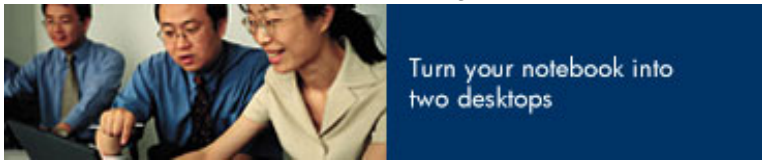




Turn your notebook into two desktops - overview

How to guide



Overview

Have you ever made it to work, ready to put the finishing touches on a document you labored over at home the night before, only to find you forgot to e-mail it to yourself? Do you spend more time than you should at the end of the day deciding which file you need to send from one computer to another? Would you like to work at home but don't want to set up -- and maintain -- two desktop systems? Do you have trouble keeping the software and settings on your two systems in synch? If you answered yes to any of these questions, you may be the perfect candidate for a single notebook computer that you can leverage as you would two (or more) separate desktop systems.

Portable computing power has come of age. Today it can be the answer to streamlining your computing, whether you travel regularly on business or just need to work in more than once place. This guide will help you understand how a single portable computer, set up with the right accessories, can provide you with the functionality of two desktop systems and help you be more productive and efficient. You will also find out how to simplify your life and lower your expenses without sacrificing power or functionality.

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Turn your notebook into two desktops - understand it

How to guide



Understand it

In the beginning, computers were behemoths, and we went to them. These giant, mysterious systems were ministered to by highly trained groups of specialists. Only a handful of gurus knew the secret handshake and how to make these systems perform.

Slowly systems became smaller and more user-friendly. Computer technologies also started appearing as components in many of the products we purchase, such as cars, TVs, and radios. Systems eventually became so user-friendly that you didn't have to be a programmer to make your system productive.

Back then, even if you had the best portable system available, you also needed at least one desktop system to handle any task that might come up. And "portable" was a loosely used term. Most of the systems were heavy enough to be considered a fitness program, and their battery life was often measured in minutes.

For the last decade, much of the creativity of the computer revolution has focused on making smaller, more portable systems. HP and Compaq have always led the way with their research and development of better batteries, lighter computers, and components that are smaller and require much less energy to run. Now you can carry more computing power in your briefcase than was available in any one system 30 years ago. The end result is that you can do a lot more now with a portable computer, and for a lot longer. Batteries are half the size they were ten years ago and have ten times the life. This keeps you online longer and vastly improves productivity.

While in the past nobody considered notebook computers a worthwhile investment unless they traveled regularly, that is no longer the case. Thanks to technological advances, the notion that notebooks are only for travelers is now obsolete. These advances have changed how you can do your computing. Now you must change how you think about it.

Portability isn't just for travelers anymore

The continuing improvements in the size, weight, and functionality of portable systems have resulted in a new

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generation of notebook computers that have computing power comparable to that found in commercial-grade desktop systems. What does this mean for you?

You don't have to sacrifice functionality for portability, or maintain multiple systems to have the tools you need to get your job done. When you replace one or more desktop systems with a notebook, you give yourself the ultimate freedom of flexibility to work anytime and anywhere.

Portability = productivity

Replacing multiple desktop systems with a single notebook improves your productivity in several ways:

- You won't have to take the time to pull information off one system to transport it to another.
- You won't find yourself without important files or without access to the right software tools.
- You only have to remember one set of passwords.
- Backups are faster and easier because you have only one system to back up.
- You won't have to purchase multiple software licenses, nor will you need to update and maintain multiple systems.

Over time, a single notebook with the right peripherals will cost less than multiple desktops and be easier to maintain. Combine that with improvements in productivity and you'll see a real and continual return on your investment.

Note: For many people, the idea of hooking a notebook computer up to a whole collection of peripherals each and every time they move to a new location is more than enough to make them willing to invest in multiple desktop systems just to avoid the hassle. If this describes you, rest assured that the power of technology makes moving from location to location a snap. Docking stations (sometimes called port replicators) give your notebook quick and easy access to peripherals and networks, as you'll learn in the Do It section.



