**Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Information Technology**

**Unit 1: Information Technology Systems**
**A Digital devices in IT systems**
**A1 Digital devices, their functions and use**

A digital device is a piece of physical equipment that uses digital data.

| Type | Example | Use |
|---|---|---|
| Personal computers | General purpose computing devices like desktops and laptops. | They're relatively small and inexpensive and are commonly used in the workplace for tasks like word processing, desktop publishing, etc. They're used at home for the web, email and gaming. |
| Servers | Web servers, mail servers, file servers and print servers. | They're used to manage access to web pages, email, files & printers. They're similar to personal computers but usually contain more storage, faster processing, greater memory & an active network connection. |
| Mobile devices | Tablets and smartphones. | They are digital devices that are designed to be portable by being compact, light-weight and running on battery power. They're most commonly used for internet access. |
| Entertainment systems | Digital media players, mp3 players & video game consoles. | They are devices that are used purely for the purpose of entertainment, such as watching tv, listening to music & playing games. They usually have good storage & internet connectivity as well as a number of features specific to each device. |
| Navigation systems | In-car satnav | They are devices that use GPS to locate you on a map and plan routes to a chosen destination. It is commonly used as an in-car satnav to plan your route while driving. |
| Multifunctional devices | Multifunctional printers, touchscreens, and force-feedback game controllers. | They are capable of more than one function, such as input and output. They're used for many different reasons, such as touch screens that allow you to input data without a separate keyboard, and force feedback game controllers that let you control the game while receiving vibration as output. |
| Digital cameras | Digital still cameras and digital video | They are used to take photo and video and store it as digital data. This can then be used to share the photos and videos online or to edit them using photo or video editing software. |
| Data capture and collection systems | Barcode scanners, optical mark readers (OMR) and magnetic ink character readers | They input and store data through methods other than direct data entry. They're commonly used in shops at the EPOS till, such as barcode scanners for inputting products. |
| Communication devices and systems | Network interface cards (NIC), wireless dongles and routers. | They move data between two other devices, such as two computers. We use them for networking, including to send and receive data over the internet. |

## Uses of digital devices

| Education & Training | Personal | Social | Retail | Organisational Use | Creative Tasks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Education & Training uses of digital devices include interactive whiteboards, virtual learning environments & online learning websites. This has made education more easily accessible, even from home. | Personal uses of digital devices include entertainment, online shopping and banking & home appliances. This has helped save us lots of time in our personal lives by automating tasks and saving us from having to travel as much. | Social uses of digital devices include social networking sites, instant messaging & VoIP. This has made it much cheaper and easier to keep in touch with our friends and family. | Retail uses of digital devices include EPOS, stock management & online retail websites. This has made buying and selling products much more efficient for both businesses and customers. | Organisational uses of digital devices include administration, video conferencing & design and manufacturing. This has helped save businesses money by reducing staffing numbers and travel requirements. | Creative Task uses of digital devices include 3d graphics, photo/video editing & graphic design. This has made it much quicker and easier to perform common creative tasks. |

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