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Upgrading to Windows 10: Why You Should (Still) Wait

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 We were as optimistic as anyone about Microsoft's long-awaited release of the Windows 10 operating system. As we discussed last May, we looked forward to real improvements—chiefly a better desktop interface—over its widely unloved predecessor, Windows 8.1. At the same time, we hoped Microsoft had learned from its troubled history of Windows upgrades and delivered a finished OS which would leave most users thankful, pleased, and productive.

So much for wishful thinking.

You probably don't need us to tell you Microsoft's ambitious free online upgrade to Win10's initial "RTM" version ("Release to Manufacturing"—or perhaps *rushed to market!)* hasn't gone quite as smoothly as anticipated.

Of over 100 million worldwide users who clicked an icon and expected a clean, hassle-free install, an overwhelming number experienced a gauntlet of frustrating issues, such as:

- Continuous stalls, reboots, or cryptic "Something Happened" error messages during the Win10 download.
- Confusing instructions about locating and entering a new Windows activation key.
- Incomplete new features (Mail, Edge browser, Cortana voice input, revived Start menu) which proved not-ready-for-primetime.

- Displaced software apps or compatibility issues with existing hardware drivers that left upgraded computers much less functional—if not totally disabled (or "bricked").

Many exasperated upgraders were left to that dreaded last resort—a wait in the phone queue of Microsoft tech support. Or they simply threw in the towel and reverted to their previous version of Windows (which Win10 allows within 30 days of upgrade).

Microsoft's first attempt to correct the early flaws in Windows 10 was the November release of Version 1511, also referred to as **Threshold 2**—or what Microsoft once called a Service Pack update. While most of those clunky new features generally perform better, the problem of disappearing apps and utilities remains (as discussed in this Reddit thread). For casual users who wouldn't consider themselves "computer nerds"—and even many who do—upgrading to Windows 10 on their own has been just short of a nightmare.

Where We Stand on Windows 10 Today

- If you haven't already attempted upgrading your computers to Win10, **we recommend resisting as long as possible**—until most of the bugs have been fixed. The current deadline for the free upgrade is July 29, 2016—but we wouldn't be surprised if that date gets extended, given the massive number of hiccups so far.

- If you've stuck with **Windows 7** all along, you're using a tried-and-true OS which many IT experts actually consider superior to the current Windows 10. Microsoft has pledged extended support for Win7 until January 2020—long after you'll probably consider your current PC hardware obsolete.

- We expect Windows 10 to be, eventually, a terrific, reliable user experience. But the first-of-its-kind online download/install—of an entire OS—has been difficult, considering every PC is its own unique combination of hardware and software. It's hardly a do-it-yourself project… but we can help.