From time to time we will have a section here called the *"Glitch Corner"* to help our customers with various topics geared around computers.

This month's topic is **Things don't last forever.** With the economic downturn, I have found myself working on equipment that really should have been replaced years ago. We often have to keep in mind that gentle balance of what a repair will cost verses the cost to replace the equipment. With this being said: How long should this stuff last?

Desktop PC's: Plan on 3-4 years. The unit may work fine but Speed and memory requirements double every year. The operating systems change and updates stop and applications, updates all require more processing power. XP is 4 operating systems old.

Laptops: Plan on 2-3 years. Yes this is even shorter, due to a few more factors. Batteries need to be replaced after 2 years (just like a car). The cost of the battery may be more than the laptop is worth. Keyboards start showing wear or missing keys, screen hinges start getting loose or maybe cracked. Rubber feet on the bottom get knocked off and the units heat up more possibly causing the hard drive to crash. Power jack is loose.

Servers: Plan on 5-10 years. If you are constantly moving to new versions of software then the numbers may be lower. If everything is pretty much static, there is not much reason to change. Server software features and data space are the biggest reasons to change out a server.

Routers: Plan on 4-5 years. The wireless industry has made some big advancements in the last couple years in the terms of speed and security. If you have a flaky router that is disrupting your business, by all means replace it, just like you would a toaster that burns the toast. It's an appliance. You may be happily surprised with the speed and new features of some of the new models.

Printers: If they are inkjet, you may want to look as often as changing the ink. I have purchased many new printers as cheap as the cost of the ink on low end printers. Most printers are not worth working on. Higher end laser printers can last 10 years or more and due to the cost they are worth working on.

Monitors: I would replace them with the PC's. Maybe keep the old for a spare, but when packaged with a PC, they are cheaper than getting one after the fact. They are not cost effective to repair in most cases.

If all of this seems like too much of a bother, bring it in and we can do it for you. All this at very reasonable pricing.

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