



Episode 4: IT for Apparel Decorating Businesses

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TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to custom apparels startups podcast; your best source for information, news, tips and tricks to get you off the ground running and earn success with your custom apparel decorating business. So get ready to soak up some knowledge, now here are your hosts Mark and Mark

Mark S: Hey everyone welcome back to custom apparels startups podcasts, my name is Mark Stephenson.

Marc V: And I'm Marc Vila and today we are here with small business IT talk part one.

Mark S: And now we've actually like named this podcast about four different things including IT small business stuff or talk with J., weekend talk with J. is what we may end up calling it just so you know. Today we have with us our in-house IT guru J. Sayers; J. is the guy that keeps the 4700 websites from all the ColDesi and Colman and Company related businesses up and running, so we thought he would be a good person to bring in and talk about all the issues with getting online like E-mail and website hosting and especially one of our hot buttons here internally is machine requirements for when you purchase apparel decorating equipment; that could be the DTG printers the embroidery machines or the brush...

Marc V: Yeah cutters, anything like that all that stuff that has certain requirements so we'd love J. to kinda touch on what are we looking for with a new computer and that end of it and like you said just general business, So, I've thought of a business and I've got a name for my business or whatever I think I am pretty close to the name for my business, what should be my first step?

Mark S: J.?

1. SayersBuy your domain name, okay there are domain name registrars all over the place there are services that actually purchase the domain name from the real companies that actually produce them for you it costs somewhere in the neighborhood of 12 bucks a year to get a domain name you keep it for the year, you can redo it after that, you can buy it for longer, so if you are close to having a name for your business -go buy the domain name first so that somebody else doesn't already buy it.

Mark S: And where do you fall into the whole .com, .net, .marketing, .pickle kind of arrangement now that you can get for domain names.

1. SayersGenerally once you pick one, so you pick 'Mycompany.com' the registrar that you go to is going to offer you several other ones. I don't usually buy em .net .org they all each have specific

purposes, but unless your domain name is already been taken, I don't see the point in really getting most of them.

Mark S: Okay, and when you say registrar.

1. Sayers So there are companies that you have seen ads for all over the place that sell domain names cheap, go-daddy's a big one, namespace, ramespace, namesheep, hostgator and now as of last week Google.

Mark S: Okay so that's great so, most of the places that sell domain names also do hosting as well, is that right?

1. Sayers Almost universally I think Google might be the only exception to that.

Marc V: And my thought on domain names is everybody assumes .com so and it's just a natural thing that everybody assumes .com as emails end in that often, so if you are going to buy something but your primary business is going to be .net just realize that a portion of people are just going to put in .com

Mark S: Right!

Marc V: You know or the .com may even rate higher on Google if somebody searches for your business name, so I have a hard time wanting to buy a domain that is only available in .net unless it's really, really...

Mark S: Yeah the only time that I would object to that is if, I mean obviously all of you out there that are listening to this and if you don't have a business name yet and you wanna name your business as abc embroidery or A-Z T-shirt printing or something obvious like that you're probably not going to get the .com, okay so that only time I would recommend going to a .net or you know a whatever the latest and after DOT .biz is, is if you have a name of a business or a domain name that you really want and you really think is going to for a specific reason or if you've got one that's 57 letters long like Colman and Company.

Marc V: (Laughs) yeah.

1. Sayers Keep in mind too that when you buy a domain name so you bought your company .com you don't have to worry about the .net necessarily but if you need some other domain name for that so you have store@mycompany.com you can also create and call em wildcards, so www.yourcompany.com is an example of a wildcard but so is store.yourcompany.com and you can do that for free with the domain name that you've already bought.

Mark S: Oh that's cool, so for making like landing pages or the shopping cart for your website.

1. Sayers Absolutely.

Marc V: Yeah, yeah, that and I think a greater thing what I've always done is sit at the computer with a domain name and domain registrar while you are thinking of your business name so have Google up or Bing up and domain registrar up and search both before you file with the state to make sure that your business name for one isn't already taken by somebody down the road from you and also that it's also not associated with something that you wouldn't want your customers to Google search and find.

Mark S: So, there's two good points there first of all I really like the interface at godaddy just to see if the domain is available coz they'll make all the suggestions and alternative suggestions for one that's

available, but this has nothing to do with your actual business name, just wanna point out to everybody that you can go on to any service and get a domain name for your website but that doesn't mean that you've established a legal business in that name or vice and versa, if you go to... here in Florida I think it is sunshinebiz.

Marc V: Sunbiz.org

Mark S: Sunbiz.org and you can look up the business name and you can register it, that does not mean that the domain name is available those are two completely different things.