Turn your notebook into two desktops - plan it

How to guide



Plan it

One of the keys to using a notebook effectively and getting all your computing needs met is performing a careful evaluation of how you work today, and how you would like to work. Once you do that, you can easily put together the right notebook solution.

Make a list

Most of the initial decisions you make when planning to buy a notebook are the same as those you make when you plan to buy a desktop system. You should consider your processor speed, memory, and hard disk storage needs as well as extras like a CD or DVD burner and multi-media accessories like flash card readers.

To get a jump-start on your basic notebook requirements, take an inventory of the hardware and software your current desktop systems have. You'll want your notebook to match these capabilities, at the very least, and chances are you'll want it to exceed them. Remember, your notebook is going to be the computer you use day in and day out, so be sure you invest enough in it now so it can serve you well for two or three years (at least).

Also remember, however, that your notebook computer is only one part of your notebook solution. Accessories and peripherals make up the rest. To finalize your notebook solution requirements, you'll need to examine your work patterns and think about the different ways you need (and want) to work.

Note: While you should keep in mind what new activities you might be looking at down the road and incorporate them into the notebook configuration that you select, don't spend too much energy trying to predict the future. Notebook computers, like their desktop cousins, are designed to be flexible and easy to upgrade.

To get started, first make a list of all of the places you want to work. Then, make a list of the different activities you want to perform at each location. Finally, think about the different devices you want to use at each location and what kind of network connectivity you plan to use. Will you be using your portable in a wireless mode? Will you need to

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connect while traveling via standard phone lines?

If you have a small network at home and a totally different one at work, not to worry. Today's operating systems allow users a great deal of flexibility. Most systems allow you to have one configuration set up for your office network and peripherals and another configuration at home for the network you have there. Moreover, the same system can have the ability to operate remotely as a standalone system, working offline, or as a workstation dialing into a network.

When you're done with your list, it should look something like this table:

	Activities	Devices/network
Office	communications	printer
	project management	scanner
	document authoring	DVD writer
	data backup	wired LAN connection
	printing	wireless LAN connection
	scanning	monitor
Home office	communications	printer
	project management	digital camera
	document authoring	DSL connection (Ethernet)
	printing	monitor
	digital image transfer	keyboard and mouse
Hotel/plane	communications	dial-up connection (phone)
	project management	mouse
	document authoring	

Your list can include as many locations as you need. If your job includes consulting or training services that require you to visit clients from time to time, you might include a "client site" category. If you work in a satellite office but spend time at your company's main offices, you might include a "corporate office" category. The goal is to get a good picture of all the places you work and how you work at each one so your notebook solution can fully support you.

Armed with your list of basics like processor speed and the peripherals you need to support, you're ready to make the move from multiple desktop systems to a single notebook.

Tip: The notebook buying guide listed under Related Links to the right provides straightforward, practical advice on how to choose the right notebook once you

know what your requirements are.

» Next: Do it

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Turn your notebook into two desktops - do it

How to guide



Do it

Planning the switch to a notebook and actually making it are two different things. Of course, you have to actually acquire a notebook, but that's really the easy part (see the Buy It section for information on business-quality HP and Compaq notebooks). Once you have your notebook in hand, you have two key tasks ahead of you:

- Install the right applications, drivers, and other software.
- Set up docking stations at the locations where you will use your notebook regularly.

Have an installation party

Installing software is easy, but can be time-consuming. Fortunately, you only have to do it once for your notebook. If you are installing applications on your notebook that were previously installed on a desktop system, take this opportunity to visit the manufacturers' Web sites to get the latest updates or patches so the version you install is up to date.

You'll also need to install drivers for the various peripherals you plan to use with your notebook. Once again, be sure you take this opportunity to get the latest drivers for your devices. They will work better and you'll be all the more productive.

Tip: To get the latest software for your HP and Compaq products visit the [business support and drivers site](#). While you're there, take a few minutes to sign up for regular driver updates so you'll know immediately when a new version of a driver is available.

Harness the power of docking

Once you move your desktop systems off the desktop, you're left with a collection of cords just begging to make a connection. But what should they connect to? Your notebook? While they could connect directly, you'd have to unhook them each time you want to change locations and then reconnect each time you get to a new location. This repetitive hooking and unhooking would quickly negate any productivity gains that come from centralizing with a single system. Enter docking stations.

