Insight

Making the Migration to Windows 10

Your path to upgrading with maximum benefit and minimum business impact

With support for Windows® 7 rapidly coming to an end, businesses around the globe are scrambling to evaluate the benefits and costs of upgrading to Windows 10. Features such as enhanced security, convenient upgrade capabilities and a reduced cost of ownership make Windows 10 seem like an easy decision for many organisations.

Adopting a new operating system, however, is no small feat. It requires a thoughtfully crafted strategy to ensure minimal impact to users and other applications, regardless of businesses undergoing a full migration plan or an attrition model.

Is the upgrade to Windows 10 worth the effort? And, how can an organisation successfully upgrade in the most efficient way — without depleting IT resources and budget? This whitepaper provides an overview of Windows 10 and discusses best practices for upgrading without disrupting business.

An overview of Windows 10 enhancements

Windows 10 delivers a familiar user experience along with major advancements that address key demands of IT professionals, such as security and speed. Of all the Windows 10 improvements, the following enhancements are the most critical as they address the work-from-anywhere mindset of today's professionals — and the need for workers to be able to collaborate from anywhere and on any device.

- **Automatic updates:** This may be the biggest improvement from earlier Windows versions. New features are pushed out via patches, like new releases. All users can receive updates, whether they work remotely or in the office. Each user is grouped by profile, also known as a persona. These profiles automatically receive updates for security, operating system enhancements and applications.

  Automatic updates transform Windows into an Operating System as a Service (OSaaS) model, making it seamless to use from any mobile device. IT professionals benefit from non- disruptive updates that can easily hit the entire organisation — without the need for future massive migrations that take much more planning and coordination.

- **Designed for user engagement:** Windows 10 was purposely built to drive engagement. A slew of new features makes it easier for all users to interact and engage with one another. A few highlights include:

  - Cortana® sticky notes. These "digital sticky notes" give employees the ability to immediately capture ideas at the time they occur. Sticky notes fully integrate with Cortana, so users can set reminders that can hit all devices.

  - Dark mode. Dark mode makes it easier to work on the go or late at night by giving employees total control over their device visibility. Screens automatically adjust for optimal viewing in low-light conditions, such as on dim airplanes.

  - A fast, modern browser. The Microsoft Edge® browser was built for speed and performance. It gives users a high-performance browsing experience by leveraging cutting-edge rendering capabilities. Plus, Edge comes with a digital ink toolkit that allows users to "write notes" on a website and quickly share the page with others.

- **A consistent experience:** Windows 10 users get the same experience regardless of what device they are using — desktop, laptop or smartphone.

The complex management of a seamless migration

Enterprises seeking to upgrade to Windows 10 are up against two critical issues: cost and time. Migrating the right way takes a thoughtful, strategic approach. This is especially critical for global enterprises with many disbursed locations. It is not uncommon for enterprises to hold off on upgrading until they absolutely must, simply to avoid the challenges that will likely accompany a rollout.
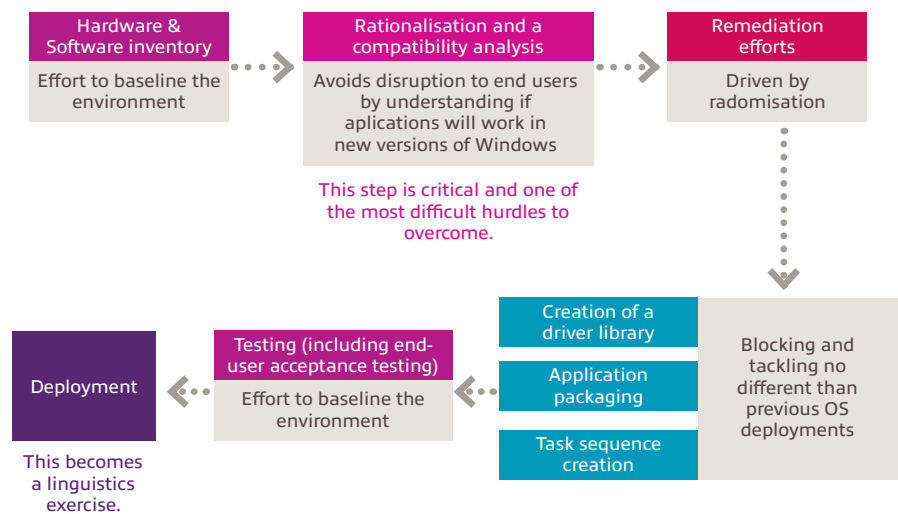
In the past, many IT organisations relied on spreadsheets to capture all the nuances and details of a migration, such as application inventory, application compatibility testing, compliance, hardware infrastructure and resource allocation. Yet, the complexity of enterprise-scale migrations far outweighs what a spreadsheet can handle.

