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Windows 7 End of Life

Since it came out in the fall of 2009 Windows 7 has been one of Microsoft's best reviewed operating systems for business computers. Even though it was technically replaced in 2012 by Windows 8, that version never really caught on. It wasn't until the summer of 2015 that it had any real competition when Windows 10 was released.

Windows 10 was fairly quick for most tasks and after a few hiccups it became quite stable. The menu interface, while certainly an improvement on Windows 8, was still a little foreign and most businesses still had large investments in Windows 7 machines and preferred a standard user interface. For that reason Windows 7 continued to be a standard for many businesses up until 2019.

Unfortunately, Microsoft has recently announced that they will end active support for Windows 7 on January 14th, 2020. What that means is that there will be no further new security updates occurring beyond that point in time. While this does not render Windows 7 unusable by any means, it does open the door for a degree of targeted hacking should a Windows 7 vulnerability be discovered by those hackers after January 14th. Windows XP went thru the same fate only a few years back, but it is still used in non-internet and Virtual Machine environments to run old software.

With that in mind, many companies have migrated or are considering Windows 10 migration over the next year or so. Larger companies with computer security policies in place have targeted complete conversion to Windows 10 by the end of the year. Now, unlike earlier versions of Windows, Windows 10 has been declared a service and it will be supported for some time to come. Several major updates have occurred over the last few years but the look and feel have remained largely the same with a few cosmetic improvements.

With this announcement and the fact that all new computers come with Windows 10 anyways, it is now our recommendation to convert to Windows 10 over the next year before it becomes an issue.

Can I upgrade from Windows 7?

If your computer currently runs Windows 7 and it has an Intel Core i-Series processor the answer is almost definitely yes, you can upgrade to Windows 10. I have personally upgraded dozens of computers and have only come across one laptop where this was a problem. I should clarify that all of these upgrades were made to machines running Windows 7 Pro. Thus far I have not faced upgrading the lesser Windows 7 Home Edition, but I would hazard a guess that this would work.

With this in mind, companies need to decide whether to upgrade or purchase all new or refurbished computers. Since the cost of memory chips and solid state drives have come down considerably, upgrading is an attractive option.

We normally recommend that most business computers now come with 8gb Ram Memory and a Solid State Drive for best speed and reliability. Typical hardware cost to upgrade to 8gb and a 250gb Solid State Drive would be about $100.00 Choosing to upgrade would depend on the age and relative stability of the computer. Good name brands can often last for 10 or more years and adding an SSD will further increase its reliability.

A good refurbished Dell, with the same memory and SSD for example, would cost $400 or less.

The same level of a new name brand Core i5 machine would typically cost closer to $1000.00

If you don't mind slightly less speed and reliability you can even upgrade your existing Core i-Series computer as is, with no fee for the upgrade. While Microsoft retails Windows 10 Pro for more than $200, it can be obtained as an upgrade for free from the Microsoft Media Creation Tool site.

When you download and run the tool it will ask the question "Do you want to upgrade this computer?" Answer yes and follow the prompts to complete the upgrade. Make sure your computer is backed up just in case something unusual happens. A Windows 10 upgrade can usually be reversed.