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Subject: Recycle your old PC

Posted by [reborn](#) on Sat, 22 Nov 2008 22:26:53 GMT

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I feel like a massive ramble, so here goes...

This year for christmas I'm having a really large family event, we decided that as some people have just bought houses, flats, are temping etc etc and money for some people is an issue, that secret santa would be a great way of making sure people don't have to spend allot of money, but yet every gets a present and it's half decent because they're spending there budget on one gift.

I'm getting my brother-in-law's gift and I wanted to make it a good one. The limit for the spend is just 40 pound sterling, so I came a bit stuck for ideas.

Then it hit me... Ouch that hurt

He's been saying for a few months now that he wants a PC or a laptop, something to access the internet at home (he recently moved in with his girlfriend and is missing the essentials).

Now I know you can't just get a new PC for 40 pounds, but I had two old PC's lying around and wondered if I could make something for 40 pounds.

After canabilising the two old computers and rummaging through my crate of old PC perhiperals containing everything from an iomega zipdisk drive to a pentium 2 CPU and heatsink (actually they wasn't separate back then, just kinda moulded into one) I salvaged the best parts for a rig and came up with the following:

160GB Maxtor SATA Hard Drive

AMD 2800xp CPU

Two lot's of OCZ's PC 3700 Dual CH Platinum Edition 3-3-2-8 RAM, giving it a healthy 1 Gig

A DVD re-writable drive and a DVD read drive, thought I might aswell add both

Radeon 9600XT 256mb Graphics card

Antec 480 watt PSU

ABIT KV7-V Mother board

And some old CPU fan I forgot about that looks like a jumbo jet engine

Not bad really considering it was just lying around. The only problem was the cases. Both cases looked like crap, I had an Antec (I think) see through clear acrylic case, but with dirty stains all over it and it just looked rough, and the other one, well.. That was never going to work, I remember using it a few years ago and the side to it had broken. I used a desktop fan to blow air into it at the time because it was hotter then Satan's nut sack. I'm quite happy though, it had all the parts I needed to started making it, albeit with no case. Although that did me a favour really, I could stuff together this modest PC and sling it inside a nice new case, making it look fantastically shiny and glimmering, blowing my whole 40 pound budget on the case.

I assembled it all, deciding to use the acrylic case for the time being, just to have something to work with. I got a bunch of software ready for it, including windows XP, Microsoft office, photoshop and some other bits and pieces I thought he might like (these pieces of software didn't count towards budget, read into that what you will, but hey... I'm on a mission here). I even had

renegade ready thinking if I installed it for him I make make a fan out of him!

I flicked the switch, actually that's a lie, there was no switch, I had to touch the pin of the motherboard with a screwdriver to start it up (don't try that at home kids), and decided instead of changing the boot order to stick XP on, I'd let it fire up and see what I had on the drive. I was a little optimistic because too much hard ware change and windows normally gets nasty on you, but it booted up fine. This was more due to it being a Linux OS rather than a windows one, and I had a breif 10 minutes looking at some old files and smiling with an air of reminisance about me. I was concerned though that during the boot there was some flickering and stuff on the screen...

I opened the DVD drive and popped in the windows XP disk, restarted and changed the boot order to read the DVD drive first.

It got to the set-up part and all was going fine, until it just turned off. I was dissapointed, but thought I'd try again.. It failed again and I was sad that it didn't even get to the part where you choose which partition you install to.

After allot of messing around and switching parts for about two hours I found the culprit. It was the graphics card. I was pretty annoyed, while he isn't a gamer, and would most likely only use it to surf the net and play perhaps a bit of championship manager on it, I though the card would be nice as I played renegade on it for a few months with no problem at all.

So now you're up-to-date, my dilema is I can only spend 40 pound on this project, and I have to get an AGP graphics card that doesn't suck, and a case. While I could just buy whatever, no one would really know, It's now become a bit of a challenge to me.

If anyone has a link to AGP graphics cars that are reasonably priced, and around the same spec as the radeon 9600XT 256mb, I would appreciate it. The same goes for a black PC case, I did want one with a clear side so you could see the jumbo jet engine cooler in it, and some old fans that have colored lights inside them, but I don't think i can get that on my budget now.

Also, if anyone has a decent AGP graphics card and would like to let me take it off your hands, I will happily trade for it.

Whilst I'm sure you wouldn't be interested in the old technology of lomega zip drives and other junk in my crate (which annoyingly enough contains graphics cards, just bloody old matrox ones) I do have something that might perk interest.

I found two hard ware key loggers in there, one is a ps2, and the other is a USB. They both work, I've just checked them and I remember that the ps2 one stores 2mb, and the USB one stores 4mb. This may seem small, but it's actually enough to store like a years worth of key strokes, or something like that.

I looked on ebay and the USB version is for sale at 40 pound plus p&p.

Alternatively you could just give it to me

This may seem like a strange thread, but I know you all share a love of computers with me, and I want to beat this challenge.

I encourage others to try have a go at making a PC from old parts yourself. Even if you don't give it to someone else, you could have a nice linux firewall, or perhaps have a go at networking them. If nothing else, you'll get a feeling of naustalga. Please share your experiance if you've had any...