over with the experts like the team at Limephusion ([www.limephusion.com](http://www.limephusion.com)) where we'll be happy to provide you with the information and knowledge you'll need to ensure you have the right computer system that fits your specific needs.

Limephusion's take on this is to select the system that suits your personal needs, and ask yourself some questions: Do you travel around and want to have the flexibility of working anywhere? Are you a keen photographer and want to have the ability to edit photos on the fly? Or are you happy with having a dedicated system for home or office? Both Apple and Windows PC manufactures have laptop systems available, all ranging in screen size and cost.

### How Much do I have to Spend?

With the PC market, you have an infinite number of specifications and systems to choose from, and with that, the cost of these solutions vary also. With the Apple MAC, it's a little more simplified as Apple provides the hardware platform that the operating system was written for, and sells this as a complete unit either in a desktop or laptop solution. This approach can come at a price premium, but offers tighter integration and stability between hardware and software. This approach differs from the Windows platform, as Microsoft software is designed to run with many variations of hardware, which in turn

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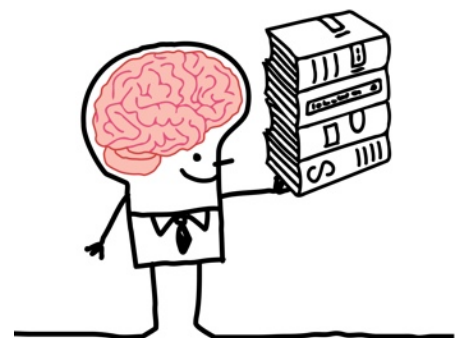
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gives you more choice and flexibility of system, and thus lowering the overall cost. It is worth noting though that as the Microsoft Operating System is design to work with many hardware manufacturers, some issues with stability and compatibility invariably can arise, and it's worth going for a pre-built system from a reputable vendor than attempting to build a system from scratch as this is not recommended for the beginner.

That's the three main topic areas covered, but there are some other considerations you should take into account before making your decision.

### **Virus' and Vulnerabilities**

Malicious computer viruses and other nasties are out there, and to-date, the Microsoft Windows platform has by far the most vulnerabilities associated with it. This is simply due to its popularity, and longevity within the industry. For the Apple MAC platform, the software that runs on Apple computers hardware differs significantly form Windows, and has virtually no major viruses that could disrupt your system in comparison. This is not to say that a Windows platform is worse that MAC, it is however important to understand that in order to keep your Windows PC virus and malware free, you will have to invest in anti-virus software, ad-aware removers and other software programs to help keep your system clean. The day will come we're sure that the MAC platform may suffer the same vulnerabilities, but to-date this system is less prone to these types of issues for now.





## Advance

Are you using technology effectively to advance and grow your business?

Limephusion can help define and deliver the right technology solution for you or review how your current setup can be optimised.

## Review Define & Deliver

Businesses rely on effective technology. Do you know if your systems are impacting your productivity or your ability to be competitive?

**Limephusion** can review your current technology needs, define and deliver a solution from a simple upgrade to a complete system which is scalable, accessible and secure.

## Business Process Review

Businesses change and evolve over time, are your processes supporting your business needs effectively?

**Limephusion** will review your current processes, and provide a roadmap that will support and advance your business.



## Protect

How do you protect your information from unwanted access and loss of data

Limephusion can securely protect your business with our Internet control and backup service.

## Data Backup & Archive

Backing up your business data is an essential task. Local backups protect your data in the event of system failure, but what about theft or fire at your site?

**Limephusion** offers a comprehensive and robust backup service that addresses local, online and offsite protection of your data.

## Internet Control

Computer and information security is critical to any business. Are your systems protected from outside and inside vulnerabilities?

**Limephusion** will help you to protect your business from unwanted access and enables you to control what is shared.



## Promote

Do you know technology can be used to promote and position your business

Limephusion can help define and deliver the right technology solution for you or review how your current setup can be optimised.

## Podcast Production

Audio or video podcasts are portable, flexible and widely accessible. They build relationships, share information, promote your expertise, products and services.

**Limephusion** offers an end-to-end production service that ensures your podcast is professional, dynamic and personal to your business.

## Business Identity

Brand identity is key to promoting your business. Do your business communications have a professional and consistent look and feel?

**Limephusion** can create a set of templates and email signatures that ensure each communication you create delivers a consistent message.

## Phusion Services

Technology is only part of the story and we have a range of **overlay services** to help you further. From **training** you on your new system or application to setting up your **social media platform**, we offer our knowledge solutions to help **Advance**, **Protect** and **Promote** your business. From **business planning** and **advice** to **office relocation** we're here to help. If you simply wish to have an informal chat come, and talk to us.



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