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Peripherals like printers, scanners, faxes, full-size monitors, and backup devices are all key components of your complete business computing solution. With docking stations, all of these devices are ready to use with your notebook computer in a matter of seconds.

A docking station is a device that plugs into the back end of your notebook computer. All of the ports that you need to plug in any peripheral devices, from a scanner or printer to a tape drive and DVD burner, are built into the back of the docking station. The docking station even charges your system's batteries while you work. Just plug the portable system into the docking station and everything is connected and ready to go immediately -- no fumbling with wires to get set up each time. Your notebook becomes a desktop system instantly, with complete access to every device connected to the docking station.



When it's time to hit the road again, just pull your freshly charged system out of the docking station and you're ready to roll. Once you reach your destination, just plug your system into the docking station you have there and you can begin working immediately, without having to transfer any files or data from one system to another. Quick and easy.

Of course, the question is: just how many docking stations do you need? While everyone's setup will be different (which is the beauty of notebooks in the first place), locations that are good candidates for a docking station are those where:

- You (and your notebook) spend time regularly and on a predictable basis.
- You need to connect several peripherals and a network connection.
- You have complete control over the workspace.

Offices and home offices are good candidates for docking stations because you work in them regularly. Also, a client site where you have an extended engagement (more than a couple of weeks) may also be a good candidate because you'll most likely have a dedicated workspace. Hotels, planes, and client sites you visit infrequently aren't good candidates because you just aren't there long enough to make a docking station worthwhile. For example, the site/activities list from the previous section had three locations: office, home office, and plane/hotel. Of those, both the office and home office should have docking stations because both have to support a variety of peripherals.

Tip: Docking stations are specific to a particular notebook model, but you can buy as many as you need and add new ones if a change in your work style requires it. As hardware goes, docking stations are inexpensive and are a key element of a productive , effective notebook solution.

» Next: Use it

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Turn your notebook into two desktops - use it

How to guide



Use it

Once you have your notebook and docking stations set up, you're ready to go. Use your notebook as you have any desktop computer. Because your notebook computer is your only computer, you'll want to take good care of it, so here are a few suggestions on caring for and using your portable system:

- Have a strong, well-padded, carrying case.
- Never carry your computer on the car seat. It will fall off the seat when you have to stop quickly. Place your system in the trunk or on the floorboard. If you need to leave it in your vehicle, always cover it with a newspaper, blanket, or jacket to deter thieves.
- Always have your system insured for damage or theft.
- Always have current backups of your system. Back up weekly, at least, and daily if possible.
- Don't carry your notebook backups with your notebook. If, for example, you back up to CD, and you keep those CDs in your notebook's carrying case, the backups are as susceptible to theft and destruction as your notebook. If you travel regularly and back up on the road, put your backups in your suitcase.
- All of this connectivity places systems at risk from viruses. Always keep your virus protection software current. This means updating the software at least once every week.

Now you know why it makes good sense for you to use a single notebook system to replace multiple desktop systems. It saves both time and money and improves productivity, but you don't have to sacrifice convenience or productivity. Don't you wish all business decisions were this easy?

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Buy it

» HP Compaq 8710p Notebook PC



For top performance in the office and beyond, the HP Compaq 8710p Notebook PC offers a 17-inch diagonal widescreen display, elite graphics, and full-sized keyboard with integrated numeric keypad.

- [Product information about HP Compaq 8710p Notebook PC.](#)

» HP Compaq 8510p Notebook PC



The HP Compaq 8510p Notebook PC gives you exceptional graphics and performance in a powerful yet portable 15.4-inch diagonal widescreen notebook weighing just 6.1 lbs and as thin as 1.1 in.

- [Product information about HP Compaq 8510p Notebook PC.](#)

» Docking solutions for notebooks



The right docking station is the key to turning a single notebook system into multiple desktop systems.

- [Product information about docking solutions for notebooks.](#)

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From backpacks to the leather Notepad, HP offers a variety of carrying cases that keep your notebook and accessories safe while you are on the go.

- [Product information about carrying cases for notebooks.](#)

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