

When You are the Statue and Microsoft is the Pigeon: Windows 10 Woes

by Jeff Verry

Who likes major operating system upgrades? Pretty much nobody. Sure, there are the new features we can see (you can now paint in 3-D!), and always a bunch of "housekeeping" where Microsoft fixes things under the hood to make your computer more secure and stable. But there is the chance it could break things too. Updates are a necessary evil. (This is true of Adobe, Apple, QuickBooks and every other major software manufacturer as well by the way.) Our recommendation has consistently been the same: it is better to keep your system as current as possible, rather than take risks inherent with ignoring critical and important updates.



Since the arrival of Windows 10, there has been a major paradigm shift in how Microsoft views, and handles, updates. Previously, they would push out updates and larger groups of updates called service packs. Upgrades were done when you purchased a new version of Windows (e.g. Windows 7 to Windows 8). With Windows 10 moving forward, upgrades come in the same manner as updates.

The latest example of this, called the April Creators Update or Windows 10, version 1803, is a telling example. The user might see a blue screen informing them of the upgrade. The computer takes hours downloading almost 3 GB of code. It then takes significant time to install, rebooting several times in the process, then presents the user with a welcome screen. In short, it does exactly what you would expect if it was an upgrade to a major version!

The good news is that the new features and fixes come down automatically. The Windows 10 you are using right now is significantly better than the Windows 10 that came with your computer as recently as last year. For a majority of users, this is great!

And now for the other news. The latest version of Windows 10 may not work with an older computer or older software, even when it was working fine with Windows 10 previously. What this means is that parts of your computer might not work well, or at all, after the upgrade!

Here are some true stories from the front lines. We have seen:

- A computer that "spent the night upgrading" and now the wireless card built into the laptop no longer works. It will never work moving forward. The solution was to get an external adaptor.
- Third party software that worked ok under Windows 10 and will no longer work post-upgrade. Some of this software was business critical. The solution was to upgrade the software.
- Third party software kept Windows updates from working at all. The solution was to identify the software and remove since it was not even used.
- The nightmare: the computer was rendered completely inoperable. We had to extract the data from the hard drive and reinstall Windows 7 fresh from the manufacturer.

Here are two takeaways from the above:

1. There are many more hurdles and caveats to using an older computer and/or older software than ever before. You may want to start planning on replacement sooner rather than later, even if your system is only 3 years old.
2. CCS Technologies has your back. We cannot tell Microsoft what to do, and often can't really tell what they're going to do, but we have the expertise and experience to work with you on a case by case basis to find right and workable solutions for your situation.

What can you do now?

Find the problems early. If you wake up and see your computer looks really different, it might be a Windows 10 upgrade. You have 30 days to "revert" back. Take your computer for a spin, if it is not working properly, make sure you find this out within that time period.

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Back up, back up, back up. The gold standard of system protection is being able to restore the whole computer if needed. If you have a business-critical system (or "family-critical" - where are your kids' baby pictures...?), now is the time to put a comprehensive backup solution in place that allows for point-in-time full system recovery. If the worst were to happen, you just restore back to yesterday or last week or whatever makes the most sense.

As always, if you have any questions or need assistance with putting the above in place, give your friendly neighborhood CCS Tech a call or an email and we'll guide you through.

"Relax...we're on IT"

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