

## Re: Low end desktop for EE tasks?

---

*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.electronics.design/2007-09/msg04830.html>

---

- *From:* [mrdarrett@xxxxxxxx](mailto:mrdarrett@xxxxxxxx)
  - *Date:* Tue, 25 Sep 2007 16:14:14 -0700
- 

On Sep 25, 4:09 pm, Jeff Liebermann <je...@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

On Tue, 25 Sep 2007 20:48:13 -0000, mrdarr...@xxxxxxxx wrote:

There's Craigslist, too – a little less risky than eBay.

Actually, I've had more problems buying from Dell and the various Dell refurbished online stores, than from either eBay or Cragislist.

<<http://www.delloutlet.com>>  
<<http://www.dfsdirectsales.com>>  
<<http://www.dellauction.com>>

Looks like it might be the Dell Vostro then.

You're right that you can get a much better new machine for "not much more money". However, at the original price, you can get TWO Dell SX260's for the price of a new Vostro.

Another reason why not to go (too) used:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capacitor\\_plague](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capacitor_plague)

One of the 14 SX260's had literally all of the electrolytics simulating a volcano. Strangely, it worked just fine, but was obviously going to blow up soon. The eBay vendor sent me a replacement motherboard, which I installed, and lived happily ever after. I also tried to repair the board with the blown caps, but managed to rip out a few too many plated through holes, which destroyed the board.

A computer tech here at work complained that the Dell desktops aren't that great. (The laptops are good, he says.) He's had to replace WAY

Re: Low end desktop for EE tasks?

too many motherboards and Western Digital hard drives on our Dell Optiplex SX280s.

Are you sure you don't have it backwards? Almost all my office and home machines are Dell desktops. I don't have any problems with those (other than the usual moving parts failures). It's the laptops that are dying on me. If the laptop doesn't blow up, the giant brick of a laptop power supply blows up. Also, plenty of dead LCD CCFL power supplies. I won't claim that the desktops are perfect, but I do have far fewer problems with them.

Interesting. No I don't think I have it backwards, and at least two of my co-workers in my unit (there are about a dozen of us in my unit) had their mainboards replaced on failure to boot – problem I think was bad caps. And at least one WD HDD replacement.

Our computer tech is one of three who help about 200 of us.

The SX260's all came with Hitachi 40GB Travelstar laptop drives. I've had VERY bad luck with the 3.5" Travelstar drives, but these 2.5" laptop drives seem to be surviving so far. Out of 14, I've had no failures of any type. I also monitor the S.M.A.R.T. statistics using SpeedFan:  
<<http://www.almico.com/speedfan.php>>  
which has been quite useful at predicting hard disk failures. No unusual problems so far.

Very strange! I've heard IBM/Hitachi is one of the most reliable available.

Our policy at work is, Save your work to the Network Drive (file server, backed up nightly), not to your C: drive !

Good plan. I use two mirrored file servers and/or NAS (network attached storage) boxes. I don't just backup the work. I do image backups of the entire hard disk so that the effort necessary to restore Humpty Dumpty is much less than the mess produced by overlapping incremental or partial backups. Think of backup in terms of how long will it take to get you back to normal operation. It's often much longer than you would initially suspect.

Re: Low end desktop for EE tasks?

---  
# Jeff Liebermann 150 Felker St #D Santa Cruz CA 95060  
# 831-336-2558 je...@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx  
#<http://802.11junk.com> je...@xxxxxxxxxx  
#<http://www.LearnByDestroying.com> AE6KS

Yeah, I work off my C:, and then schedule a batch-file backup with 7zip and then transfer that big file to our network drive overnight.

Michael

.