Marc V: Yeah so you really wanna have in Florida I wanna have a 3up you that specifically for I would have sunbiz and Google and the domain registrar before I pick my business name just by that whatever it is your state, that's a good idea to just ping, get's everything covered.

1. SayersKeep in mind too that your domain name isn't just going to be the website that your customers go to ideally it's also where they'll email you so if they had a question they can email info@yourcompany.com.

Mark S: Right.

1. SayersThat's something you wanna have associated with your actual business ideally.

Mark S: That's a good point especially if you are going for a more corporate clientele so in other words if you are going to approach IBM in Atlanta, they're not really going to take you as seriously if you have an AOL email address or if it's at hotmail.com so it should be your domain.

Marc V: So, then what they have to setup a web site and pay somebody to do a ton of this stuff to get @theirbusinessname.com that costs a lot of money, right.

1. SayersNot necessarily it depends on how you're doing it, every registrar is going to offer you some kind of email package with them or you could use your existing domain name on a service like Gmail from Google. You can get free, if its five per email addresses through Gmail using your domain name, so you'll go to gmail.com you'll login with info@yourcompany.com and be using Gmail's interface and have people email you @yourcompany.com you can get more addresses than that, you can link them together however you need to run your email you can do it that way, you can do that through basically any of the providers.

Mark S: And I have a confession, I probably have 7 email addresses that I run out of my Gmail account exactly like that they all have business domain names, some of them Jason upped for me they're attached to ColDesi.com which is our main domain or colmanandcompany.com and I am running them all out of my Gmail account on my Smartphone.

Marc V: Yeah and that was bit of a loaded question ofcourse because that's really the impression is that, I just have a Yahoo.com because I don't have a website, I don't have an IT person to keep it all up and if you use a big name hosting or not even hosing... domain registrar and email provider they'll basically will set it all up for you for almost nothing.

Mark S: Right, absolutely... so for instance if you need to get office software to get your business up and running, so you need copies of work in excel all of these companies also offer office 365 service which

is email using your domain name and then all of that office software on multiple computers and your phone and online as well all of these things all packaged together, so you don't have to run any of it you make one time.

Marc V: So you can get word and excel and PowerPoint... all of that stuff and your email all kind of connected.

1. SayersConnected on your phone, on your desktop, laptop, on a webpage that you can go to and be able to edit documents and read them or whatever as well, so, all of these things are available and it's every registrar has some kind of service like that available for you.

Mark S: Because all they are really doing is they are hooking into available services from Microsoft or Google or somebody like that.

Marc V: And just reselling them.

Mark S: Right!

1. SayersThey're pretty cheap, if you are only going for a year you are probably looking at something like 5 dollars a month to do that and that's just absolutely worth it to not have to show an @yahoo.com email address.

Mark S: Yeah that's great and also let's keep in mind that we are talking about discreet things, so we are talking about the domain registration which is different than the domain hosting we are talking about the domain name which is different than your business name, coz its easy if you are not like in this world and doing this thing you know all the time to get confused by...

Marc V: At the end we can do a little definition wrap-up.

Mark S: Right, that's good.

Marc V: At just the very end it is simple to say these are all the things we spoke of and just as a reminder and why just a minute at the end.

Mark S: And while we are talking about hosting ive really gotta tell my horror story because there is more than one, what happens is i will never recommend you host your website with some guy you know, okay ? there are a lot of small website creators and service providers and consultants or guys that work from their house or their garage or something along those lines, they may be very talented and very Conscientious but when you host your website with these folks that means that they are controlling where your website is located whether it is up or down or if you haveany issues and its a nightmare if they get sick, we've got a related company that spends about 1500 dollars getting a nice website created by an independant contractor and they thought he was hosting it at a common hosting service like godaddy or hostgator or one of those but it turns out he wasn't he was hosting it in his house and the downside is that he basically fell off the face of the earth and now they have to go through all kinds of contourtions to get their website downloaded and uploaded on to a new hosting service.

Marc V: Yeah and you could actually, you could literally lose your entire website and if you spend if you had it custom programmed and you had some shopping carts done by you could just buy that person, if that person if their house catches on fire and everything goes down your website would disappear.

Mark S: Right!

Marc V: Right?

1. SayersAbsolutely it is common for these guys to work like that while they are developing the website before they make it publically accessible or they are just making something which you can see that's normal to see but its something that you want to make an agreement with them on when you finish they'll move hosting to whichever provider you'll chose and also its good to get an offline copy, so just a CD with all the stuff.

Mark S: Yeah that's a good idea, yeah that's a good idea.

1. SayersThey'll change overtime and your offline copy won't be worth it to you a year from now but at least in the meantime if anything goes wrong you'll have that.

Mark S: Yeah and maybe if they have setup a hosting account for you, you wanna make sure that you have password access to it. And i have a big question for you J. because you mentioned CDs now I haven't actually got one of those in my hands in about 3 years.

