

### **Windows Tablets Go Mainstream**

The initial Windows tablets were meant to primarily compete with the i-pad for users that wanted a touch screen tablet with Microsoft Office capabilities for occasional business use.

With the advent of Tablets powered by Intel Core i-3 and i-5 series processors, these devices have taken a serious step toward becoming true business tools capable of replacing the standard laptop in many cases.

Some of these tablets now come with a Core i-5 processors, Intel HD-4000 graphics, 4gb of Ram and a 128 gb Solid State Drive. This combined with Windows 8 makes for a very snappy little machine, as powerful as almost any laptop or desktop for that matter. These are now available from Acer, Asus, Dell, HP, Lenovo, Microsoft and Samsung to name of few of the larger players in the new Windows tablet arena.

When your combine a detachable keyboard and blue tooth mouse they function as a small laptop, but the screen size ( 10 inches ) is still a bit small for those of us without eagle eyes. You can however connect these units via an inexpensive universal docking station to a large screen monitor, full size keyboard and mouse.

Similarly by connecting to a portable hard drive you can get around the modest 128 gb storage limitation and expand it to 1tb or more. When you are on the move, you may need to bring along a USB hub as these units often only have a single USB port. The docking station looks after this when you are in the office, of course.

So, most of the limitations of a tablet can be compensated for when you are working in the office. The downside is the additional added cost. On the road you might also need to pack a set of reading glasses although the screen is high resolution coming in at 1920 x 1080.

### **So Can I Phase Out My Laptop?**

For now I would say no. The high performance tablets currently cost about \$1000.00 and you need to add in a few hundred dollars worth of accessories to make them truly useable.

By comparison you can get a pretty good 15” Core i-3 or Core i-5 Laptop with a 500 gb drive for \$400. to \$600. This is quite useable without all of the extra add-ons that a tablet requires.

Still, tablets continue to make inroads into the Laptop marketplace the same way that Laptops did to the Desktop market a few years earlier. I believe all three machines still have a future as they all currently offer unique benefits.

Desktops offer power, longevity and ease of repair. It’s much easier and less expensive to replace a desktop keyboard than a laptop or tablet keyboard for example. Desktop computers are also easier to upgrade with more Ram, hard disk space, a new video card and such to extend their effective life spans.

One area that tablets do offer improvements over laptops is in potential reliability. The Gorilla Glass screen and Solid State hard drive should prove to be very resilient. By comparison, I’ve seen many laptop screens and hard drives damaged by the everyday wear and tear that portability requires of these devices.

As time goes on Tablet prices should go down and capacities go up to the point that old style laptops will likely disappear, replaced by modular tablets. With larger screen sizes and attachable keyboards, they will become for all intents and purposes the laptops of the future.

So don’t throw out that laptop just yet and give some serious thought to your individual needs before spending a lot more money for one of the latest and greatest professional tablets.