

## **SOFTWARE**

**Q: I'm trying to plan my budget for this year. Can you tell me the cost of the software bundles?**

**A:** Due to the volume of licenses that VT purchases each year, the cost for software from the University is far less than what you can find on the open market. It is highly recommended that you purchase all required software directly from VT as opposed to other sources. Costs are *estimated* as follows:

**Undergraduates: Microsoft Campus Agreement Software Bundle + Pamplin Business Software Bundle**

Freshmen and transfer students: \$103 + \$52 = \$155 (+tax)

**MBA student bundle:** \$85 (+tax)

**MACIS student bundle:** \$45 (+tax)

**Q: When will software bundles be available?**

**A:** The Microsoft Campus Agreement Software Bundle will be available during summer orientation. The Pamplin specific bundle will be available a few days before the fall semester starts.

**Q: I purchased a new PC that came preloaded with Microsoft Office. Do I still need to purchase the bundles?**

**A:** Incoming freshman and transfer students ARE REQUIRED to purchase both software bundles mentioned in the requirements (and above). MBA/MACIS students are also required to purchase the appropriate program specific bundle. There is no exception process. Students will be billed for bundles even if they do not pick up the software. This is a requirement by the University which plays into our attractive licensing costs. Keep in mind that the bundle price includes upgrades, so if you purchased a machine with Office 2007 early in 2010 (or in 2009), then you will get Office 2010 with you bundle.

**Q: I have Windows 7 Home Premium. Can I use that?**

**A:** In order for the machine to work best at VT, you need to run Windows 7 Pro, Enterprise, or Ultimate. However, you can purchase a machine with Windows 7 Home and then upgrade once you get to VT to Windows 7 Enterprise. Note that any data stored on the machine between purchase of the machine and the install of the Pro version would need to be moved/backed up, as Windows 7 Enterprise prefers a clean install.

**Q: I'm confused by the Apple/Mac information. Are they really supported?**

**A:** Apple computers can work in our environment, however, many programs which students ARE REQUIRED to run for certain classes only run on Windows. These include but are not limited to Visual Studio, MS Project, MS Access, MS Dynamics, Visio, and Hawkes Statistics. If you want to go with a Mac, you should also install Windows on the machine; if you deem this extra complexity is worth the benefits of the Apple machine, then certainly you are welcome to go with one.

## **HARDWARE**

**Q: I already own a Mac. Can I use this?**

**A:** As noted in the requirements, all Pamplin students are required to have a machine that can run Windows 7. Intel-based Macs can run Windows. Therefore in order to use a Mac, the student will need to purchase and install a program such as Bootcamp or Parallels. Some software used in the various Pamplin programs is only designed for Windows, hence the requirement.

**Q: I'm not sure which PC model to purchase. Will Pamplin recommend a specific manufacturer and model for me?**

**A:** Pamplin will not dictate, nor recommend specific models or manufacturers. Machines from Dell, HP, Lenovo, Acer, Toshiba, and others can be used without issue. If you do not know how to match the specifications given to a specific model, it is suggested that you take the specifications to the VT bookstore or a local store of your choosing and discuss with knowledgeable staff there. The specifications are detailed enough that knowledgeable sales associates should be able to assist you. Remember, the specifications are minimums, chosen to be in the pricing "sweet spot" as of March of this year; it would not hurt to exceed such requirements in your purchase, depending upon your budget.

**Q: Can you be more specific about the wireless requirements? I have a Wireless "G" network at home and want the laptop to work at my house and at VT.**

**A:** Wireless cards currently purchased with PCs generally can choose which wireless standard is in place and navigate automatically. VT runs "Wireless G" currently and will likely upgrade to "N" at some point. Your best bet is to purchase a machine with a built-in wireless device which supports "a/b/g/n". This provides for maximum flexibility. However, if your card does not support "n" it is usable and will be usable for years to come. The main difference in the various standards is speed, not interoperability.

While all classrooms at VT are wireless-ready, some dorms are not; therefore, bringing a 25-foot Ethernet cable to campus is also a good idea.

**Q: I see the requirement to purchase both a 250 GB internal hard drive and a 500 GB external hard drive. Can I simply purchase one internal large drive?**

**A:** The reason for the external drive requirement is twofold. First, it allows students to backup data. Secondly, it allow for easy transfer of data from machine to machine amongst classmates. Having one large internal drive does not accomplish the same thing. Two drives are therefore required. This is not a requirement simply to have 750 GB of space.

**Q: Should we purchase a computer from the VT bookstore OR are direct vendor purchases preferable?**

**A:** Many parents and students prefer purchasing from the bookstore for support reasons. This is a good reason to consider purchasing from VT. However, all other vendors also provide support options with machines and you should purchase a 3-year warranty (per the requirements) regardless of your source. These warranties generally provide phone and/or internet support, plus parts replacement via mail as necessary. You should consider your individual budget and PC skills of the incoming student when making this decision.

**Q: Is a printer really required?**

**A:** This is a convenience; printer costs have come down so far these days that a very capable printer can be purchased for less than \$100. While there is a computer lab in Pamplin that allows students to print using money from his/her Hokie passport, purchasing a printer will make things much more convenient.

**Q: We just got a new PC this year for our son or daughter which does not meet your specifications, do we now need to buy yet another one?**

**A:** Strictly speaking, the answer is no. Any machine purchased during the last 1-2 years, which can run Windows 7, should be adequate. But adequate is not necessarily where you want to be. The specifications set forth are the college's best guess as to what sort of machine can see the student through 4 years of college. If you go with an older, pre-owned machine, chances are very high that it will need to be replaced before the 4 years are up. In any case, Pamplin makes no guarantee that any machine purchased in 2010 will still be usable four or five years down the road. The student should be comfortable that the machine he/she brings to campus is a good machine that can be relied upon to get work done in a reasonably expedient manner.