

Computer Bytes – November 2019 – Windows 7 to 10

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Hello Friends & Associates -

I hope you are looking forward to and enjoy the upcoming Holiday Season!

I'm revisiting an issue I shared this past spring as time is drawing near. It's repetitive but I believe is justified. As of April 14, 2020 Microsoft will 'discontinue' support of Windows 7 operating system. Again, this does not mean your system will suddenly stop working come that day. What it means is that you can continue to use Windows 7, but once support ends, your PC will become more vulnerable to security risks as you will stop receiving security and feature updates.

For business users, this is significant. All those "windows updates" that can be annoying and unclear also include the security updates. Simply put it's the "fixes and updates" for vulnerabilities in the existing software and/or for holes those hackers out there are continually working to exploit. ALSO – this is critical to business that are required to align with HIPPA notably medical and dental practices. Not to discount home users, you still don't want to deal with the fallout lack of security the Windows updates provide.

I'm giving you a heads-up now so you can start to plan. You have a few options. One, you can continue to use Windows 7. Depending on your use, you might get away with it and not have any issues. It's not the recommended option, but certainly no one can MAKE you upgrade. Even now we have some clients still running Windows XP which was discontinued in April of 2014. Again, not recommended. Secondly, you can 'upgrade' your current system to Windows 10. In most cases, you get the software upgrade at no additional cost. Also, if done properly, you can do it while retaining all your applications and data. The most common issues with upgrading to Windows 10 are generally older printers and older software have some compatibility issues. It's always best to run a compatibility check first so you can be prepared. For those of you with older programs that you simply don't want to replace, there is a feature called "Hyper-V" on the new operating system. When set up properly, you can load an older operating system to do the one function needed there in "virtual mode". That's a bit complicated but just knowing the capability is there can help you breathe easier. Finally, you can buy a new system. Any new one out there at this time in our world will come with Windows 10. This route will give you the 'latest & greatest'. Just remember you'll have to transition your programs and data to the new platform.

Whatever you decide, it's time to start planning. If you go our web page: <http://hocsupport.com/news/> we have a full listing of all the operating systems and expiration information.

This discussion also brings up the side point to run your Windows Updates. Sometimes they can interfere with unique functions and may require 'rollbacks' or disabling specific ones that create issues for you but it's definitely the lesser of evils.

Lastly some new info this time. If you're still using Internet Explorer for web activities you'll want to consider switching to a different browser. It's becoming more routine that some websites are no long working properly in the older browser. Some options are Chrome, Firefox, or Edge.

NOTE: Our sharing of information within articles includes suggestions and tips. USE AND/OR APPLY AT YOUR OWN RISK. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our offices for professional service/guidance.

Until next time, don't forget your backups! For more information, contact Harv Oliver, HANDS-ON Consultations, (805) 524-5278, www.hocsupport.com