

# White Paper: Windows 10

## *Do I need it?*

### **Introduction**

Windows 10 is the latest version of Microsoft Windows, as you have probably heard. You may not know that it is also the *last ever* version of Windows in the traditional sense. What's more, it is being offered as a completely free upgrade – but that offer is only valid for the next 12 months.

This White Paper will share with you Ethical IT's experiences and lessons learnt in carrying out upgrades for our customers. Our goal is to give you, in non-technical terms, a better understanding of what Windows 10 means to your company, to help you make an informed decision about upgrading.

### **Main benefits**

There are three very good reasons to consider upgrading to Windows 10:

1. It's free – at least in terms of the license cost, for the next 12 months (£189 thereafter)
2. It runs quicker on older computers, compared to Windows XP, 7 or 8
3. Microsoft will continue to actively support and improve Windows 10 until at least 2025

There are a lot of general improvements over Windows 7 and Windows 8 too; searching for files is a lot simpler and the results are clearer, the Start Menu is back after a brief departure in Windows 8, and Windows 10 will be the standard operating system used on all Windows phones, tablets and laptops – so the experience will be consistent across all devices.

Finally, Windows 10 integrates seamlessly with Microsoft Office 365. Together, this will allow you to take your work anywhere you want, having your files and emails on your phone, laptop and computers, and giving your staff many options for flexible working.

### **How it will transform your business**

We are not going to see future versions of Windows released as in the past – so there won't be a "Windows 11", "Windows 12" and so on. Instead, Microsoft will simply update and evolve Windows 10 continuously and in the background, meaning future upgrades become a lot simpler and therefore a lot cheaper for your company.

Windows 10 offers improved security for your company data – files can be encrypted without having to buy additional software which can be very expensive, and staff can use their own personal Windows 10 devices if they wish, while the company still retains control over data should the device be lost.

Windows 10 is also designed with performance in mind, so you can install it on your older computers and it will actually run faster than before, which will help elongate the life of your existing PCs to five or six years' service, rather than the three to four years you can currently expect.

### **Ease of use / staff experience**

Most of your staff will use a computer outside of work, and will probably already be using Windows 7 or 8. Windows 10 is not dramatically different; the Start Menu will be familiar, the Desktop is still there, and Microsoft Office programs such as Word, Excel and Outlook remain the same.

In our experience, not much training is needed if you are moving from Windows 7 or 8 to Windows 10, which is another good reason to upgrade. If your company is still running Windows XP then training should be carried out to help staff transition, but this need only take the form of a single staff training day done in groups, which is something SynergyTech can help with.

### **Which options are best for me?**

The upgrade from Windows 7 or 8 to Windows 10 is offered free until approximately August 2016 - you may have already noticed a message appear in the bottom right of your screen about upgrading.

If you are still running Windows Vista or XP then you will have to buy a license for £189 to upgrade, although those computers are likely to be so old that it may be more cost effective to replace them with a newer machine – this is something Ethical IT can audit case by case, as it is likely you will have a mixture of computers of varying age.

## **Ease of implementation / migration**

Ethical IT has been through Windows 10 upgrades for other customers, and we have found the process is straightforward and very reliable; everything can be done “in place” meaning minimal disruption to staff.

Investing a day or two having an audit done on your computers is worthwhile, as there may be some candidates for replacement rather than upgrade. Once this is done there are only two steps involved in upgrading - although we also suggest taking a manual backup for peace of mind:

1. Register the computer for the Upgrade. This will download Windows 10 in the background.
2. Take a manual backup of important files onto a USB drive, just in case.
3. Click through the Upgrade Wizard, and Windows will automatically take a backup of itself, then carry out the upgrade, during which the PC cannot be used.

The process takes about two hours to complete, and your PC will then be running Windows 10. You will have the option to roll back to the previous Windows version if you really do not like it, or if anything fails. This option remains in place for one month after the upgrade, giving you plenty of time to change your mind.

## **Our conclusions**

We firmly believe upgrading to Windows 10 is a good idea, especially as it is free for the first year and the upgrade is simple. Full support for Windows 7 actually ended in January 2015 (Microsoft will continue to provide security updates until Jan 2020), so it makes a lot of sense to upgrade now.

Windows 10 has a lot of genuinely useful new features, as well as key improvements to old features, compared to Windows 7. It has better search and file management, it's faster in general use, and the new Start Menu is – we think – better than the one in Windows 7. Plus, you know Microsoft will continue to support it for at least ten years.

When all these factors are combined they make upgrading a very sensible thing to do, and Ethical IT has the experience, resource and expertise to support you from start to finish.