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OPEN OFFICE VS. MICROSOFT OFFICE:

Once upon a time we used a pencil or pen to compose and keep track of documents and accounts and then came the typewriter and now the computer. Most of this was free in the past but just like cable television and cell phones, we pay for most everything we enjoy. In 1999 Sun Microsystems purchased an open (free) software called StarOffice which they renamed OpenOffice. It has gone through numerous upgrades over the years and is still FREE! This software includes a word processor, a spreadsheet, a graphics editor, a slideshow presentation and a database that is similar to Microsoft Office. It is compatible with both PC and MAC. The OpenOffice document can be converted to a Word document or saved as a PDF for use with other applications. I must say that I truly prefer Microsoft's product because of all its capabilities. It is amazing what they can do. It is not cheap to own this suite so naturally free is preferred. Simply go to openoffice.org and road test this simple suite of applications by accessing their download. If you don't need more than what this can offer then by all means use it. Take me back to free television and radio. Wait...I want cable and my cell phone. I also paid for Microsoft Office Suite. Aren't we a spoiled generation? The choice is yours as always.

E-BOOKS:

Do you have a Kindle, Sony, or Nook to read your books electronically? Here we go again, paying to read. You can also read a book on your smart cell phone and computer including pads. Amazon will provide the free application to download and then offer you either free or discounted reading material. You can choose from thousands of titles. How about thousands of books from our wonderful public library? That's right; you can download a software called overdrive through ToledoLibrary.org. Follow some simple instructions to download an e-book and copy it to your device of choice. Now I cannot imagine sitting here reading a book but I have managed to get a couple of free ones loaded on my smart phone in case I find time to read them. I love being a techie and discovering all this new stuff almost every day. I am so happy that I can share this with you too. I have set a couple of these readers up lately. How cool is this? I know...you like the look and feel of a paper book. I do too but I also like options like a clock over a sundial. Mashed, fried or baked potatoes. The choice is always yours. If you own one of the items above, check into a free or paid book to have for those times you wish you could access a favorite.

REPAIR OR REPLACE?

Let me put it this way. If your computer is over 4 years old, you will probably need to add memory to keep it running smooth at a cost of approximately \$75-\$150 (parts and labor). Pretty much no matter how much you spent on that new machine, if you use the internet and any modern software, you will only get about 5 years of good service out of your PC. At some point you simple should not spend any more money on updating your computer. Back up all your files externally so when that day comes you can make an easy transition. End of continual speech.

I MAKE HOUSE CALLS:

I will come to your home or office to help you with almost any predicament including REPAIRS and upgrades. I have an endless amount of patience and knowledge. I offer a 20% discount on my hourly rate for those aged 60 and over. Give me a call at 419-318-9112. References are always available upon request. Don't forget to sign up for my FREE NEWSLETTER at OhComputerTraining.com. Subscribers will get added hints, tips and exciting new web-links.

Janis Weber, B.A., owner of Ohio Computer Training, is a professional computer instructor at UT, Lourdes, and MCCC. E-mail any specific questions or comments to jwpctutor@gmail.com or contact her for assistance at 419-318-9112. Public classes are listed on her website: www.OhComputerTraining.com.
Private tutoring and repairs are a just phone call away.