



# Notebook In Your Bag, Monitor On Your Desk

## Introduction: Laptops are Here to Stay

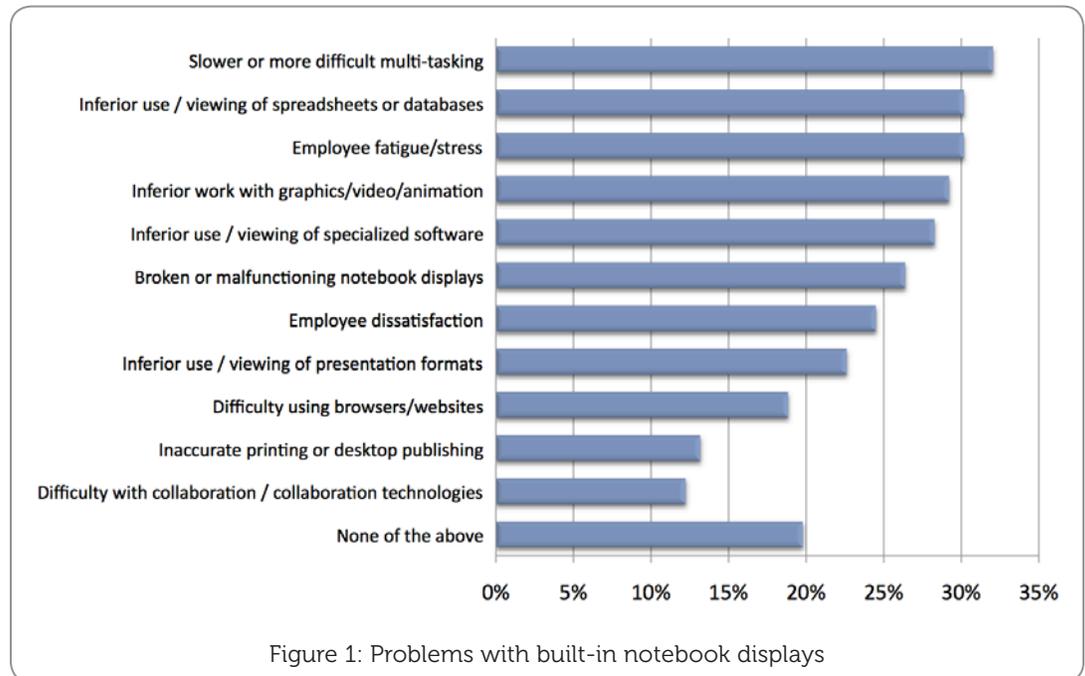
At the end of 2008, analyst firms and news outlets broke the story that laptop sales had eclipsed those of desktop computers during the holiday sales season. Businesses quickly discovered laptops are just as powerful as their deskbound counterparts, and that they enable employees to take their work anywhere, so the trend away from desktops and toward portable devices began in earnest.

Laptops have since shrunk in size and grown in portability. The so-called ultraportable category of notebooks maxes out around three pounds, though most weigh less than two pounds. Further, 12- and 13-inch-screen notebooks lost ground to eight- and nine-inch netbooks in 2009—even among business users. Sales of netbooks doubled from 2008 to 2009, but were supplanted somewhat by tablets (which also have smaller screens) in 2010, according to *The Wall Street Journal*.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the rise in popularity of netbooks and tablets, business users are sticking with traditional laptops. *The Wall Street Journal* article cites research firm Gartner, which expects a 26 percent increase in laptop sales this year. It also quotes Staples CEO Ronald Sargent as saying, “For business use, you are still going to need a laptop.”

In March 2010, IDC reported that shipments of portable PCs—which include tablets, netbooks, and traditional laptops—rose 18.4 percent year-over-year from 2008 to 2009, and predicted that portable PCs will remain the primary growth driver across consumer and commercial PC segments, reaching a 70 percent share of PCs by 2012.<sup>2</sup>

It’s clear that laptops are the form factor of choice for today’s knowledge workers, and that the overwhelming trend has been toward thinner and smaller devices. The problem is, this creates a trade-off between mobile computing and desktop use in the office. The smaller and lighter the device—and the smaller its screen—the less conducive it is to long workdays, multitasking, and group collaboration.



