



South Puget Sound Chapter of National Association of Independent Fee Appraisers
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President's Message

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This is a story of contrast – The difference between the very best in a service provider and the very worst of a retail business. I will keep this as short as possible because it really is a long, involved story. Last March I decided to add another computer station to my office and buy a machine with swappable and back up hard drives, more memory, more speed, etc. I spoke with a few appraisers, I had read up on recommended systems for our industry, and I felt fairly prepared to have a machine built to my specifications. My husband helped my order this wonderful, state of the art, time saving marvel from a company in Federal Way near the Sea Tac Mall.

Long story short, less than 5 months later, the machine has been returned twice, never to be repaired correctly, has never run correctly, and has crashed twice, has required over 30 hours of time from a consultant, and well over \$250 worth of replacement parts.

The good news is that after the first crash, an excellent computer consultant, DAVID ELLIS of iSYS Consulting, managed to rebuild another hard drive for me and retrieve all of my appraisal files, photos and data from the crashed drive. He upgraded my operating system, and gave me instructions on what to tell the retail store about repairing my machine. Two weeks later, after the retail store SAID that they repaired my machine, it crashed again. By crashed, I mean really - Will not boot up - Blue screen of death. Keep in mind folks, this is a new, expensive system.

Again. David Ellis, computer consultant to the rescue. I phoned him on a Tuesday late morning, almost hysterical. I had lots of reports that needed to be completed and delivered, and all of my systems were down. He was busy, but said he could arrive late afternoon, and he did. And he stayed until 2:00 AM patching my machine together so that I could at least do bare bones report writing and Internet research in the morning.

A few days later, David came back and worked 10 more hours on my system, making it do what it was supposed to do when purchased. After all was said and done. It needed new RAM (again), new

intake fan, new chipset fan, new casings with better fans and heat sinks for the hard drives, and a new power supply. Not to mention the rebuilding of the operating system, and the reinstallation of all of my software, some of it measured by the install and requiring that I buy it again! (The inadequacy of the original parts, and the sub standard components that they used to build my machine did not work. The machine constantly overheated, and would not operate.)

It now works wonderfully. David Ellis charged me a fraction of his normal hourly rate, billing me a lump sum that was about 20% of what I imagined I was going to end up owing him. David works for several real estate appraisers now, and has a fairly good grasp of the needs of our industry. His ethical and fair treatment in my hour of crisis impressed me. I was in a situation where I needed to be operational, no matter what the cost, as I was in jeopardy of losing clients, or at least losing credibility with my clients. (I already told them I had crashed once•” I don’t think most people have much of a tolerance for more than one computer disaster” I know I don’t) David Ellis did not gouge me, and went way above and beyond normal service. For this reason, I am recommending him to all who will listen to me. He is also available for consulting before you purchase a new system! He is not connected with any suppliers of hardware or software, and does not have any hidden agenda for his advice! He can be reached at david@isysconsulting.com. I work very hard, as you all do, to provide good, reliable, ethical service to my clients, I appreciate those same qualities in other service providers, and encourage you to support those businesses that represent your values. David Ellis is one of those businesses.

After the fact I learned that the store where I purchased the machine is known for its inferior parts and sub standard components. After much arguing with them, my husband managed to squeeze a 895 refund for some of the parts we replaced. I will gladly provide their name to anyone who asks me.

As our world and our industry continue to rely more and more on computer technology and the internet, it is wise to have a working relationship with a consultant that you trust.