1. SayersCds is a casual term meaning floppy disks, CDs.

Mark S: Okay floppy disks.

1. SayersFlash drives... whatever.

Mark S: You'd have to buy a stack of floppy disks to hold that.

1. Sayers(Laughs)

Marc V: So, so essentially whenever they get a... whoever makes their website, however they make it they should ask for an offline copy, something that they can have in their possession or whether if it's on their computer.

1. SayersIt's always good to have one but the most important thing is to make sure that they will then move the site to whatever hosting provider you have chosen.

Mark S: Right, that makes sense.

Marc V: And I think do some internet research J was mentioning before this about not endorsing anyone specific but go online and do some research on the hosting provider, do they provide support? you know some of them provide 24/7 support, you can just call up and say "I'm getting another domain name because we're opening up a second store somewhere else, I wanna have a individual domain but I wanna go to that same website" he'll just do it for you if you have one with support and you might pay a little bit more for that and you would from the cheapest service out there but you'd get...

Mark S: Yeah so by the way if you don't know what mark was referring to, what you can do is let's say you end up with a long domain name that is commonly misspelled like 'colman&company.com' but you want

a really short URL to use in advertisements or to use in print ads or in your email signature or something like that so you might go out and buy CC.com

Marc V: Yeah we have C&Cdeals.com and ColmanC.com

Mark S: Right so you can use those and when people type that in or click on it, it will just go on to your main website. That's what you're talking about.

Marc V: Yeah or really just anything that you don't know how to do whether it's renewing it every year or all those things if you have a company that that provides customer service.

Mark S: I agree I actually use it all the time as a matter of fact the 24/7 thing is also a good idea, because I know a lot of you that are listening to is now you work full time at a regular job and you come home afterwards at 7oclock at night and you're doing embroidery work or printing t-shirts and working on your websites you wanna be able to talk to somebody if there is an issue.

Marc V: So what's next down the list, they got a domain, they've bought some email service and whatever other office things they've connected together what should be next from an IT perspective.

1. SayersI think hosting would be the next thing and it maybe the same provider that you're looking at but it's the kind of hosting that you're going to get that you need to think about, so there are all kinds of options so if your website is going to actually sell things to people then you are going to be looking for some kind of support fromr the website, they have those often top of my head shopify is a service for you where you can actually set up a shopping cart and a store pretty simply without having to do any programming, the important part of this service is that they run the credit card transactions through them so, not through you, all of the PCI complaints and everything like that they are on the hook for, not you, you're not going to become the credit card provider or authorized agent

Mark S: Right that's a good idea. And I know that a few ways I've gotten around that in the past is like developing a site with o-commerce or somebody just getting a PayPal account and I find that pretty easy...

1. SayersActually there are a lot of ways to do that you know square PayPal and all of these different providers that I do accept payments too that's all good stuff. If you are not actually planning on selling stuff online though you just otta be able to advertise your services things like that then you're probably looking for a much simpler website but possible when you have to have is development to build for you too. if that's the case then options that you'll see when you'll look for a place to actually put your website so that people can get to it are you're going to see things called virtual servers or dedicated servers or shared servers they are all essentially the same thing there's basically a website where you can go and you're just going to see different pricing tiers for them 9 times out of 10 any sort of shared hosting is going to be fine for just about anyone all it really has to do is the amount of resources that it uses. So if you are expecting a million visitors a day, a shared host isn't going to do it for you. You're sharing that host with a number of other websites that have nothing to do with yours. A dedicated one will do that job but likely you're not going to need it.

Mark S: But by the way if you are expecting millions of visits a day then please go to ColDesi.com and pick one each of each piece of equipment to purchase coz you're going to be making a lot of t-shirts. So

there is also something that I am looking at one of the hosting providers what is SSL and what is the significance of that.

1. SayersSSL is security its secure socket layer is what it actually stands for it creates a secure connection between the person going to the website and the website itself 9 times out of 10 it's not important for a regular going to find information but if you are doing any kind of transaction on the website its vital in fact its required to have some kind of security and SSL is the main type out there.

Mark S: So if you are just setting up just a basic word press site or you are using the built in website programming software in your web post then you probably don't need SSL because you are just going to have pictures of your stuff up there you want people to call or email you and talk about jobs.

1. SayersFor that you don't require SSL you can have it, there are people who speculate that, that might give you a little bump in your search rankings but not a huge one probably though. So considering the cost of the certificate I probably wouldn't worry about it and that's the way SSL works that you have to buy a certificate from probably your hosting provider that verifies that you are the entity that you said you were.

Marc V: So, so people are going to be inputting any personal information onto the website that's going to be stored on the website pretty much need to have that.

