C10 Introduction to Computers

Business Startup Proposal.

Bill, a close friend of your parents wants to start a business. Your parents refer him to you since you are presently working on a technology related degree. In your first discussion, you discover the following facts:
•    Bill has been a sales representative for a major restaurant supply company for many years.
•    His prior skills are very low tech. He drives from city to city, visiting restaurants and either provides his customers with supplies, or visits new restaurants to try and convince them to purchase supplies from him exclusively. He phones his orders in to the manufacturer, and other than accounting for his expenses while on the road, he does no record keeping.
•    Other than basic email skills and a vague familiarization with Microsoft Word Bill has little or no experience with existing communications technologies or software applications.
•    Bill’s business plan is to start a new restaurant supply business in his home. He wishes to spend more time at home and travel much less than he did in the past. He knows he will sometimes be required to travel to negotiate deals or meet with clients, but he would prefer to be able to do all this at home whenever possible.

1. Bill has already implemented the following actions:
He has found an accountant who has agreed to help him set up his accounting system. (Do not consider any accounting software for this assignment. The accountant will provide that.)
2. He has contacted six different restaurant supply companies and negotiated a fee and commission arrangement that will allow him to represent them and sell their products.
3. He has found local training and certification company that has classes in all the major software packages (Apple OS, Windows 7/8, Word, Excel, etc.), which will allow Bill to start classes immediately.

Although Bill has minimal technical skills, he does know what he wants. As the discussion proceeds, the following items are added to the plan:

* Budget: Bill has funds for the start up, but the budget has some limits. He doesn’t want the fastest, biggest or best, but he will spend what it takes to have equipment that will suit his needs.
* Security: Bill has heard horror stories about computer information being hacked, and he wants your assurance that his business information will be secure, if he follows your suggestions.
* Hardware: Bill knows of no special requirements for hardware, but he does know he will need to store somewhere between two and three terabytes of catalog information from the companies with whom he will be working. He needs to be able to access this info at all times from any location. He has no knowledge or preferences about hardware and says he will go with what you recommend.
* Operating System and Software: Bill feels comfortable with the Windows environment, and prefers not to learn another operating system.
* The Cloud, Wi-Fi, Mobile Computing: Bill has no idea how these technologies tie in to his business, but he does know he needs to be able to do the following from his home office, from his car, or from any remote location: Check his email and compose/send emails at any time, place a supplies order via the Internet to any of his suppliers, be able to answer phone calls, and be able to set up video conferencing phone calls.