

STOP WAITING FOR COMPUTERS TO DIE BEFORE REPLACING THEM!

Replacement through attrition is the most expensive, disruptive, and time-wasting method of handling that task. Despite that, most law firms only replace computer hardware when it finally dies. The useful life of a computer is three to four years if you didn't buy a bargain, low-end computer in the first place. If you buy behind the curve and get an underpowered computer, you've just handicapped your efficiency and shortened the computer's useful life. Here's why you need to schedule the replacement of hardware before the hardware actually stops working:

DATA LOSS

Unless you're backing everything up on every computer every day, you'll likely lose something stored on the computer that stopped working or crashed. The best way to prevent disaster-based data loss is by [implementing an effective backup regime](#), including cloud-based backup, through services such as [Backblaze](#) and [Carbonite](#).

PAY TOO MUCH

You have no time to research, plan, or find the best price from the best vendor. You must run out and buy a new computer, printer, etc., as quickly as possible. "Spur of the moment" buying costs you lots of money because you'll get the worst deal possible simply because you can't wait.

INAPPROPRIATE CONFIGURATIONS

Most brick-and-mortar computer retailers cater to the home market for computers. Their selection of business-oriented computers will be limited, and they'll likely have very little good advice regarding what you should buy. Instead of getting Microsoft Office or a year or more of Microsoft 365 included with the new computer, you'll end up with games or [crapware](#). Instead of Windows 11 Pro, you'll get Windows 11 Home, which lacks [BitLocker](#), Windows' native full-disk encryption technology. Instead of simple speakers or an external webcam, you'll pay extra for 3D surround sound with a powered subwoofer. You get the idea. Computers targeting the home market have plenty of nice features, just not the business-focused ones you need.

DOWN TIME

It is costly for you or any of your employees to sit idle at their desks, unable to work. If your computers don't work, then you don't work.

As ever-more legal software and services migrate to the internet, interim computers or temporary computer swaps are easier than ever before. But many user configuration settings, such as shortcut keys, color scheme, zoom magnification, etc., the setup niceties that make a computer easier to use and yours, are still machine-specific. They don't flow down from a website or sync down from [Google Workspace or Microsoft 365](#).

CHARITABLE DEDUCTIONS

You could donate your old computer to charity and take a legitimate tax deduction if the computer works. If it doesn't work, it'll probably sit in your computer graveyard closet until you finally [wipe the data and recycle it](#) or pay someone to take it away.