1. SayersEven if it's not being stored on the website YES, but we are talking about secured information too, so if you put up a forum on your website that is put your name and email address and you'll receive more information you don't have to have SSL for that.

Mark S: Okay.

Marc V: Okay, but definitely for the credit card.

1. SayersDefinitely, with the credit card it's absolutely required. The requirements for doing credit card transactions online are steep and complicated and it's just really not something the average person, there are people whose job it is to understand that, so that's a higher job.

Marc V: alright so, that's a good case for like the square, PayPal like you said coz generally those are just some sort of module or piece of program that you plug in that covers all that for you in a way.

1. SayersYeah you are looking for some kind of dedicated payment process, there are tons of them out there but just make sure the term you need to look for is PCI compliance and its done year to year its audited constantly so, just make sure that their PCI compliant...

Mark S: Okay that is Paul Charlie Indigo (PCI) compliance and that is a big deal and honesty if you go for one of the big hosting sites and one of the big software developers for websites they'll walk you through that kind of thing they'll register your domain where you do your hosting they will definitely help you out with that 24/7 tech support phone number that you'd wanna get.

1. SayersThat sounds a bit daunting but it's actually a fairly simple process to get that stuff setup using one of these providers.

Mark S: Yeah it's basically clicking a box and filling in some information.

Marc V: Yeah and actually what I saw on a website once which is ... nobody should ever do this but it was a order forum that you fill out and two of the forms were just type your credit card number here and I could tell that this was literally just a forum that was emailing the information.

Mark S: The credit card, right!

Marc V: So they can process it on their little hand... you know the one that they bought from their local...

Mark S: Right-Right.

Marc V: Yeah that's terribly insecure for your customers and dangerous and you can get in trouble if something goes bad with that.

1. SayersYou could lose the ability to take payments even in your store front because you will have violated the agreement that you made with the credit card company.

Marc V: Right, so taking credit cards online, you need to make sure that you are using a service that does that.

Mark S: So, so what we've talked about so far is we've talked a little bit about finding your domain name, getting it registered, the difference between that and your corporate name, the good idea of having your corporate registration, search for your domain and your company name at the same time that's a good idea and the fact that you can use free office email services or a get it wrapped up with your provider like get a office 365 or Google's version of the same thing which is usually available through hosting as well and you are only going to use a host that has at least some technical support and a 1800 number and not the web guy that you met or anyone you're related to, to host your website on their local computer, just because you never know.

Marc V: And I think just to simplify it and J. tell me if I am right about this one hosting basically means your website is data-up just like you have stuff stored inside your computer, that data is stored on a computer somewhere and that's how people access it, so they type it in so that's physically reading that data off of a computer somewhere and it's not your computer obviously and it needs to be a computer that needs to be ON 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

1. SayersRight uh...

So, quick breakdown of terms, hosting is the place where you put your website its going to be, that's where people's computers will connect to it so that they can actually see it, that host is actually a machine called server and it's called that because it is serving that data out there, so when you get hosting from somebody their giving you some space on their server.

Marc V: Okay, yeah, yeah that makes sense they're giving you a piece of their computer to put all of your website information up.

1. SayersYeah and you usually actually purchasing some amount of that computer's resources so they'll actually tell you what kind of processor and how much memory and how much disk space you are buying.

Mark S: But you don't need to know all that, all you need to know is after your website is up and running if it is really slow every time you open it and it's not your own internet connection then they may need to give you a little bit more space.

Marc V: And usually they'll tell if you start putting pictures on your website you'll get generally speaking you won't be able to put anymore on you'll run out of space just like your computer.

Mark S: Right and, and... I also just wanna establish some like pricing parameters here, how much will it typically cost you to register a domain name for a year.

1. Sayers10-12 bucks.

Mark S: Okay 10-12 bucks, okay is that a monthly fee or that is...

1. SayersNo that's for the year.

Mark S: Okay great! and now hosting I just pulled up a couple of numbers here while we are talking and it used to be that you'd pay between 40 and 80 bucks a month to host a website and now it's a dollar to 12 dollar and I do have a couple of sites that are hosted for a dollar a month, they are not the kind that has 24/7 technical support. But so you know I mean if you are in the 4-10 dollar range.

1. SayersYeah you're probably just going to be fine in there, even if you end up somewhere in the 20 dollar range that probably has some further services added to...

Marc V: Because the SSL it costs more...right?

1. SayersThings like that and tying it in with all of these other services we are talking about if they are all looked together you are expected to see as much as 20 buck a month but probably never more than that.

Mark S: Okay, that's awesome, does anybody have anything else to say here about the email and such coz I really like to talk about system requirements for running...

Marc V: Sure I only have one thing to say about it is that all of these things I think are if you are not going to have a website that's fine, you don't have to have a website, we talked about that in the last podcast, we talked about social marketing.

