



The clock is ticking...

Are you still using Windows 7? If so, you must take action NOW to upgrade your software, before you put you, your business and customers at risk of harmful viruses and malicious software.

Microsoft will not support Windows 7 after January 14th 2020. You can continue to use Windows 7, but once support ends, your PC will become vulnerable to security risks. Windows will operate but you will stop receiving security and feature updates.

Since its release on 22nd October 2009, Windows 7 has become one of Microsoft's best-loved products. So much so, that despite the introduction of Windows 10 back in 2015, over 40% of PCs are still running the software. However, all good things must come to an end, and the time for change is upon us, make sure you and your business are prepared.

How much longer will Windows 7 be supported?

Back in 2009, Microsoft made a commitment to provide extended product support (including technical assistance and security updates) for Windows 7 until 14th January 2020. Having already ended mainstream support on 13th January 2015, Microsoft will discontinue Windows 7 extended support to focus on newer technologies. Businesses are advised to upgrade to Windows 10 as soon as possible before product support ceases.

What's the difference between mainstream and extended support periods?

Everything has a shelf life, especially in the fast-paced world of IT technology. The lifecycle of a Microsoft operating system begins with its release and ends with the termination of support. This typically includes two service periods, mainstream support and extended support.

Mainstream support:

During an operating systems mainstream support period, Microsoft continue to implement security updates, release design changes, and provide paid online and phone support. This typically ends five years after the release date, at which point the extended support period commences. In Windows 7's case, this first phase of support ceased on 13th January 2015.

Extended support:

Extended support typically runs for a period announced by Microsoft until the operating systems end of life, this being 14th January 2020 for Windows 7. Rather than continuing to develop the product during this period, Microsoft simply release security updates to keep it safe.

Will it still be safe to use Windows 7?

The constant evolution of viruses and other malware means security updates play a vital role in protecting a business's data. Newly identified vulnerabilities will not be patched by Microsoft, therefore, businesses that continue running Windows 7 beyond this point will be doing so at their own risk, leaving themselves vulnerable to cyber-attacks.



What's the best route to change?

To ensure your business experiences an efficient and cost-effective migration to Windows 10, you must understand your options and either **replace legacy systems** with new devices that run Windows 10 or **upgrade existing devices** with a full version of the software.

Replacing legacy systems:

According to Microsoft "For most Windows 7 users, moving to a new device with Windows 10 will be the recommended path forward. Today's PCs are faster, lightweight, yet powerful and more secure, with an average price that's considerably less than that of the average PC eight years ago."

Upgrading existing devices:

Alternatively, it is possible to upgrade compatible Windows 7 PCs by installing a version of the Windows 10 software. This is the most cost-effective option in the short-term. However, it's worth noting that PCs older than four years often cost more to maintain than a new Windows device.

How do I implement the migration project?

Avoid a situation where you need support that's no longer available, by carefully planning your business's migration to Windows 10. Having decided whether to replace or upgrade existing devices, it's time to devise your implementation strategy.

Common issues to avoid during the migration

As well as the financial and strategic implications of upgrading to Windows 10, there are several technical issues to consider:

Avoid compatibility issues: Evaluate the compatibility of Windows 10 with your business's applications, these might include finance, HR, CRM and ERP. Take time to liaise with your application vendors to confirm compatibility and avoid disruption further down the line.

Avoid post migration issues: Mitigate against potential post migration issues by implementing a strategic plan for each application.

Avoid integration issues: To prevent any disruption, setup processes should be tested when upgrading to Windows 10.

Unsupported applications: Although some applications may not be supported by Windows 10, this does not rule out an upgrade. QDOS-sbl can propose alternative solutions based on best security practices.

Get help from the experts

January 2020 may seem a long way off, but when it comes to switching from Windows 7 to 10 there is a lot to consider. With help from QDOS-sbl implementing such a major project doesn't have to be a daunting prospect. QDOS-sbl specialises in providing leading-edge IT, voice and in-room technology solutions and support for the international hospitality industry, so we understand just how disruptive even positive change can be, if not managed properly. Whether acting as consultants to your internal team or managing the entire business change project from start to finish, we can provide professional project management services.



For expert advice on migration to Windows 10 speak to the QDOS-sbl team
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