1 *The Wall Street Journal*, “Laptop Sales Sapped by Tablet Frenzy,” October 5, 2010  
<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB30001424052748704789404575523800740263636.html>

2 IDC Worldwide Quarterly PC Tracker, March 2010  
<http://www.idc.com/getdoc.jsp?containerId=prUS22247710>



In this tech brief, we'll learn about the benefits of combining laptops with flat-panel monitors on the desktop, and discuss the results of a recent Ziff Davis Enterprise (ZDE) survey on the subject.

### Laptop + Monitor

A knowledge worker's laptop provides a full-featured computing environment wherever he or she may be. But when the worker is in the office, a larger desktop monitor—in conjunction with the laptop—delivers the best and most productive experience. Consider the disparity: In contrast to a 13- or even 15-inch screen, desktop monitors provide more screen real estate for multitasking and viewing multiple documents side-by-side. Desktop monitors are also designed to reduce eyestrain and are more adjustable, for better user comfort, which leads to greater user satisfaction.

In an October 2010 Ziff Davis Enterprise (ZDE) survey conducted on behalf of Dell, 106 IT decision makers (split evenly between companies with 99 or fewer employees and companies with 100+) were polled about their notebook and display purchases. When asked about problems or difficulties their workers had with built-in laptop displays, only 20 percent chose "none of the above." In other words, 80 percent had some problem (see Figure 1).

The most-cited problems include difficulty in multitasking, problems with viewing and working on spreadsheets, and worker fatigue. When you're using a laptop as the primary display, there's simply too little screen real estate to support the viewing needs of a full workday's tasks. Adjusting window sizes for maximum comfort and viewing space is severely curtailed. Editing documents side-by-side is near-impossible, and using graphics and design applications that require accurate color and high resolution is also a challenge. And if you want to collaborate with colleagues, crowding three or four people around a small display is a perfect way to reduce engagement and interest.

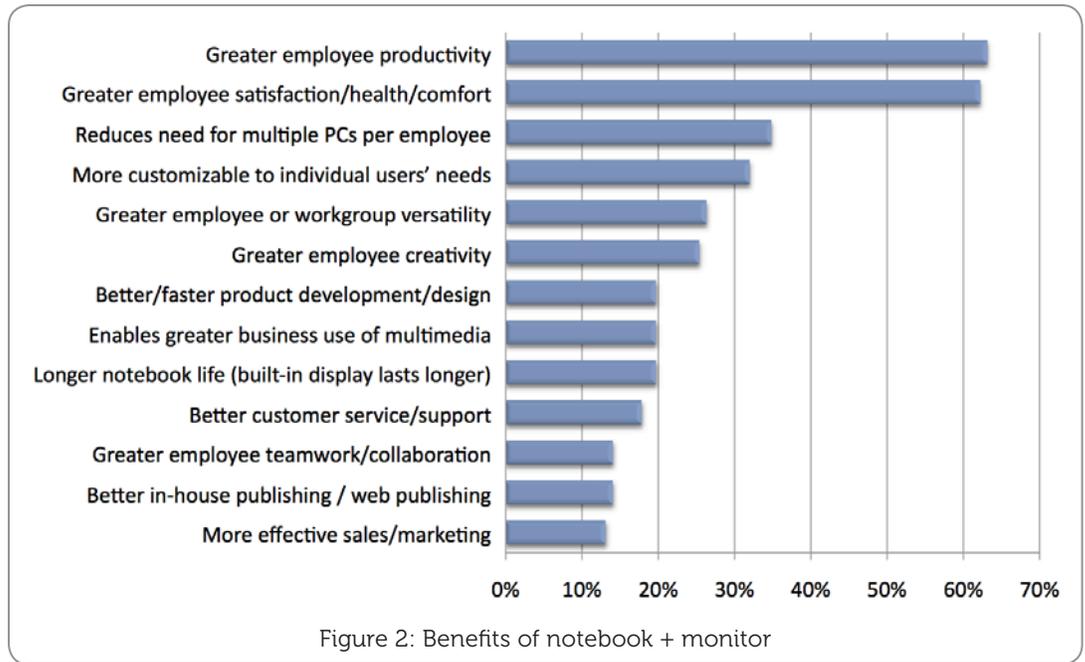


Figure 2: Benefits of notebook + monitor

Marrying a laptop with a desktop monitor, on the other hand, can eliminate all these concerns and increase productivity.

