

Macs more expensive? Not if you consider TCO

Posted by Dennis Sellers ■ Mar 11, 2009 at 2:00am

Recently, [two analysts](#) said that the common perception of Macs as pricey items is indeed true. Richard Shim, an analyst at market research firm IDC, and Ian Lao, an analyst at In-Stat, said that, without significant price cuts, Macs continue to cost between 25 and 40 percent more than PC hardware of equivalent specs, say both Shim and Lao.

The Sellers Research Firm (that's me) disagrees. In my talks with the folks at the [The Enterprise Desktop Alliance \(EDA\)](#)—an organization designed to help IT departments integrate Macs into the corporate environment—show that their studies show that, while the initial cost of buying a Mac may be more than Windows systems, the long-term cost is a different story.

When it comes to Macs, the initial cost of purchase is higher, but the TCO (total cost of ownership) is less. TCO is a financial estimate designed to help consumers and enterprise managers assess direct and indirect costs. It's a form of full cost accounting. When you figure in ease of use, less malware/viruses/spyware/etc. than on Windows, lower IT costs, ease of use, bundled software and more, Macs are, in the long run, a better buy.

In fact, a [2007 report](#) noted that, when it comes to Macs versus PCs, the old adage that Macs are more expensive than PCs just isn't true—unless you're looking at sub-US\$600 systems.

"I have found in my research is that neither side has a lock on good value. If you start with Apple's relatively short list of SKUs (three or four model variations for each of its lines, such as MacBook Pro, MacBook and iMac) and then look for comparable Windows machines, you'll find that Apple bests the competition in some ways and not in others, but the pricing overall is surprisingly on par," Scot Finnie wrote for *Computerworld* regarding the report. "Only a few years ago, it seemed like a no-brainer that Windows hardware was much cheaper. But if you're talking name-brand hardware, that's just no longer the case."

And Macs have come down in price since that article was written. Another interesting piece, though it's a few years old, is a [2006 report](#) by Daniel Day Eran of *Roughly Drafted* in which he concluded that Windows is five times more expensive than the Mac OS. And that was before the Vista fiasco.

The question is, when purchasing technology, do you want to pay now or pay later? Of course, some of us would say that, straight financial considerations aside, when it comes to Windows, you'll pay both now and later.

[Leave a comment](#) ⇒

Please post the article topic & comment in our forums. No registration required.

Advanced Search

Article Information

- [Comment on this Article](#)
- [Print this Article](#)
- [Email this Article](#)
- [Digg This](#)

Contributor



Dennis Sellers

Dennis has been a newspaper editor/reporter (seven years) and teacher (seven years). He has over

10,000 magazine, newspaper and online articles to his credit. He has also covered the Mac and tech industries for over a decade for such online publications as MacCentral, MacMinute and now MacsimumNews.

Recent Articles

- [Booq announces new carrying case for the iPad](#)
- [iPhone/iPod apps for Jan. 29](#)
- ['Macsimum Recommended Reading' for Jan. 29](#)
- [Chinese company claims iPad copies one of its designs](#)
- [Cocoon Innovations announces organizational accessory for the iPad](#)
- [DJ Mixer Professional for Mac 2.0 is released](#)
- [Scosche announces KickBack stand and case for iPad](#)
- [iUseMailUseMac offers FileMailer Pro for free—for 22 hours](#)
- [CoreMelt releases Lock & Load X](#)
- [A short history of, and tribute to, the Apple Newton](#)
- [Macsimum Migration Kit: groupware software for Mac OS X](#)
- [An iPad makes the time for an Apple home server even more opportune](#)
- [iLuv unveils line of iPad accessories](#)
- [UEI redesigning its iPhone apps for the iPad](#)
- [Belkin releases new iPad sleeves](#)
- [Woodwing announces support for the iPad](#)
- ['MacVoices' offers a different perspective on the iPad](#)
- [National Federation of the Blind Commends Apple for including VoiceOver on iPad](#)
- [LaCie offers new enterprise class storage solutions](#)

Ads by Google

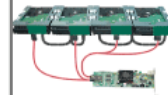
[AAPL: Buy, Sell, or Hold?](#)

The most explosive turnaround in stock market history. Free Report!
www.TheBestNewsletter

[Ask Mac Tech Support Now](#)

18 Tech Support Reps Are Online! Ask a Question, Get an Answer ASAP.
JustAnswer.com/Mac

Pro Cable



- **Affordable Data Protection, Performance & Enhancement for 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 Mac Pros**
- **Freedom and Choice to Use third party Controllers.**
- **Hot Swappable Internal Storage Solution.**
- **Quick & Easy Installation**

