The countdown has begun...

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1 2 3 4 5
6 7 8 9 0

are you prepared for the 2020 problem?

TWIN SYSTEMS

Trusted by very demanding people

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THE 2020 PROBLEM

Now Auld Lang Syne is out of the way for another year, there's another countdown to look forward to. Except this one doesn't involve champagne and party poppers.

This time next year, half of all businesses are going to be affected by a big problem.

In fact, IT professionals are calling it the 2020 problem.

Some of the most commonly used business software is coming to the end of its life in 2020. And when it does, it will no longer be supported by Microsoft.

That means that anyone still using that software will be in big trouble. Not only will there be nobody to fix it when things go wrong (and it's inevitable they will). But out of date software also means your business won't be compliant with GDPR.

So, all that effort you made to tick all those data protection boxes last year will count for nothing.

And then there's the hackers. Cyber criminals love companies who don't upgrade old software because it leaves them extremely vulnerable to attack. Those who continue to squeeze their end of life software right down to the very last breath are easy prey, and once the cyber baddies spot a way in, they'll happily swoop down and create carnage.

Here's a list of the software that's going to expire in January next year
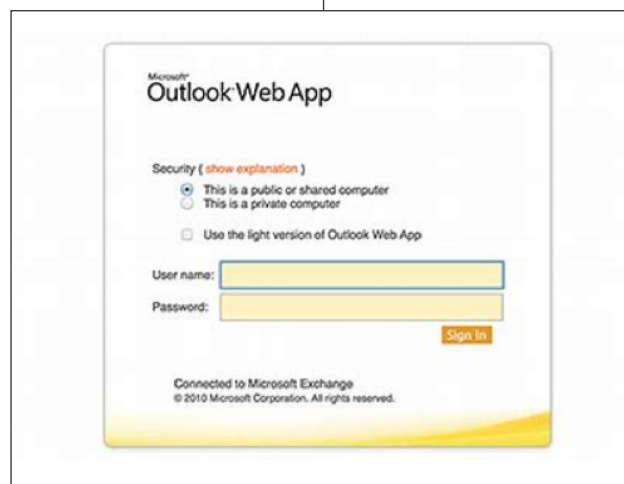
- Windows 7
- Office 2010
- Exchange 2010
- Small Business Server 2011
- Windows Server 2008

If you don't know what software you're using, don't panic. Checking is easy. You can find out what version of Windows you're using like this:

1. Click on the Start Button
2. Enter "computer" in the search box
3. Right-click on properties
4. The version of Windows you're running will be displayed. If it says it's Windows 7, it's time to take action.

There are other simple ways to check what versions of software you're using. Here are some visual guides to help.
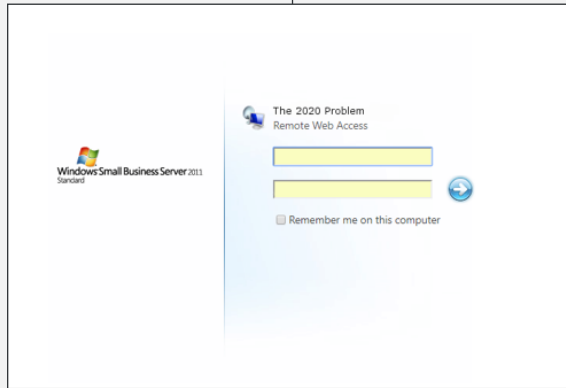**Is this how you get web mail?**

If your start button looks like this, you're on Windows 7, and it's on its last legs:

Is your Office icon yellow or brown, like this? If it is, it's out of date:

And you can tell if you're using the Small Business Server if your remote login looks like this:

But it's not just about the way things look. We all get a bit crotchety and slower as we age, and it's the same with computers. If you're finding things are taking longer than they should and your PC takes ages to wake up when you turn it on, there's a pretty good chance it's out of date.

Up-to-date software is typically faster and more stable. And allows you to do all sorts of time-saving stuff like working on any document, from any device.

Loading...

