M2 – Recommend suitable hardware and software upgrade

As technology is expanding, more and more upgrades in hardware and software are being made. The first recommendation that I will be recommending is upgraded software of the Microsoft windows operating system. **Windows 8.1** is the brand new upgrade that has been around for a short while now, completely improving windows 8, bringing in new features, a faster and user friendly software that will please every user. With windows 8.1, it gives users access to better personalisation, allowing users the chance to personalise their home screens with difference choices of themes, backgrounds, allowing users to choose which type of text they wish to use and how large icons are on the home screen. One thing is that it comes with a totally upgraded new interface which is easy to learn and adapt to. It comes with more applications, loads to choose from to enjoy and download. It is compatible with a lot of old and new hardware and software, and when protected with an antivirus, it is protected well. As it is an updated version of the operating software and has new features for example touchscreen; users can use touchscreen to interact more with their computer/laptop as it is more user-friendly. When using touchscreen you can use the touchscreen keyboard to type or just simply use the touchscreen for other applications or how you would normally use a mouse.
Therefore I recommend upgrading to Windows 8.1 as it is able to be used by all ages, it is user friendly, and is an overall good operating system that will benefit a user for anything they wish to use it for.

Another recommendation is upgrading browsers. Instead of using Internet Explorer, there are so much better and faster, user friendly browsers available for example **Google Chrome**. Google Chrome is a web browser that has been created to meet every user’s needs. It is speedy, user friendly, and has a simple interface that users can get used to if they are new to the browser. As Google Chrome is a speedy web browser, it loads up web pages fast, and downloads web content quickly too. It also runs plug-ins and extensions pretty fast, ready to be accessed by the user. The fact that it has a simple design, and is fast to use, people in the youth centre would find this web browser really liable and also reliable to use. It also doesn’t take long to install, so getting the web browser up and running will be a quick and easy process.

A good software recommendation would be to upgrade **email software** for older members in the youth centre to use, for example upgrading from Microsoft Outlook 2010 to 2013. By upgrading this would bring in newer features, for example it is easy to view and reply to emails that you receive, it has a new interface which is simple and easy to get around, it includes new themes to choose from, and even has a weather bar to view the weather forecast. One main improvement is that it has improved performance which is the best benefit for users whilst using this program. Therefore I would recommend the newer version of Outlook for older users in the youth centre.

Hardware that I am firstly recommending is the use of an **optical mouse**. If the youth centre has been using older versions of computer mice such as a mechanical mouse that contains the rubber ball inside, then it is best recommended that they upgrade to a newer and more reliable mouse such as an optical mouse. The main difference between the two is that the optical mouse lasts a lot longer than the mechanical mouse. Mechanical mice contain a rubber ball that will eventually wear out, meaning that they would need to be replaced in the future, whereas the optical mouse uses a laser which tracks movement, it responds faster and as mentioned is more reliable and lasts longer.

Another upgrade that could be made is upgrading the **keyboard**s that are used. For example, I would recommend computers in a youth centre to be using wires keyboards instead of wireless keyboards. Wireless keyboards may be portable, and in some cases beneficial for some particular users, but they need batteries in order to continue to be used, and would also need the USB to be attached to the computer, which could be mistaken for a regular USB and can be unplugged, causing they keyboard not to work, and that USB can get lost. Whereas with wired keyboards they are to be linked up to the computer, they work well and have every single key on the keyboard clearly printed out for users to see and use, they won’t get lost as they aren’t portable and are also unlikely to be stolen, and they usually have a sleek design which means that it s easy to use.

What I could also recommend to the youth centre is to upgrade their **RAM**. By purchasing this piece of hardware and upgrading it from the type they currently have, it would be beneficial as it means that by having larger amount of RAM means that people who come and use the computers will be able to run more applications and programs on the computers. Random-access memory (RAM) is a type of computer storage that allows users to access it randomly. It stores data that are in use. Whenever a program is loaded, it goes through the hard drove into the RAM. The more RAM your computer has, the better. This means that because there is more RAM, data can be easily loaded from the hard drive into the RAM, speeding up your computer. Therefore for example, by upgrading this piece of hardware to a higher amount of RAM storage space, will allow users to enjoy a faster computer system along with better performance all around.

Another piece of hardware I am recommending is to upgrade the youth centre **monitors**. A lot of organisations still use plasma screen monitors, today, the most common use of monitors is LCDs (Liquid Crystal Displays).

They were created in the 1990s and are flat screens with electronic and video display which uses light properties of liquid crystals. They are commonly used today whether in mobile phones, laptops or computers. LCD monitors are thin and are not as heavy as older monitors such as a CRT, they can be expensive from £50 and up. The monitors can be quite big as they are mostly diagonal and these days over 19’’. LCD monitors have a good resolution display which means that they are good quality for displaying images and text. Nowadays as LCD monitors are so popular and provide great quality of graphics, aside from using them as computer monitors, they can also be used for watching TV and displaying DVDs. Compared to monochrome CRTs, the LCD monitors are perfect for displaying graphics as well as watching animations and regular TV on them. The speed of an LCD monitor is quick, although improving its response time improves image quality. Its frame rate is 60 – 75fps and is refreshed at 200 Hz.