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## Saying goodbye to Windows 7 on January 14, 2020

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When Windows 7 came out in 2009, Microsoft made a support commitment of 10 years. *The end of support for Windows 7 will be January 14, 2020.* After that, technical assistance, updates and security patches will no longer be available. Microsoft is pushing for all users to move towards Windows 10.

When Windows XP support was discontinued in 2014, the industry seemed to be surprised as to what the end of life cycle meant. One issue was that almost 60% of the ATM machines in the US were powered by Windows XP. After some discussions between the banking industry and Microsoft, they worked out an arrangement for Microsoft to provide an extended period of support. Other support extensions were worked out with large enterprise level clients. For the general population, nada.

Computerworld estimated (from August 2018) there were still 378 million PCs running Windows 7 worldwide. Microsoft announced that they will have an extended support agreement for sale in the form of a new product called "Windows 7 Extended Security Updates" (ESU), however at this time only Windows 7 Professional and Windows 7 Enterprise users can be covered... and then only if those operating systems were obtained through volume licensing. For the general population (at this point), nada.

### What if I keep using Windows 7?

You can continue to use Windows 7, but once support ends, your PC will become more vulnerable to security risks. Windows will operate but you will stop receiving security and feature updates.

### Can I upgrade to Windows 10?

To take advantage of the latest advances in hardware technology, Microsoft is recommending that you move to a new PC that would have Windows 10 already installed.

As an option, you can upgrade compatible Windows 7 PCs in a couple different ways.

- 1) Purchase a Windows 10 license from Microsoft (Home \$139.00 & Pro \$199.99, per computer)
- 2) Microsoft 365 Business comes with a free upgrade for users with a Windows 7 or 8 Pro license on their device.

### **Why would I not want to upgrade my current computer?**

There have been numerous problems in upgrading to Windows 10 from Windows 7. The base problem is that it's not a seamless endeavor. Windows 10 is quite a different operating system from Windows 7 in architectural foundation and features--- when doing an upgrade, you end up having system files and device drivers from both operating systems that can cause ongoing problems.

NOTE: You can get more information about Windows 10 updates and problems from my article in the recent December/January edition of the Hamilton County Business Magazine.

### **Fresh install of Windows 10**

If you do have a compatible computer, I would suggest (after making multiple backups of your data), that you format your hard drive, install Windows 10 as a fresh operating system--- and then install your software and restore your data.

Here's a list of to-dos when moving to Windows 10 from Windows 7:

- Inventory your software applications to include version numbers. Contact the manufacturer (or research online) if your current software will work under Windows 10. Purchase new software as needed.
- There will be new device drivers required for your computer—to include: main logic board, audio card, video adapter, web camera and wired/wireless network adapters. There will be new device drivers for your printers and scanners too. Contact each manufacturer for the required updated driver. Most can be found online on the manufacturer website.

The most important thing to do whether you upgrade from Windows 7 or do a fresh install of Windows 10, is backup your data onto multiple external hard drives.

### **If I want to buy a new computer, what specs should I look for?**

There are many offerings for new computers from Best Buy (retail class) to purchasing direct from Dell (business class). These are the specs I would suggest for a home business or corporate level computer.

Good:	i5 Intel Processor	8GB Ram	1TB hard-drive
Best:	i7 Intel Processor	16GB Ram+	1TB hard-drive

With regard to warranty: most retail class computers include a one-year *mail-in* warranty and a business class computer will normally have a three-year *next business day onsite warranty*.