Why it's important to act now

We know what you're thinking. "But 2020 is a year away, I'll just leave it for a few months".

While we understand that it can seem like there's always pressure on businesses to invest in the biggest, shiniest piece of new IT kit, we promise we really do have your best interests at heart here. It's always tempting to put things on the backburner for a while, but when it comes to computer upgrades, leaving everything until the last minute is a recipe for disaster.

Time flies, and a year in business is a fast one. The dreaded GDPR is a perfect example of this. 8 months on, and thousands of organisations are STILL not compliant with the new regulations because they left everything to the last minute and then panicked. Burying your head in the sand is always a terrible idea, especially when it comes to things that can cost you huge amounts of money – and customers - if you get caught out.

This is probably the last thing you want to hear right now (sorry) but upgrading can take weeks or months to properly plan and implement. So the sensible thing to do is get onto it straight away. By acting now, your chances of a smooth and seamless transition are greatly improved. If you wait too long, you're in danger of a rush job that causes unnecessary stress and downtime.

All modern businesses rely on software that works properly. Downtime means staff sitting around doing nothing, which quickly leads to frustration and low morale. It means you can't give customers what they expect, which puts you at risk of them jumping ship and going elsewhere.

And it costs you money.

Big money.

IT outages cost businesses like yours a fortune

According to a 2016 survey conducted by Beaming and Opinium, downtime accounted for 145 million lost working hours and £12.5m in costs during that year alone. Businesses haemorrhage money when they're unable to operate, and the longer it takes to fix the problem, the greater the risk of the business ending up six feet under.

There's another major downside to waiting. To keep quality high, a good service provider will only take on a couple of upgrades at a time, which means they might not be able to squeeze you in. IT support companies who are worth their salt are in demand. If they're good, they'll have customers queuing up to use their services. Leaving things too late puts you at risk of being left with the IT cowboys nobody else wants.

Upgrading is good business sense. There's been a lot of talk about digital transformation of late, and 88% of businesses are now using at least some form of cloud computing. Most of them didn't adopt this new way of working because they're excited by technology, they did it because they didn't want to get left behind.

It's the same with the 2020 problem. Companies that don't take action will, without a doubt, get left behind. But let's not focus just on the doom and gloom.

There are loads of benefits of upgrading your software early

It's going to give your business a new lease of life.

No, really. You'll be amazed by how much more productive you and your team will be when you've got a computer system that actually helps you. New versions of software have all sorts of wonderful tools that can dramatically cut down the time you spend on fiddly admin.

You'll be able to work on the go, check the progress of projects from the poolside and make snow days a thing of the past. Staff will be able to communicate and work on files wherever they are, and all your systems and teams will be able to work together like a well-oiled machine.

It will save you money

"Yeah, yeah, yeah, pull the other one..." We would say that, right? Well, it's actually true. Modern business solutions are all about saving money, by reducing capital costs and allowing you to scale up your business without spending a fortune on infrastructure. You'll be able to spend your staff budget more efficiently too, and because everything can be managed remotely, any glitches can be dealt with quickly and without huge call-out fees.

And let's not forget the downtime issue – when systems are up to date and running smoothly, you don't have to worry about losing money if things go wrong.

It will give you a competitive edge

It will give you a competitive edge

You know that thing we said earlier about customers leaving you for someone who can give them more of what they need? Well, it works the other way too. Customers can be a fickle bunch, and when they get to hear about all the wonderful things you can offer them, they might just start knocking on your door.

Updated systems give businesses a clear competitive advantage, and that's just a fact.

So what now?

IT plays an integral role in your business, so any upgrade is going to take time, thought and careful planning. Upgrading your software in plenty of time is essential if you want to stay operational, so you need to start making arrangements now.

Talk to a trusted IT support company (also known as a Managed Service Provider) about how you can arrange your upgrade in plenty of time and with minimal disruption to your business.

Of course, you'll want to avoid those cowboys we mentioned earlier. Go with a company who has great reviews, will put your needs first, and is happy to take you through all your options... someone like us!

Contact us today to make sure your business avoids the 2020 problem.

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