In fact, when asked which factors are driving demand for notebook/monitor setups, nearly 40 percent of ZDE survey respondents cited the advantages of having two screens, and the same percentage stated that built-in laptop displays aren't adequate for their business needs. Interestingly, 35 percent indicated that their employees are asking for external monitors, which is a strong indicator that workers will be more productive and more satisfied with a desktop monitor they can use in conjunction with or instead of their laptop screen.

Using a desktop monitor also frees the company to invest in smaller and lighter notebooks. Knowledge workers would certainly be happier carrying a 13-inch thin-and-light model and docking it with a 21-inch display in the office than carrying a thicker, heavier, 15-inch laptop.

Another important benefit of using laptops in conjunction with desktop monitors is the extension of the laptop lifecycle. Typically, the 'first thing to go' on a laptop that is nearing the end of its warranty period is the display backlight. Failures of this component can require an expensive repair or replacement of the LCD, which increases cost of ownership and may even lead to retiring of the unit. When the majority of the display work is



offloaded to a desktop monitor, however, the laptop's backlight is used less and its useful life is extended.

At present, around a quarter of the respondents reported that half or more of their workforce is already equipped with laptops and desktop monitors, and another quarter reported that 30 percent or more of their workers are so equipped.

When asked about the advantages of having an external monitor connected to a laptop, respondents cited productivity and employee satisfaction/comfort as the overwhelming winners (see Figure 2). Several years ago, John Peddie Research conducted an extensive survey of companies that use multiple displays, and found that productivity gains can reach from an average of 30 percent up to 42 percent.<sup>3</sup> Think about how one-third more work—or work accomplished in two-thirds the time—could impact your company's bottom line.

Based on these results, it's clear that providing knowledge workers with laptops and external monitors delivers the optimal mobile and office computing experience.

### **Dell Laptops, Dell Monitors**

When you're ready to make the move toward higher productivity and employee satisfaction, Dell has the notebook computers and external monitors that you'll need.

Dell's latest generation of flat-panel monitors is designed for optimal image sharpness, clarity, and user comfort. Dell's UltraSharp™ monitors feature IPS glass technology that allows for wider viewing angles, so collaborative groups can view the display comfortably from any point in front of or next to the screen, and colors display accurately, without shifting as the angle changes.

Most of Dell's display models are EPEAT-certified and Energy Star-rated for efficient power usage and conformity with green initiatives. Dell offers a broad array of monitors at various price and performance levels, which makes it easy

for companies to find the right equipment to meet the needs of their users.

The Dell Professional monitor series includes features such as adjustable height, panel pivot, tilt, and swivel to increase viewing comfort, plus comprehensive VGA and DVI connectivity for integration with a wide range of computing devices.

Dell's UltraSharp™ monitor series takes monitor performance to an even higher level, delivering superlative color accuracy for design projects, wide and consistent viewing angles thanks to IPS glass technology, and fast response time for video editing. Its connectivity options include 2x-DVI, Display Port, HDMI, CS, and CN in select models, and four high-speed USB 2.0 ports for peripherals.

When your laptops and monitors are furnished by the same vendor, there is one point of contact for all purchase and support issues. The hardware components are designed to work together from the start, and all of Dell's monitors are backed by a comprehensive warranty and a service organization that is second to none.

Dell's service and support are world-renowned for speed and efficiency. Dell delivers your order exactly as specified and handles customer concerns promptly. Dell also remediates any hardware problems quickly, which minimizes downtime and lost productivity. Dell's experts are available to expedite setup and integration of new monitors as well.

To maximize employee productivity and satisfaction, companies should equip their knowledge workers with laptops and external monitors. Dell has the right technology, at the right price, to ensure that a notebook/desktop monitor rollout is seamless and worry-free.



**To learn more about Dell's newest flat-panel monitors, visit: [www.Dell.com/monitors](http://www.Dell.com/monitors)**

<sup>3</sup> John Peddie Research, "The Multiple Display Market and Consumer Attitudes," April 2006  
<http://www.jonpeddie.com/special/MultDisp.shtml>