Mark S: Yeah.

Marc V: But you I think it is number one important that you have to have a domain of some sorts and an email that says @something like your business name, whenever you choose it to be because from a marketing perspective and a sales perspective is a huge trust factor, they trust @this is the business name @ business name .com or .net a lot more than you trust @AOL.com it feels less professional and I think it is important for the long term of your business, so we just start that right away.

Mark S: Ug... aa Agreed! Wait I gotta say this it goes twice as much for those of you out there who have cute personal e-mail addresses like hotgrandma@aol.com or like bigsteevethehunter@...

Marc V: You just destroyed all of this...

Mark S: I did I did.

Marc V: Someone's going to email them now...

Mark S: They are... then you'll learn about spam filters, but I just want to make sure especially that if you even like today right now if you are starting a business and you are starting to send our emails to see if anybody cares or might be interested that you are starting a business if your E-mail address is something cute or unique that has nothing to with business but has to do with a hobby or something about you; baldguy101 you know things like that, don't use those E-mail addresses, just call somebody on the phone before you do that, because that's going to be the impression that people are left with is .. and that's why Marc's point about you know having your corporate domain name is a big deal because Marc@colman&company.com is a lot better than you know marc_sci-figeek@gmail.com.

Marc V: Yeah, Yeah absolutely.

Mark S: Which by the way, you really need to change that pers....

Marc V: (Laughing)

1. SayersAlong the same lines you should also actually take a good look at your domain name before you purchase it, make sure it doesn't spell anything...

Mark S: OH Right! When the letters are all together right!

Marc V: Some people's initials plus the name of their business turn out to be terrible, terrible.

Mark S: Yeah I know what you're thinking I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING OF! don't say it out loud I know exactly what you're thinking of (all laughing) Okay enough of that let's talk about machine requirements and I wanna ask you about two different thing because there are two things here,

1. What kind of computer do I need to run my business?

&

2. What kind of machine do I need to run my equipment? And that is sometimes the same, frequently the same thing but may or may not be; I'll let you talk to them.
3. SayersWell as far as what kind of machine you need to run your business, I guess it starts with Windows VS. Mac and at that point it doesn't really matter I guess at that point you do have some benefit of keeping all of your computers alike and that can be limiting because for your machine software you are running windows you knowcan we say in that matter. Let's just stop right there for a second I wanna say that one more time, so if you are looking to get into business and you are a graphic artist or video editor creative person you are used to work and you've just spent 4000\$ on a beautiful Macintosh you know the latest machine with all the accessories and you are really pumped about making t-shirts, you're going to need a PC, you have to.

Marc V: No matter what no matter what brand or what type of equipment almost all of them for this industry, there's not enough people buying embroidery digitizing software for them to make it available on every platform, so you're generally just going to find them on windows because most people have a windows computer.

Mark S: And you can use an emulator package if they are good enough because we do have some people that do that but you are all by yourself. I don't support for...

Marc V: And I'm a Mac guy I'll say I we, my computer we have a lot of em at home.

Mark S: We're actually recording this on a laptop that has a lighted fruit on the back, on the cover, so I think that's an Apple...

Marc V: So, so I love these computers and I've used and built a ton of computer stuff since I was a teenager and I like the user interface but the bottom line is if it's for my business I'm still going to own a PC, I'm not going to depend and I know how to use em and I still own a couple of PC's at home just because its just never seamless on any of the emulators or any of the like your parallels or the fusion ware and all that stuff it just never as good, just have in the PC, they're so cheap just get one.

Mark S: So, so for your office, you know for working in your office you can use what you want, right, for working on a apparel decorating equipment.

1. SayersYeah if you are doing accounting and spreadsheets and stuff like that use whatever you're comfortable with it doesn't matter, if you are doing work on machine, even if you are planning on branching out of this industry and going into sign printing or vehicle wraps or little bit further away from apparel decorating, you're still going to be using windows.

Mark S: Right, so.

1. SayersThe good news about that is you can get a whole lot more computers for a whole lot less money.

Mark S: So, let's talk about minimum requirements.

1. SayersSo, minimum requirements are something that you should always aim well above, that's not the get this and you'll be fine level of purchasing for your computer that's the you must have this and if your 8 year old computer happens to have it you'll be okay until you can buy an upgrade.

Mark S: Yeah, good.

1. SayersSpeaking of which your eight year old computer doesnot, should you be starting a business and getting new equipment get a new computer for yourself. Have something dedicated for this process its safer for you, it's easier to get everything setup and you don't have to worry about some piece of software that somebody installed on your machine four years ago causing a conflict that makes one of your USB ports not work.

