What is Windows 7?

How to help your people work in the way they want to

Small Business whitepaper

What is Windows 7 and why should I care?

In today's challenging economic and competitive climate, small businesses are under ever increasing pressure to do more with less; whether it's smarter working from your employees, or a more effective IT system with less management costs. At Microsoft we have spent a lot of time in discussions with small businesses like yours to help us develop the most effective computer operating system to help you face your business challenges head on.

Windows® 7 Professional has been designed with your business in mind; it is faster, more secure, easier to use and more cost effective. By adopting this new operating system from Microsoft, you can help your employees achieve more in their day – whether working at home, in the office or on the road, you will have the ability to manage your day-to-day business processes more easily and reduce the time spent dealing with IT-related incidents, all resulting in your company focusing more time on actually doing business, gaining and retaining your customers and developing new business ideas to drive your organisation forwards.

Businesses with a small number of PCs that want to improve the tools they have at their disposal to save both time and costs can deploy Windows 7 to help them work smarter while keeping their IT management simple and secure.

How will Windows 7 Professional help my business?

Windows 7 is an operating system that supports your business need for an IT system that is more manageable, more secure and helps your people to be more productive. It has been designed to help reduce the costs of doing business, speed up workflows and encourage your people to work smarter.

Windows 7 Professional has been developed with feedback from small businesses in mind. It simplifies your IT system, requires less management time and offers more features to help you with your everyday tasks. Microsoft has addressed the fact that security is critical and any downtime caused by a security threat or data loss can have profound impacts on a business, while still focusing heavily on making Windows 7 work with all your existing systems to minimise the impact when you deploy the technology.

Windows 7 works the way you want

Windows 7 Professional has prioritised the basics that any business expects from its PCs. That's why it starts up, resumes and shuts down fast and reliably. It is designed to work with the systems you already have, so the majority of software and devices working on Windows Vista® will also work on Windows 7 Professional. Also the latest technology advances in Windows 7 Professional mean you can keep using essential business software packages that run currently on Windows XP. At the same time, tasks such as easily setting up a secure network, sharing files and printers, have been made simple and quick to do, with or without servers. And powerful diagnostics and troubleshooting tools enable you to get to any potential problems without always having to call in the IT professionals.

Get more done

Windows 7 Professional has been designed to make everyday tasks easier, so your people can focus on what matters most to your business. Just type a few letters in the search box to find files, applications or even a menu in Control Panel in seconds, arrange windows side by side or maximise windows to customise your view. Improved power management means you have longer battery life to keep you productive while on the go and helping to reduce your energy bills. New enhanced features in Windows 7 Professional can even detect whether you are at work or at home and automatically send your documents to the right printer, allow you to access files and programs remotely from another computer or enable you to work offline, while automatically synchronising information between your PC and the network.

Safeguard your work

Windows 7 Professional has been designed to provide strong protection and control of your business information and assets, so you can select the security options that fit your business's needs. Internet Explorer® 8 helps protect business information and data by delivering improved protection against security and privacy threats. Accidental data loss due to missed backups or a lost laptop can be prevented by scheduling a periodical backup to save data or an entire system image, while it's also possible to restore previous versions of files that might have been accidentally deleted or changed. And, with Windows 7 Professional, it's also possible to back data up to a network drive and even encrypt files on a PC.

Justin Bates, IT manager of UK geotextile distributor, Geosynthetics said: *"Geosynthetics is the market leader because we deliver the right product to the right location at precisely the right time – always. We can do that because Windows 7 helps our employees work faster, smarter and more efficiently."*

The top ten benefits of Windows 7 Professional

01. *It's fast and reliable*

Responsive and ready – you can start using your PC quickly with fast startup, shutdown, sleep and resume from Standby. Further performance improvements lead to fewer interruptions and prompts, as well as faster recovery from problems if they happen.

02. *It works with what you have today*

Specifically designed with compatibility in mind, Windows 7 Professional works with a broad set of devices and applications. In addition, Windows XP Mode can provide the flexibility to run many older Windows XP productivity applications right from the Windows 7 desktop.

03. *Helps you find what you need quickly*

Find what you need fast with instant search, Jump Lists and a larger, customisable taskbar with pop-up previews. Type a few letters in the search box and files, applications or even menus appear in seconds. Similar types of documents (such as financial records or customer lists) can be grouped into Libraries – making it easy to find them even if they are stored in different folders or on different PCs.

04. *Makes the things you do every day easier*

Everyday tasks are streamlined and simplified – with commonly used resources put within easy access and clutter minimised on the desktop. Enhancements to the Windows Aero® desktop experience (such as Aero Snap, Aero Peek and Aero Shake) help you intuitively navigate, arrange and work with multiple open windows on the desktop.

05. *Helps you easily share your files and printers*

If you're a small business without a server, you can easily share documents, printers and devices across multiple PCs running Windows 7. For businesses with a server, Windows 7 Professional lets you connect PCs quickly and more securely to both your wired and wireless domain networks. This can better help you manage security and the costs of multiple PCs. In addition, with Location-Aware Printing, your documents automatically get sent to the right printer – whether you're at work or at home.

06. *Allows mobile workers to stay productive anywhere*

Windows 7 Professional makes mobile computing on the go easier with access to all your mobile settings in one place and greater connection and networking options. Now you can access and share all your work computer programs, files and network resources – whether you're at home, at work or on the road. You can even disconnect from the network, work offline and then have your network files automatically and seamlessly updated with any new changes.

