School Smarts

Computer Memory: Do You Have What's Needed For School?

(NAPSA)—Any time during the school year can be the right time for a high school or college student to take a closer look at the computer he or she is using to see if it has enough memory.

Many students find that investing in a memory upgrade for their computer can pay dividends when it comes to speed of operation and their computer's ability to run programs that demand a lot of memory.

For starters, if the computer has slowed down and is sluggish when it performs everyday tasks, such as viewing digital photos, watching videos, working on a presentation or term paper, or even taking online classes, it may be time to consider a memory upgrade.

In addition, it's common for engineering and finance students to run CAD and modeling programs. These are data-intensive programs that may require additional memory to run efficiently. The same may be true for arts and design majors who run Photoshop, music majors who use composition software, and geology majors who run advanced mapping software. Typically, programs such as these can benefit from having additional memory.

Also, if it seems to take forever for the computer to restart and response time slows down when more than one program or window is open at the same time, it's likely that it can use more memory.

While many find that improving the memory on a computer can be a fairly simple operation, it's still not without its challenges. To help, here are some tips.

Is It All About The RAM?

RAM—which stands for Random Access Memory—is the internal memory specifically used by the computer to run programs. If you are reading your e-mail, watching a video, writing a report or playing a game, your computer is loading those programs into RAM to run them. These types of computing activities can benefit most directly from a memory upgrade, by providing more space to run additional programs.

If you find that your computer is sluggish when you are watching a video or writing a term paper, it may be time for a memory upgrade.

Is There Enough Memory?

Increasingly, many colleges and high schools have specific requirements concerning the kind of computer they expect a student to use. Often, this includes how powerful the computer is expected to be and how much memory it needs to have at its disposal.

Can I Do It Myself?

Fortunately, installing the memory can be a fairly straightforward activity. However, the process of finding the correct type of memory upgrade for your computer can sometimes be a real challenge for the average computer owner.

The good news is that there is an online retailer called Crucial.com that specializes in memory and storage. It also offers free, easy-to-use online tools designed to help consumers quickly find the memory upgrade best suited to restoring a computer's lost performance.

Simply use the drop-down menu on the Crucial Memory Advisor tool to see the types of memory supported by your computer and recommended memory upgrade options.

For those unsure of the computer's make and model, there is a System Scanner tool that automatically scans the computer's system and recommends compatible upgrades for its system.

Hundreds of thousands of types of computer memory upgrades for PCs and Mac computers, both new and old, are available through the Crucial.com website. To find your memory upgrade options, visit www.crucial.com.