

President's Column

Truth in Advertising

Author: Andrew Cummins, President, ICON Users Group, MO

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www.iconusersgroup.org

[andrewcummins \(at\) yahoo.com](mailto:andrewcummins@yahoo.com)

I saw in a store PCs being sold which boasted of incredible amounts of system memory for their price, such as 24GB. Looking at the smaller print, that 24GB is 8GB of RAM plus 16GB of "Optane memory." Optane memory is just a small SSD to cache a large HDD. It gives the PC the performance similar to an SSD for not much more than the cost of a cheap HDD. Don't be confused by my jargon, and don't be fooled into thinking Optane is system memory, or RAM. At least Optane memory does what it does well and so shouldn't be avoided.

I'm really excited about LED lights, but if you go out to buy high-powered LED lights, they often are advertised with false wattages, such as 600 watts for something that actually uses 60 watts. Sometimes you can't even find the actual wattage used on the packaging. They want you to think you're getting more light for your money than you're actually getting. At least the power savings of LED lighting versus older technology is incredible, regardless of advertised power.

If you've ever checked with Windows to see how large your PC hard drive is, you've always been presented with a smaller number than the advertised capacity for your hard drive. Hard drive capacities are advertised with redefined terms to make them appear larger. At least it's not a large difference between advertised and actual capacity.

When you look into it, there's an incredible amount of misleading, if not false, advertising. It's not just the tech industry. Go buy a flowerpot and see if it's really the gallon capacity advertised. It's almost certainly smaller. At least pots are often sold by inches in diameter, a less abused measure of pot size.

If you want help finding something to buy, ask at your tech group meeting. I have people often asking more for buying advice. You can read user reviews online for advice. Make your decision on themes you find in comments, not on any one person's review. You can ask the salespeople for advice. Remember, salespeople are trying to sell you something, even if they don't have what's best for you. At least these days, technology is so advanced that you're still getting a great product in spite of dubious advertising.

