

# Business laptop vs a general laptop - What's the real difference?

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*Whether you have a home laptop, a personal laptop or a business laptop - they all seem like they do the same thing. These devices accept inputs, process data and display images on the display. Each range is unique in its own right.*



But what makes a business laptop issued by an employer different to the notebook your parents bought you when you completed your degree? That 'gift' laptop is sitting on the coffee table at home, hanging on to dear life cause it's nearing a decade in age. Still, the corporate-issued laptop is speeding through those presentations, and spreadsheets and dropping emails in every client's inbox.

And it's not only because that 'gift' laptop is old, but it's also because it wasn't developed with your business needs in mind.

When purchasing a laptop for yourself or your employees if you're a business owner, the options seem so broad it's overwhelming. It's helpful to understand the nuances between consumer and commercial laptops when you dive into the research phase of making that purchase decision.

There are a few key factors to consider from the start - while an inexpensive laptop package may offer an appealing low buy-in appeal, in the long-term overall quality will show its age much quicker.

Companies and decision-makers should consider these primary features in a high-quality business laptop:

## Take a trip to the IT department

Up first is build. Each laptop range is built from some combination of metals and plastic. General consumer laptops are typically constructed from lightweight ABS (a type of thermoplastic polymer), while a higher-end business laptop chassis typically contains metal or carbon fibre for durability.

Delve under the plates, and there are also substantial differences. Commercial laptops are fitted with high-powered processors, allowing faster processing and multitasking. This is essential when you consider a daily driver. It needs to have the tools to deliver desktop-level results in a fast-paced environment.

Of course, a high-powered CPU is typically accompanied by a capable GPU and RAM. In the case of consumer laptops, you may not see a dedicated GPU on board. So depending on your employees' needs, commercial notebooks can be specced uniquely.

More affordable 'shop' notebooks run more traditional hard drives (HDD), while it's become almost standard to find a solid-state (SSD) drive in a commercial laptop. Because this is a notebook for business use, its storage capacity should generally be at least 250GB. Ideally more. The more the better.

While you may sit with all this storage at your fingertips, it's essential to back up every single file you generate or save. This is where software plays an integral role - we'll get to that in a moment.



## **Back into the office**

Now that the internal components are mostly covered, here is a range of actual real-world features that'll affect typical office (and WFH) users.

A notebook has a set amount of input options - the ones used most come in the form of keyboards and trackpads.

Commercial notebooks place increased weight on a robust and comfortable keyboard. These keyboards offer a satisfying amount of key travel, and are designed to last as long as the laptop will last. Trackpads are becoming more comfortable and easy to use with each new generation of devices.

The best keyboards and trackpads have a spill-proof feature because accidents happen in the boardroom and the living room.

Depending on the number of external devices you need to attach, a few USB ports may suffice. For more complex peripherals demanding a faster connection, users may consider a fire-wire for external storage, a serial port, or an HDMI port to connect an external monitor for dual-monitor work.

Lastly, but probably most importantly, the device needs to feature a battery capacity that suits your work needs. If you're glued to the same desk every day - battery capacity probably isn't a requirement. But travelling workers and people who sit in board rooms for extended periods of time will require a long-lasting battery - something that comes as standard in many commercial products.

## Nothing soft about software

The first tool everyone thinks of when acquiring a business laptop is Microsoft Office, and with good reason. Office's app integration with the Windows ecosystem is unrivalled, especially when it comes to enterprises and even SMEs.

Another useful, and sometimes overlooked, feature - is the capability to track down your device if it is lost. A business laptop needs to come loaded with software that will help to secure business content. A solid business warranty and service offering go hand-in-hand in any company's risk mitigation package.

While all of the above can be found in specced consumer notebooks - they're not standard features in most retail devices. If you're buying notebooks for business, it's essential to consider devices that offer a robust hardware and software features that add value to your business.

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