Mark S: Right and then you just get angry with us. (J.Sayers laughing)

Marc V: I have a question about that, I don't think that we should name specific numbers or anything on what your computer should have, that'll change in months but generally speaking over the years, how much money should they spend on this computer, they spend minimum this, in theory should be fine.

1. SayersOkay, so if you were looking at, let's say a desktop, so and that just means the computer itself not the monitor that comes with the keyboard and mouse, if you spend somewhere in the neighborhood of 6-7 hundred dollars you're going to get a computer that will last you a several years and should be pretty solidly loaded with hardware, you just wanna make sure that you are not getting one that is completely full of software that they are charging you a lot of..

Mark S: Right!

1. SayersIf you haven't heard of a brand of a computer and you can go and play a demo, you don't play a actual demo on it look on there and if you see a bunch of software installed on the machine in the store that you've never heard of that's probably not the computer that you really want, there's not much free software that comes preinstalled on a machine that is useful to you anyway..

Mark S: So, so what you're talking about is 6 to 7 hundred dollars and that is not a magic number because you can spend a lot more, what you are really looking for is all the software that we use all of the Sierra products like stitch era liberty for embroidery digitizing or hotfix for rhinestones and everything that you are going to use for DTG printing which includes c-6 the reps software and probably going to wanna load CorelDraw or Photoshop on there they all love two things and that is they love RAM, so my basic philosophy is that no-one has ever installed too much ram into a computer, it has never happened; RAM is happiness, the more you have the happier you'll be and the other one is the graphics card because it is the speed of display..

1. SayersYeah, so Graphics in this industry, graphics cards in this industry are interesting some of the software takes really heavy advantage of graphics cards and others don't, so if you are going to get into Sierra software for embroidery and rhinestone machines and things like that then you want a good solid heavy duty graphics card in there, there are two major players out there in graphics cards, Nvidia and ATI, if the machine doesn't comes with one of those cards installed it's a pretty easy add-on you can get it installed for you at the computer store where you bought it or you can do it yourself, it's really not a tough job to do and you can get a good graphics card for somewhere in the neighborhood of 75 to a 100 bucks.

Mark S: Okay, so let's go with that person that you know they've only ever used their computer for E-mail

1. SayersRight.

Mark S: So, do you have an opinion like VS. Onboard graphics like the really thin computers that don't have a separate graphics card it's just built into the system itself.

1. SayersThat's what happens with the laptops primarily is that you can't add a graphics card till they are built into the motherboard and on some fancy desktops like the all in one cases, well if that's the case you've bought a computer that you can't add a graphics card to, well then you have a computer can and a graphics card, that's all there is to it; Doesn't mean you can't run the software but you could get more speed out of it if you're running something better, for this kind of stuff I'd recommend a desktop computer, for one thing its more configurable you can add or remove things; as things

change down the line also it can come with component dyes, you're not completely down, so if your graphics card happens to die, like if somebody tripped down the cord and ripped the plug out of it, you can just go get the new one.

Mark S: Okay so and I wanna do a little disclaimer here, because we are talking about computer stuff and I just wanna say it's not our fault, so if you for example, we get this a lot is someone will look at these system requirements that we recommended at the minimum standards they'll go out and buy a computer and most of the time it's because it comes with all the preloaded software applications that the J. mentioned a moment ago but they'll try to sierra software and it will stop all the time or they'll load Photoshop on it and it reboots automatically, we are not a computer maintenance and support company, our organization is devoted to the apparel decorating business we have a lot of knowledge that's come from that but we don't fix computers, so we're going to make the best recommendations that we can and you're going to make the best purchase that you can, it may not always work out it may have conflicts.

1. SayersWell I don't think we've ever run into this situation where we couldn't get somebody's software to run at some level but there have been situations where somebody's computer ran it so poorly that they went out and bought a new one anyway, I don't think that's ever happened with a new computer though, I can't imagine that would, as far as requirements for machines and which you otta go get though you can't name specifics because they do change too often, there are some general ranges that you can look at so, there are only two major players for computer processors, that's AMD and there's Intel, they both make good processors its fine you can get either one, you'll talk to people who have ideas about which one works better but honestly don't waste your time with that get a good one, the one you can afford.

Mark S: Yeah, they are amazing you know, really, really doesn't matter.

1. SayersSo don't get a bottom line one, get one that's at least in the middle of the road for now a days and get one with as many cores as you can afford,

Mark S: So, what is a core?

1. SayersSo each of these processors has essentially multiple processors wrapped into one chip and each one of those is called a core. So, right now you'll see a lot of dual core or quad core computers or sometimes even more than that, I wouldn't say get anything less than a quad core computer right now and next year I might be telling you six or eight, so look in that range though don't look for two, look for more than that.

Mark S: So the maximum amount of ram that you can possible find and maximum amount of cores?

