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Re-Purpose Old Laptops: An Alternative to Recycling Old Computers

Do you have an old PC lying in a pile in the corner...?

I had an old HP Laptop that wasn't being used anymore, it was still in good shape, but could not run the latest versions of Windows. I did not want to recycle, since it was a favorite of mine, and still worked well after 7 years of usage.

But, it would not run Windows anymore. I found an alternative operating system in **CloudReady OS**. It is published by a company named Neverware.com, a small company run by a very young group of whiz-kid programmers. What they have accomplished is pretty amazing: a reliable, working operating system that mimics a Google ChromeBook exactly. **And it will run on computers that are up to 8 years old.**

If you recall, I am a big fan of ChromeBooks in general, especially for education and home use. To recap: a ChromeBook is a low-cost laptop (or desktop) that uses Google's cloud processing power at your fingertips. It gives you basic browsing, documents, spreadsheets, cloud storage, and most importantly email for... free. If you use specialized software such as Quicken, Quickbooks, CAD, or other processor-intensive tasks, a ChromeBook is not for you. But for everyone else... it's just perfect.

So, here's the proposition: if you have an old laptop that you're not using because it's too old, you may have an opportunity to re-use it for basic tasks. Even better, if you have school-age children, you have even more reason to re-use that computer: the kids very likely will have a Google account through their school, and will bring homework that involves lots of time on a computer. In fact, for schools that use Google, most homework assignments are submitted via Google Docs/Google Drive, and not on paper anymore.

The instructions to download and install Neverware's **Cloud Ready OS** are contained on their website at www.neverware.com The process may seem daunting, but it's not. The basic steps are download the program, create a bootable FlashDisk, then install the Cloud Ready OS from the flash disk on your old laptop or desktop. You will need:

- A computer with Google Chrome Browser
- Install the Google "Chrome Recovery" app
- A Flash Disk of 8GB or larger
- An old Laptop or Desktop that you want to re-purpose.

When you have downloaded and created the installer flash disk, you boot up the old laptop with the Flash Disk installer, and install Cloud Ready OS. It takes about 20 minutes start to finish. And when you're finished, you'll have a nice little laptop that can live on a few more years.

-John Becker