07. *Helps you easily restore deleted files or folders*

Windows 7 Professional enables the scheduling of automatic periodic backups to save data or an entire system image to a network location or a local drive. This helps quickly restore individual files or folders that get accidentally deleted or even an entire PC in the event of a hard drive failure or the presence of malicious software.

08. *Helps you better protect and secure confidential information*

Protect your business's confidential information, such as credit card numbers or employee information, with the Encrypting File System. This provides user-level file and folder encryption, enabling strong data protection and control.

09. *Offers greater online protection*

Help keep your business up and running with Windows Defender offering enhanced protection from Internet threats, spyware and other forms of malicious software. At the same time, the Internet Explorer 8 browser helps protect your data and business information by delivering improved protection against security and privacy threats.

10. *Helps you solve PC problems quickly*

Windows 7 Professional Action Centre gives you one place to view, diagnose and solve common PC problems. Now it is easy to access the built-in troubleshooter for a range of different types of problems, such as printing, Internet connections, performance or power issues.

But I have a few more questions!

Q: *"Why should I invest in Windows 7 Professional today?"*

A: Investing in the Windows 7 operating system can bring long-term value to your business, while helping your workers to be more productive – at home, at work and on the road. New PCs with Windows 7 Professional are designed to be faster, more reliable, more secure and easier to use than older PCs running Windows XP or the Windows Vista operating system. More sophisticated networking and mobility features help mobile workers access their computer programs, files and network resources away from the office. PCs with Windows 7 Professional can do more to protect your valuable business and customer data. At the same time, compatibility features let you run many of the applications and devices you use today – including applications for Windows XP.

Q: *"How is Windows 7 Professional better than Windows XP?"*

A: Windows 7 Professional is easier to use, and has a range of new features that have been designed in response to feedback from small businesses. Put simply, Windows 7 is designed to make your day-to-day business run more smoothly, more effectively and more securely. Windows XP is nearly a decade old, with limited support for new hardware and software. On the other hand, Windows 7 Professional has been specifically designed to meet the growing demands of modern technology users with more sophisticated networking, mobility, entertainment, data protection and compatibility features. Also, with Windows XP Mode, you get the compatibility of Windows XP in Windows 7 Professional.

Q: *"Will Windows 7 integrate with my existing computer system?"*

A: Windows 7 Professional has an option to run some applications in compatibility mode. There is also Windows XP mode, a valuable transition tool that lets you run many existing older Windows XP applications within Windows 7 Professional. Windows XP mode is easy to find and access from either the Start menu or the Windows 7 taskbar.

Q: *"Do I need a new PC?"*

A: No not always. Your existing PC will be able to cope providing it has the right facilities to run Windows 7. However, new PCs are designed to get the most out of Windows 7 in ways that older PCs are not equipped to do. Windows 7 Professional is preinstalled, preconfigured and fully supported on a new PC, which helps to maximise performance for faster startup, shutdown and Web browsing. New PCs are also optimised for the latest peripheral software and mobility devices – supporting multi-touch functionality, all your wireless devices, Blu-ray, WiMAX, digital tuners and much more.

Q: *"How is Windows 7 Professional better than Windows Vista?"*

A: With Windows 7 Professional, we listened to our business customers. First and foremost, we strengthened fundamentals around performance, stability, reliability and security. We improved ease of use through user interface (UI) improvements, better wireless networking and more comprehensive troubleshooting. We added Windows XP mode, giving businesses the option to extend the life of older productivity applications and we made everything faster, more convenient and fully customisable, so your computer works the way you want it to.

Q: *"How much time do I need to invest to learn how to use it?"*

A: Using Windows 7 Professional is intuitive and easy. Everyday tasks have been streamlined and simplified – with commonly used resources put within easy reach and clutter minimised on the desktop. UI improvements make finding things easy – simply type a few letters in the search box and documents, applications or even menus appear in seconds. You can easily access the programs you use the most with just one click by pinning them on your taskbar or with a simple keystroke, you can minimise or maximise windows or arrange them side by side so you get the view you want from your PC.

UK-based transportation and logistics company, Ralph Coleman International is using Windows 7 Professional to increase productivity: *"You know, to be honest I just love everything about Windows 7,"* said managing director, Alan Pitman. *"It's so much faster than anything I've ever seen before."*

"With a small staff, it can be difficult to accomplish everything each workday. But with Windows 7 Professional, we've been able to decrease downtime and, simply put, get more done." said Luke Mulligan, Partner at UK-based accounting firm, Mulligan Williams.

At Microsoft we have listened. Small businesses are under enough pressure without the additional task of dealing with a difficult or process heavy IT system. Windows 7 Professional allows your business to focus on doing what it does best and helping your people get the most out of every day.

With new features, more security, more stability and yet still with the familiar interface that users understand, Windows 7 Professional will help your business to manage everything from critical tasks such as cash flow and managing customer data to everyday errands such as e-mail and printing.

A simple and easy-to-use operating system that will integrate easily with your existing infrastructure, Windows 7 has been developed to minimise IT pains – it will work with Windows Vista applications, as well as working in XP mode to run older programs and applications. All designed to make your business run better and help technology add value to your company.

Find more information or to purchase and download Windows 7 Professional, go to the online Microsoft store

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Windows 7

Windows 7 Professional