1. SayersCores for your CPU, so interchangeable terms here, so CPU is a processor, so they tell you that you've got a four core processor that's your four core CPU, if they tell you that this machine has X gigs of memory, that's the same things as RAM, RAM and memory is same thing, if they tell you that it has X gigs of hard drive, that's a different thing, that's disk space, that's how much you can actually store on the computer.

Mark S: And honestly the hard drives now are so big you're never going to use it all and if you do, you'll be able to go out and buy external storage or little usb drive or something like that or even free online storage, that I don't even think that's a consideration.

1. SayersIts only a consideration in you wanna make sure that the computer you buy packaged out of the box has a good sized hard drive in it, by good size I mean one terabyte or better, but that's 1TB is how you'll see it.

Mark S: Now, now we're saying this in January of 2015 probably next year there'll be a new terabyte standard.

Marc V: When people listen to this in like 2075,

Mark S: They're going to be laughing.

Marc V: Yeah, They're going to be laughing.

Mark S: I think they'll have it downloaded into their brains coz no-one will be listening to things at that point.

Marc V: I think it is a good idea if you don't know much about computers, if you know about computers everything we just said you just completely understood and you know what to buy, if you don't know a lot about computers I recommend going to a store that will help to configure things ahead of time or a local computer shop that will either build and buy or help you configure it.

1. SayersI was going to recommend that too and I had to tell you something to say when you get in there so if you don't speak the language already this can be daunting, when you tell them that you need a new graphics card they are going to assume that you're playing games on the computer, you can spend hundreds and hundreds of dollars on graphics cards, so just tell them "I need a graphics card that's good for things like Photoshop or that kind of work I don't need to play games with it." That'll save you a ton of money right there, you can tell them I need some storage, I don't need a huge amount, one terabyte it would be good, you can tell them that I want as much memory as you can put in the machine at a reasonable price so you know you don't wanna spend four hundred dollars on memory but you wanna get as much as you can possible afford, and you wanna get a CPU with at least four cores if not better.

Marc V: And the IT guys that you go to talk to, they will all have their own opinions about what you should do, so that's a IT guy thing they know a lot of things that a lot of us don't, so they're going to be happy to share that with you and they're going to tell you that you don't need to buy 84 gigs of RAM at a 1000\$, they're going to say buy 4 gigs.

1. SayersYou'll end up using as much as you buy, so buy more than you think you need so then you'll end up using it.

Marc V: So, the computer folks that you go to...Bring your system requirements with you I think is not a bad idea either, coz some of them won't even have things like good better and best, you know requirements I've seen something like that, if you bring that whoever is going to build the computer is going to know that they should build the computer to those minimum specs, they're going to build it like you said and they'd create at least.

Mark S: Only caviatta I would have about all of this is if you do go to some local shop and have them build the computer for you, that's fine there is a lot of local shops that do that, make sure they give you copies of your system disks all of your drivers, even they might refer to it as an image of the hard drive, so you have something if anything goes catastrophically wrong and you get struck by lightning and everything is zapped where you can restore from scratch and get everything back up and running again.

Marc V: Otherwise you won't have a copy of windows or Microsoft word or anything else that you might have purchased with it, so yeah that's really good, so even if you go to a big box store make sure that they have a service that you can kind of save in. I don't want any of that free bloat software on it, take it off for me. And this is for the folks that don't know how to do it themselves. I think.

1. SayersSo that should cover everything I think as far as your computer goes, but there is one more thing that nobody ever taught you about that you absolutely must do and that's backup. You always hear everybody tells you to backup but nobody ever does it and then their computer breaks or something goes wrong and then they come to me and they say "can you get this back" and I say NO because that's a molten hunk-o-junk now.

Mark S: Just so you know he was staring directly at me when he said that.

Everyone (laughs)

1. SayersIt happens to everybody and it happens all the time, there is lots of ways to backup and there is a lot of free ways to back up even if you don't backup your entire computer... and do backup your entire computer; but you should find some way of storing important documents, you know if you lose your accounting spreadsheet that you can do in excel that could be seriously detrimental to your business. So there are free online storage things where you can at least put a copy of a file where its offline and safe for you...

Mark S: Fairly say yeah so, I mean for example I keep all of my personal and professional documents in my drop box so that I can access them from my phone or from any computer.

