

THE COMPUTER CORNER

No. 255: Windows as a Service

Stan Kaplan, WB9RQR 715 N. Dries Street Saukville, WI 53080-1664
(262) 268-1949 wb9rqr@att.net

We've had about a dozen major Windows versions with several more sub-versions. Win 3.1, NT, 95, 2000, ME, XP, Server, VISTA, 7, 8 and 10 pretty much covers them, pretty much in chronological order. But apparently Windows 10 is the end. At least according to Ted Eiler, a computer service consultant right here in Greenfield, WI. You can read his latest blog and even subscribe to it (free), by going to <https://www.tecs-onsite.com>.

In the past, new designs and functions of the Windows operating system (OS) were incorporated into a completely new release (and new release name or release number) every couple of years. Instead, Microsoft is now simply going to keep Windows 10 and add new stuff about twice a year. So, you can expect no Windows 11 or 12 or 13. Rather, look for updates to Win 10 in the spring (March or April) and in the fall (September or October), and a bill one of those times for the annual "service fee". Key performance changes such as security updates will continue to be released each month.

So, here is what you really want to know. Everything before Windows 7 is dead (including XP), and you would be foolish to have a machine with these early versions on any machine that you even occasionally connect to the Internet. Mainstream support for Windows 7 ended on 13 Jan 2015 (product design features and complementary support ceased that day). While extended support (security updates to keep the OS safe) are still being released as of now, they will end totally in just a couple of months, on 14 Jan 2020. You don't have much time!

You can get a copy of Win 10 Professional at <https://softwarelicense4u.com/> for only \$29.99 as of this writing. For their fee, they send you only the software key and instructions for how to download the software itself from Microsoft. I have used them on at least four occasions with no problem. Most important, the key was accepted by Microsoft when submitted, resulting in proper activation of the OS.

On the other hand, you might elect to not purchase Windows at all. Linux Mint 19.1 Cinnamon 64-bit is a very fine OS that works just like Windows. It comes with an office suite that is a great substitute for Microsoft Office. It includes a spreadsheet, presentation, drawing, formula, word processor, database and other items. It can open and save .doc, .docx formats in the word processor and comparable formats in the other software. Best of all, it is FREE and is installed automatically with Linux Mint 19.1 Cinnamon (as is the Firefox browser and a whole bunch of other goodies).

Bonus. If you have a bootable thumb drive that you want to use, turn off your computer, plug it into a USB port and power on the computer. If it doesn't work, your computer might require you to press a boot menu key to tell it to boot from the thumb drive. Common boot menu keys are:

Acer	ESC, F2, F9 or F12	Lenovo, Samsung, Toshiba	F12
Asus	ESC or F8	Sony Vaio	F11
Dell	F12	HP	ESC or F9

Clip the above out and save it for future reference. Happy Computing!