Computing Purchasing Guidelines

Computer Purchase & Inventory Information
(Information Resources Use and Security Policy - Section 19.6)

All units are required to have their local IT Systems Custodian(s) participate in processing (e.g., inventory, standards verification, configuration) of all IT procurements (e.g., network-capable computing devices and large dollar or high risk software). This includes but is not limited to any university owned devices that have the ability to store university data or use the university wired or wireless networks. Examples of these types of computing devices include but are not limited to: laptops, desktop computers, servers, network-attached storage devices, and tablet devices.

Per policy, the ECE Information Technology Office and your assigned Procurement Officer are required to approve and/or be made aware of ALL computer-related purchases prior to finalizing your purchase. This includes ALL methods of Procurement (ProCard, UT Market, Amazon Business accounts, Purchase Orders). This ensures all compute devices are Business/Enterprise models, meet university compliance (regardless of Operating System), and is approved for the university networks (wired & wireless).

Computing equipment purchased that does not meet university standards or compliance must go through an exception process with the campus Information Security Office and ECE-IT Office. Without approval, these devices may not be placed into production and may need to be returned or will not be placed on the UT network (wired and/or wireless).

For assistance with system configurations or quotes, please email help@ece.utexas.edu with your desired options. ECE-IT will coordinate with various vendors to leverage higher-education pricing, warranty options, and ensure your system meets the minimum hardware standards.

The University currently has agreements with Dell, Lenovo, SHI, CDW-G, B&H Photo/Video/Audio, and others.

Click here for a list of recommended computing devices that meet University compliance.

Encryption Requirements

All UT-Austin computing equipment such as desktops, laptops, servers, and storage devices are required to be encrypted in accordance to University policy. Therefore, each purchase should be vetted through the Information Technology to ensure encryption compliance can be met.

A supported operating system is required for all UT device to reside on the university’s network (wired and wireless).

A minimum of a three year extended hardware warranty is required for all computing devices. If it’s a mobile device, then Accidental Coverage (drops/spills) is highly recommended.

Network Capable Devices

These type of computing devices can range from a variety of hardware connected to the UT wired (physical wall port) or wireless network.

Examples of such devices include:

- Network Attached Storages (NAS) devices (e.g., Synology DiskStations, Qnap)
- Programmable microcontroller development boards (e.g., ZedBoard)
- Consumer-based network switches, hubs, routers, wireless-access points (e.g., D-Link, Linksys, Netgear devices) These should never be purchased and/or placed on the network without approval from IT (Network Operations Manual)
- Embedded systems used for complex/specialized applications and prototyping (e.g., National Instruments cRIO-9082)

Although some of these devices are necessary for academic or research purposes, ECE-IT must be informed of all acquired equipment, especially if it will reside on the UT network.