1. SayersAnd I know mark he uses Google drive and a lot for the same things I use both of those and our service called box as well so those are all good things they are not all technically back up they are other copies, you really do need actual backup. Now the good news about that is that you don't have to buy software for it anymore. You can and you can get greater levels of backup but windows backup works really well and if you are on windows 7 or above, windows backup is going to do enough of the job for you that you can recover files when you need them. It won't recover your programs though, so don't throw away your serial number or allthat kind of stuff. But you gotta put it someplace you can't put it on the same computer that you are backing up coz if something happens it goes down. Easiest thing to do is to get a NAS drive (Network Attached Storage) it's a hard drive that connects up to your computer network, plugs right into the back of your router or your modem from your ISP and then your computer can access it across the network, you don't have to do a whole lot of configuring you can see it it'll act as a hard drive for you and you can save anything to it, spend about 160-200 bucks one time on this thing and it should give you good redundant backup.

Mark S: So, let's reduce that down to the guy or the woman that's in their bedroom with an embroidery machine and the new computer they just bought, so are you talking about like an external hard drive they can plug into the usb port?

1. SayersYou could do an external hard drive which is plugged into the usb port as well, the reason I don't like those is just because there is every chance that you won't go plug that usb port into your computer and do a backup. Whereas if you use windows backup you can schedule and it can do it automatically to this they call it my network appliance or network enhanced storage, so it just sits there on your network all the time and its ON windows will automatically connect to it, backup your data and boom you're safe.

Mark S: So there's now something that they can talk about if they got Verizon fios or Time Warner or Comcast.

1. SayersFor all of these internet service providers that are there, they aren't too many of them that don't give you something with more than one plug in the back that you can plug...

Mark S: Okay right... yea, yea, yea.

Marc V: And this will work on MAC too, so even if you have that PC but you still use your MAC per say your Photoshop or other things you... that has time machine is what they call it just like windows and they both do the same thing and sometimes if you wanna make connect to the same one you can even do that but that's more complex id situation but you could still do that.

1. SayersYou can done this down as much as you want to and just click start on windows backup, time machine or you can make it as complicated as you want to and be able to restore one file from 3pm, 3 weeks ago.

Marc V: Yeah and I agree a 100% at my house huge on everything being backed up and my entire family always makes sure that we are backing everything up. Things that are really, really important I have them all, I've got box I've got drop box I've got icloud through Apple and if you have Amazon prime which a lot of folks listen to probably have it statistically, they provide a free drive with a few gigs on it and you can just drop a file there and this is just really important that if anything blew up, I can access this one file at one place that is really important to me and you can then keep multiple copies at multiple places and the one that you can access from mobile are particularly nice if its information that you needed grab on the go.

1. SayersAnd that's great if you got a working computer but if your house just got flooded what you run out of backup is the quickest you can get back up and running is still, okay so it's good to have these cloud services because you can get to a file but if you don't have a copy of Photoshop installed on some running machine then you know you're out of luck, so backup isn't so much about saving your data it's more about how quickly you can get your data useful again.

Marc V: That's actually awesome point, that's really good because you can access if it's a particular file that you just wanted to keep a backup copy of that's significantly different than your business being down.

1. Sayers Right for me I came into this industry as somebody who did on demand t-shirt printing and I would have customers call me up and say "Hey, I need to come by at 3 o'clock and I can pick up for the design" Okay, great I already got the design and I just bring it up print 2-3 shirts take the money when they get there but if your computer is down how long is it going to be before you can say "Yes I can have those shirts for you".

Mark S: Yeah that's a really good point.

Marc V: Yeah that's particularly good, so I think that we've covered the basis of what we said we would cover today and we kinda gone through some of the definitions. Once I guess a wrap up though of what we've said so far and what's the most important thing that you've spoke about today.

1. Sayers Backup is the most important thing.

Mark S: Even if you haven't done anything yet, that's where you start.

Marc V: So when you buy the computer you should also think about it for a second, at the same time when you are buying a computer you should probably buy a backup drive as well.

1. Sayers Yeah absolutely and in fact the store that I often go to has these from the next isle over to the desktops all these NAS drives.

Marc V: Okay so then just ask, say "I need to backup disk" and they'll make sure you get the right size.

Mark S: Great, okay well thanks J. the IT guru for sharing your knowledge with us today, I think that does it for this edition of CAS podcast, the name of this episode is the IT Guru speaks about small business computing important things for apparel decorators, I think that's what we're going to call part 1.

Marc V: I'll probably call it something simpler than that when I put it online we'll go with that, I'll let you go with that but we kept on saying this that this is part one because we had discussed before this you can have a whole podcast just on business IT alone, so as our customers ask us things and as you guys go online to CASpodcast.com and ask your questions to us which please do, go on there and ask us some specific things that we'll do our best to answer or at least point you in the direction of where to get the answer. Then we'll do this again and we'll talk about some other things that have to do so, if you have IT requests about what we can talk about next time that would be fantastic too coz we've been going depth on a lot of it, really.

Mark S: Okay!

Marc V: Yeah Great!

Mark S: Yeah thanks for listening to CAS podcast.

Marc V: Thank you.

~MUZIK~

