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Planning to Upgrade Mom and Dad for the Holidays?

Candoo Tech Says: Ask These Six Questions Before Buying Tech Devices for Older Adults

New York, NY— Do your family virtual visits turn into a virtual comedy routine because the older relatives are technically challenged? Do you spend hours on the phone instructing mom, dad or grandma how to use their computer? Maybe it's time to upgrade their devices and give them the training and tech support to use technology confidently.

“Keeping older adults connected through technology is especially important and beneficial right now. Studies show that seniors who communicated through video chat were half as likely as others to report depressive symptoms and the use of telemedicine by seniors has increased 300% during the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Liz Hamburg, founder and CEO of [Candoo Tech](#), a tech training and support service specifically for older adults. “But older adults face challenges learning and using new technology, especially those with hearing, vision or mobility declines. Before you invest in new tech for them it's a good idea to assess what they will be using it for and what, if any, special features they may need. This will pave the way for a better experience for both the gift recipient and the gift giver.”

Candoo's staff of Tech Concierges are specially trained to work with older adults and to understand a client's capabilities and limitations. Based on their experiences, Hamburg recommends gift-givers answer these six questions before making a purchase:

1. How well does the planned recipient hear and does he or she wear hearing aids?

Nearly two-thirds of adults over age 70 have hearing loss, which can impact their ability to learn and use new technology. Hamburg says devices that can be connected via Bluetooth Technology to hearing aids can significantly enhance the user experience for hearing impaired individuals.

2. Is the recipient visually impaired?

For some individuals with vision problems, just finding the on/off button can be a struggle, not to mention reading text on a screen. There are hardware and software adaptations that can address many vision related disabilities, such as software that dictates or by changing the background contrast on a screen.

3. Does the individual have mobility limitations?

Some individuals may find it difficult to hold a tablet or swipe a screen while others may struggle to press a keyboard or use a mouse. For others with limited mobility, technology can make everyday tasks easier, such as turning off the lights or playing music. There's an array of technology solutions, says Hamburg, to address users' mobility limitations and to help older adults to live safely and more comfortably.

4. What are the recipient's interests and how will the device be used?

There may be a gap between what granddad is doing now on his computer and what he'd like to do if he knew how. Candoo Tech finds many clients feel like they have a new window to the world when they realize they can use a device to access many of the things they were doing in person. From joining chair Yoga classes, art classes, watching operas to playing cards with friends and renting audio or digital books from the library. Hamburg suggests you introduce fun and helpful content and arrange for professional training to teach your family member how to use it.

5. Will the recipient be able to set up the device(s) on their own?

The answer to this is probably, "no," says Hamburg. Three-quarters of Americans age 65 and older say they need others to show them how to set up and use new devices, according to Pew Research. New smart phones, tablets or laptops are not ready to go out of the box. You'll need to make sure that software is updated, passwords established and a backup and password protection are set up. Setting everything up in advance, giving your relative a "cheat sheet" and lessons on how to use their gift can be the keys to success. Candoo Tech offers customized new device set-up that meets the specific physical abilities, interests and desired uses of the recipient.

6. Who is going to train the recipient how to use the devices?

Do you really have the time, patience and expertise to teach your parent or grandparent how to use their new smartphone or tablet? Teaching older adults can test your patience and theirs. Candoo Tech Concierges, in addition to being help desk professionals, are specifically trained by a leading New York City geriatric health institution and cognitive enrichment specialists to work with older adults, including those with disabilities.

"There's no one-size-fits-all when it comes to technology for older adults, but the right technology can open a whole new world for a person," says Hamburg. "We have a 105-year-old client who's learned to take and send photos to his doctor. Others are downloading books and doing Zoom visits with their grandchildren for the first time. They want to learn and they can learn, they just need a little help from our experts."

About Candoo Tech

Candoo Tech provides tech support and training specifically designed for older adults to help them stay safe, independent and connected. Candoo's services are provided remotely, nationwide by U.S. based Tech Concierges who are specially trained to work with older adults. The company was founded by entrepreneur Liz Hamburg in 2019 and has been working with older adults and their families directly as well as with senior living facilities and other organizations. Candoo has seen that with the proper training and support, older adults realize that they "candoo it." Candoo Tech is a proud member of the inaugural class of Techstars Future of Longevity Accelerator in partnership with Pivotal Ventures, an investment and incubation company created by Melinda Gates. For more information go to www.candootech.com .