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Mac vs PC

“Mac or PC?” is the question people ask when shopping for a computer now days. While they are similar, both platforms are different. These computers have different user experience, different computer designs, and different but similar hardware.

The Mac provides “a more positive user experience than is generally found in the Windows world” (Rittmaster). This is because back in 1984 Steve Jobs believed everything should be integrated to provide a positive experience. That is still holds true today because while a Mac may run similar hardware to a PC the integration is tighter due to Apple picking the hardware and then designing the software that goes on top of it. With that said, this integration allows Apple to run a 5K display off one cable (PCs require two cables), replace the function keys on a keyboard with a touch screen display so the options from certain programs can appear there, being able to hookup an iPod with no extra software required, etc... They also target it to creatives by including Pages (Word Processing), Numbers (Spreadsheets), Keynote (Presentation), GarageBand (Audio Editing), and iMovie (Movie Editing) with every new Mac purchase (Moren). This means that the user can be up and running without having to buy extra software for big amounts of money. Apple is even targeting developers by having Unix inside the OS which allows things like Bash scripts which, “It lets you run programs in almost any language without using a specialized IDE” (Hattersey). This is important because usually developers have to install an IDE (Integrated Development Environment) to program in most programming language.

On the PC side of things though, the user experience is different. A PC usually comes with a web browser, a very basic notepad, and system maintenance programs. Everything else is sold or installed separately. In fact, the last two versions of Windows don't even support playing DVDs out of the box anymore. Recent features like Microsoft Account support and the Windows Store are new features that allow the user to integrate their data across different devices. Microsoft did receive some criticism for selling that data to marketing agency's though. Heini Järvinen, communications and community manager at the European Digital Rights organization was quoted in this eWeek article saying, "Summing up these 45 pages, one can say that Microsoft basically grants itself very broad rights to collect everything you do, say and write with and on your devices in order to sell more targeted advertising or to sell your data to third parties" (Hernandez).

The hardware on the Mac side of things is similar hardware to what you would find on a PC. For example, an iMac has the same Intel Core i7 CPU that a PC would have. It's the handpicking of hardware is what makes it special. Look at the Mac Pro, Apple picked the hardware that they wanted in it and then made it look like a trashcan computer. This wasn't always the case though. Apple ran Motorola and PowerPC chips in their PCs before 2005 (Fitzgerald). The reasoning on why Apple did this was because Intel's CPUs were faster than what the PowerPC chips were and then these computers could also boot into Windows just in case a customer needed to run Windows software too.

On the PC side of things Microsoft mainly just designs the software while only getting into making actual computer hardware back in 2012 when Windows 8 launched (Burt). That means the consumer must provide their own PC to install Windows on. This can be done by buying a computer for someone like HP or Dell, building a PC, or installing Windows on an

existing PC. The only downside is that sometimes things will not work when a new version of Windows is installed on an older PC. This can even happen with a newer PC where an update is pushed out and something stops working (for example a sound card or a webcam). The upside of having a PC though is that the end user can typically get a better value than a Mac. They can also customize how much “power” they need in their PC.

With that said both the Mac and PCs are very different and very similar to each other. They both have different use cases in the experiences they provide, the different physical form factors each come in, and the different but similar hardware. Which one should consumers pick? Well if money is not an object and the user want something reliable then pick they should pick the Mac. But, if the consumer wants something that can be personally tailored to them and want to save some money then pick the PC.

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