Why you should buy a desktop PC

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[00:00:09] **James Rowe:** Think a desktop computer is a huge box in the corner of your room. Think again. Your next one could change the way you work from home forever.

[00:00:21] **James Rowe:** Hello, it's James here with another episode of Witch Shorts, featuring another great piece of journalism from one of our magazines. This week I found a piece that was written by Ian Evanton in the October November issue of witch tech, which explored the pros and cons of non portable PCs, plus the specs and software that really matter.

[00:00:43] **James Rowe:** Here's Ian's piece, adapted for the podcast this week. Read by Rob Lily Jones.

[00:00:55] **Rob Lilley-Jones:** When you picture a desktop pc, your mind may wander back to the beige boxes and huge CRT monitors of the nineties. All the simple gray towers attached to a screen mouse and keyboard that used to cover many identical office desks. But as we advance through the 21st century, the truth is quite different.

[00:01:16] **Rob Lilley-Jones:** When we say desktop pc, what we really mean is one that doesn't have a battery in it. So basically a computer that needs to be connected to a power socket to function. Desktop PCs can be big or small, and they might have built in screens or keyboards attached wirelessly. Or with a cable, they can be budget machines bought off the shelf, or completely custom home built configurations that rival supercomputers in processing power.

[00:01:43] **Rob Lilley-Jones:** The only thing to know is they're not as easily portable. It's strange in some ways that the desktop PC is still a thing given how convenient laptops have become. Portable, computers are small, efficient, and come with everything you need already attached. You can pick one up reasonably cheaply if you're prepared to make a few compromises on things like graphics processing or screen size.

[00:02:05] **Rob Lilley-Jones:** However, the desktop PC still exists because it allows you to sidestep these compromises. You won't find a 34 inch ultra wide screen on a laptop, and you can't take one apart to upgrade it either. You certainly won't be able to fit it with a cooling system, which tackles the heat that cutting edge PC parts can generate.

[00:02:24] **Rob Lilley-Jones:** This is partly why the desktop PC is still with us, but the other reason is cost. Budget desktops can be made quickly and cheaply, and as a result can be picked up the less cash than you'd pay for a laptop. You'll still need a mouse keyboard and monitor to go with it, but you'll probably already have most of these items.

[00:02:44] **Rob Lilley-Jones:** And if you want something to use on a desk rather than on your lap, it can make a lot of sense. In terms of models, a desktop computer doesn't have to be a Windows pc, although they make up the vast majority of the models on offer. If you like the Mac operating system, then the 599 pound mini or 1,299 pound iMac are the ones to look at for home use, depending on whether or not you want to supply your own monitor.

[00:03:10] **Rob Lilley-Jones:** Additionally, the 2099 pound Mac Studio is more powerful and built for high-end video editing or other such creative work. And the Mac Pro, starting from 7,199 pounds is as its name and price suggests strictly for professionals. Windows 11 desktops come in two flavors home and pro. The home version is by far the most common and will be absolutely fine for most uses, and the pro version only comes into its own.

[00:03:38] **Rob Lilley-Jones:** If you want to run virtual machines using Microsoft's Hyper V security features such as BitLocker Drive encrypt. Or IT management tools such as remote desktop and group policies for home use, you won't need any of these. There are also chrome boxes, which were essentially mini PCs with Google's lightweight chrome OS installed.

[00:03:59] **Rob Lilley-Jones:** This doesn't require advanced specs, so a chrome box can be a cost effective way to buy desktop pc. And you can pick one up for less than 200 pounds, as long as you are happy with the limitations of a system that runs everything in a web browser. Your desktop PC can also connect to peripherals and monitors, but only if it has enough ports.

[00:04:18] **Rob Lilley-Jones:** Although one HDMI port is standard to quickly hook it up to a single screen, it's better to have two. Adding a second monitor can revolutionize the way you work, as you can switch between apps by turning your head rather than having to minimize tabs that are in the way. Saving both time and stress any more screens might not be worth it.

[00:04:38] **Rob Lilley-Jones:** Although Sir Terry prt actually had a six monitor set up, which he said he used six because he didn't have the room for eight. Thunderbolt and some USBC ports can be used as video outputs to a screen. Although this reduces the number of other peripherals you can attach many things that were once. The domain of expansion cards that go inside the PC are now available as external boxes that connect via USB.

[00:05:03] **Rob Lilley-Jones:** These include video capture cards and even sound cards for better quality audio outputs. A Thunderbolt doc can also be a useful thing to have on a desktop PC as it can turn a single port into many others, such as USBA ports and SD card readers. If you're into gaming, seriously advanced video editing or 3D applications, you are going to need a desktop tower pc, which has slots inside where you can plug extra boards.

[00:05:30] **Rob Lilley-Jones:** So you can add new features or upgrade existing ones. The classic use for this is to plug a powerful GPU or graphics card into the top PCIE slots, which is usually the fastest. You can also use these extra slots for video capture cards, extra storage, or networking capabilities. Although most desktop PCs already come with ethernet ports and wifi.

[00:05:53] **Rob Lilley-Jones:** And you could add them via USB instead. You can even add thunderbolt ports this way if your PC doesn't have them, or extra USB ports if you need them. Other slots on the motherboard allow the addition of more RAM or storage. This is one of the big advantages of buying a desktop system as you can customize its capabilities to suit your needs, bickers parts slot together easily.

[00:06:15] **Rob Lilley-Jones:** You can do all of these things yourself, and usually you only need a screwdriver. This should give you a good idea of the specs you need and look to the websites of major PC brands such as Acer, Dell, hp, and Lenovo. As you'll get more options than standard tech retailers to configure your desktop exactly as you want it.

[00:06:34] **Rob Lilley-Jones:** We also have links to recommended models and where to buy them@witch.co uk slash desktop dash PCs.

[00:06:55] **James Rowe:** That brings to an end another podcast from which there's loads more for you to read about everything we discuss today. Just head to the episode description for more useful everyday advice. There you'll also find an exclusive offer for podcast listeners like you to become a witch member for 50% off the usual price, giving you access to our product reviews, our app, one-to-one, personalized buying advice, and every issue of which magazine across the air.

[00:07:17] **James Rowe:** Plus your membership helps us to make life simpler, fairer, and safer for everyone. If you'd like to know when we release a new episode, then make sure you press subscribe wherever you're listening. That way you can be one of the first to listen. And for any questions, comments, or anything in between, follow us on social media at which UK or email us Podcast, at which do co uk goodbye.