



SUGGESTED COMPUTER SPECIFICATIONS

Purchasing a new computer

- These are the minimum computer specifications that RKS recommends. If your budget permits, you should exceed the listed specifications.
- Check the web site of all software you use to obtain their individual requirements.
- *Memory* in your computer is the working space. The more memory you have the easier it will be for your computer to work. Get as much as your budget allows.
- The *Processor* is the computer's engine. You need a powerful machine to handle the data that is generated by business or practice software.
- The *Hard Drive* is the storage area where the data is kept. Don't confuse it with *Memory*.

Microsoft Windows Vista

- Most new computers come with the Microsoft Vista operating system, although you may be able to find a computer manufacturer who still offers the XP operating system.
- If you are buying a Vista machine, be sure the operating system is **Vista Business** or **Ultimate**. Most business software requires the Business version.
- Check with the software manufacturers of ALL the programs you use to be sure it Vista compatible.
- If you plan to continue to use your current printers and other equipment, make sure they will work with the Vista operating system.

Where to buy your new computer

Your computer will be used in your business or practice, so you should find a computer source that will provide:

- good quality equipment that is dependable.
- be around when you need service.
- prompt service when there is a problem.
- on-site service to help protect the confidential information that is on your computer.

Computer

- Intel Dual Core, Pentium or AMD Athalon - 1.5 Ghz or higher *Processor*, minimum. No 64 bit processors.

- **(No Celeron or Atom** since they do not have a math co-processor to handle the accounting math functions separately; the computer must stop what it is doing to compute the math. This makes it slow.
- minimum 1 GB RAM *Memory* for a single computer, more would be better. For 3 or more computers client/server network, 2 GB RAM on the server and 1 GB on each of the stations. More memory is better.
- 160 GB Hard Drive or larger
- 1024 x 768 hi color display on monitor
- 40X CD drive for:
 1. installing software and/or view training CD's. could also be a DVD reader
 2. making (burning) CD's for backups etc. Can be a CD or a DVD burner.
- 56K Modem (This is becoming optional, but if you ever need to use a dial-up connection for credit card processing, internet, etc., you will need one.)
- 100 - 1000 network card in each computer (if you plan to connect more than one computers)
- Method of backing up data — cd burner, zip drive, tape backup, flash drive
- 3½" floppy drive (this is now considered optional, but we recommend it should be included. Some programs may still be on floppy disks, you may want to copy a small file, or you may have history on floppies.)

Operating System

Windows XP Professional, Windows 2003 SBS Server, Windows Vista Business or Ultimate.

Printer

You will need a laser or inkjet printer and printer cable to print reports. If you use a dot matrix printer for invoices, checks or other forms, make sure it will work with the new computer.

Hardware also needed:

- Battery power backup to prevent data loss in case of power failure on each computer. This provides power with AVR (Automatic Voltage Regulation) for a short period of time until you can shut down the system properly. Do not confuse this with a way to back up your data files.

- Surge protector for each computer. Surge protectors do wear out, so plan on replacing them sometime in the future.
- If you plan to network two or more computers together, you will need cables, network switch and network cards for each computer. We do not recommend a wireless network for business machines.

Virus Protection

Be sure to have your computer come with a virus program, or plan to purchase one.

Plan to:

- run the virus scan program on your computer at least daily.
- go on-line and download any new virus protections "definitions" each day.
- pay an annual renewal subscription fee to the virus program manufacturer so you can continue to obtain the current virus protection "definitions".

Software

You will probably need a word processing program to write letters, address envelopes etc. and a spreadsheet program. Microsoft Office, Word Perfect Office or Lotus Smart Suite provide a suite of programs that can be used in your office.