

Its our 19th Birthday !!

Reflecting on 19 Years of Operation

There is no escaping the truth. Mentor Computers is 19 years old. We would like to thank all of our clients for making these 19 years successful ones. Our business is built upon customer loyalty, and of course the kind things that people have said about our custom crafted computers.

While international corporations flood the media with images and promises, reflective people understand the need for good local service, and the quick response time this provides. As well, there is a strong willed segment of Thunder Bay that recognizes the need to support local industry. They understand that keeping their purchases local, keeps the local economy working.

At the beginning of this newsletter, I was going to spend some time summarizing the changes in the computer industry. But there are just too many to write down.

One client suggested that we look at what has not changed - a common denominator for the nearly past two decades. Thinking about this is easy. I call it the "transparency of quality".

Nearly twenty years ago, it was very difficult to simply look at a computer and know if you were getting a good one, or a lousy one. You really had no idea. There was very little written, and the computer magazines

were only beginning, and there was not a recognizable Internet.

Everyone started out making computers of fantastic quality because "short cuts" and other economies were not wanted! But then it came: businesses who charged exceptionally low prices on computers, but with that came exceptionally poor quality. Sadly, there were many business casualties, and a lot of bad feelings amongst buyers.

With time, some brands of components became **standards in the industry**, but they did so because of the quality of their product, and not because of any "media hype". Creative Labs and SoundBlaster did not make their reputation on a low price, but because they produced a very good product.

So, quality is a common link between now and in the distant past, but I must add that recently a growing segment of the market is again only interested in the initial price of a computer. The prime concern is not the make and model of the processor, the memory, the mainboard, the hard drive, and all of the components, but the price. We have already learned this lesson, but this new section of the market has not. Because the computer is now for everyone, and not simply computer geeks, there is a segment of the market who

can fall victim to the problem of price. They



can't easily see the difference in quality, and then price becomes the only difference.

Perhaps this is our number one job - education!

Please note, there should be more candles on our cake, but this graphic is the only one I could find.

Backup Awareness

Last September, Maxtor tried to make it Backup Awareness Month. While we did distribute the information they made available to people, it would seem that this is still not a habit for many people. Many people come to our shop with very difficult problems to correct, but as well with no working backup of data. So, we thought that we would remind everyone - in the middle of Tax Season.

First, it is imperative to **develop a backup schedule**. Information should be backed up daily for most businesses, and now for most households. If your computer usage is light, at the very minimum, a weekly backup could suffice.

Second, it is important to **back up everything**. Today you can easily back up all of your hard drive data. No need to spend time sorting through every file or folder. Invest in a storage solution that's twice the size of your internal hard drive, to give your system room to grow. All too often people chose techniques which literally require hours to fumble through. Talk to us.

Third, you are going to forget. So, it should be **done automatically**. Set it up and forget it. Use a solution that's easy to set up and provides automatic backups. We have the software and the hardware for this task, and it is not difficult for us to set up for you. It is also a good Do It Yourself project too.

Fourthly, and we were caught on this a few years ago, **backups should be rotated**. Give yourself added protection incase of some

problem in the building, and get a backup off-site. If your business were to experience a fire, and your computer were destroyed, I think that the backup beside the computer would be destroyed too!

Lastly, and most importantly, don't procrastinate. **Do it now! Do it today!!** Unfortunately, the need to back up data is often a lesson learned from a bitter experience. I know we have learned this lesson, and learn this through some of the people whom we help. In this regard, their pain and frustration is our pain and frustration. It can be prevented so easily.

Free Supper

Yes, it is true. Our birthday means that we are giving a party. But people are busy, and it is difficult to get everyone together for a party at one time. To remedy this, we have a number of Gift Certificates from the Neebing Roadhouse and Steakhouse.

If you have been there before, you know that there is both an elegance and a quality which you enjoyed. However, if you have not been there before, this free gift certificate will get you to try out something new for a change. You won't be disappointed.

While supplies and quantities last, we will be giving out a free gift certificate to anyone buying a computer from us, or purchases a triple component upgrade. It is simply our way of saying thank you for supporting us now, and we hope in the future as well.

Mentor Computers
250 South Algoma Street
Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 3C2
807-345-1995 (home)
807-345-0626 (fax)