The modern approach guarantees a fast and seamless deployment: upgrading via a central management platform. Migrating with a central management platform ensures all endpoints are updated and secured and that no updates are missed. It acts as one central repository to capture every little (and big) detail. However, even a central management platform requires additional staff, a deeper budget and the flexibility to delay other high-priority IT initiatives.
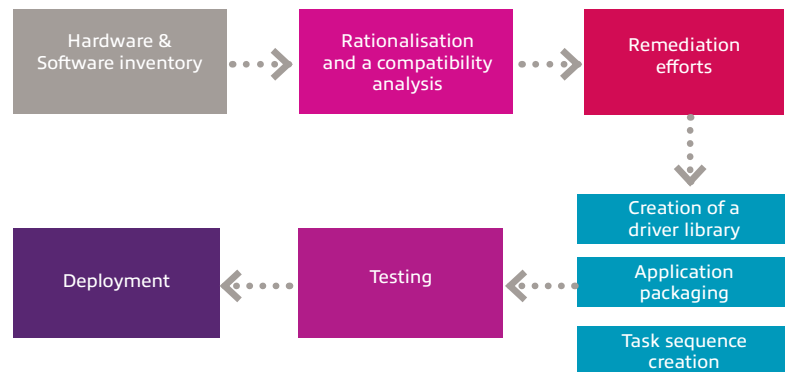
The first step in planning a migration is to assess your environment's current maturity. If your Windows 7 migration was thorough and included a management platform, your migration will be much simpler.

What does a Windows 10 migration look like?

To understand what a migration to Windows 10 looks like, it is important to understand how previous migrations may affect your success. For example, a thorough Windows 7 migration would have included the following steps:

Hardware & Software inventory	Rationalisation and a compatibility analysis	Remediation efforts
Effort to baseline the environment	Avoids disruption to end users by understanding if aplications will work in new versions of Windows	Driven by radomisation

This step is critical and one of the most difficult hurdles to overcome.

Deployment	Testing (including end-user acceptance testing)	Creation of a driver library	Blocking and tackling no different than previous OS deployments
	Effort to baseline the environment	Application packaging	
		Task sequence creation	

This becomes a linguistics exercise.

If all of these steps were properly completed for a Windows 7 deployment, then a Windows 10 migration (and all future updates) will simply include the last two steps, as follows:

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┌─────────────────┐      ┌─────────────────┐      ┌─────────────────┐
│   Hardware &    │····▶│  Rationalisation │····▶│   Remediation   │
│ Software inventory │   │ and a compatibility │  │     efforts     │
│                 │      │    analysis     │      │                 │
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                                                  │  Creation of a  │
                                                  │  driver library │
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│                 │◀····│                 │◀····│   Application   │
│   Deployment    │      │     Testing     │      │    packaging    │
│                 │      │                 │      ├─────────────────┤
└─────────────────┘      └─────────────────┘      │  Task sequence  │
                                                  │    creation     │
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Unfortunately, many organisations did not have the resources or capabilities to conduct a thorough Windows 7 migration. These organisations now find themselves needing to remediate past deficiencies in planning before they can successfully move forward in adopting Windows 10. The upside is that investing in these actions now will ensure future deployments run smoothly.

A worry-free path to Windows 10

For businesses looking to balance cost and benefits, partnering with a solution provider may make sense. Solution providers can work with businesses of all sizes to offer extremely customised Windows 10 services. An ideal IT solution provider can take businesses through every step of a comprehensive migration strategy, from a detailed needs assessment to employee training.

Working with Windows 10 deployment experts results in a completely unique solution to fit the organisation's needs. Each engagement includes:

- A current state maturity assessment
- Remediation recommendations based on best practices
- Road map development with future-state recommendations
- Deployment best practices, including inventory assessment, process creation and the development of operational run books
- Employee recommendations for custom employee tools, from security guides to training materials
- Future-state recommendations for next steps to continue to refine the process

Plan ahead: Windows 7 expiration

Microsoft will end support for Windows 7 on Jan. 14, 2020. At that time, s ecurity patches will no longer be available, and Microsoft will no longer support the product. This gives businesses approximately two and a half years to upgrade to Windows 10. Many large-scale enterprises will require the full duration of this time in order to plan and execute their migration. Businesses that choose to remain on Windows 7 open themselves up to an even wider range of cyberattacks.

To learn more visit

nl.insight.com/learn/articles/2019-01-voordelen-van-upgraden-naar-windows-10

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