

Windows 10—First Anniversary Update Released On August 2, 2016

By Joseph G. Hodges, Jr., Esq.

In prior issues of this Journal I have covered various aspect of the initial release of Windows 10 in July of 2015 (e.g., “*Windows 10 Is Finally Here—Should You Upgrade,*” September 2015). The free upgrade period for Windows 10 ended on July 29, 2016, by which time Microsoft reported that more than 350 million active devices were running Windows 10. This upgrade deadline was followed by the free release to then registered users of Microsoft 10 of the First Anniversary Update Edition of Windows 10, Ver. 1607, on August 2, 2016.

[Update Edition is Here](#)

I will attempt to cover here what is new or noteworthy about this Update Edition, especially so that those of you who are still using Windows 7 or 8.1 can decide if now might be the time to upgrade to Windows 10 even though it is reported that doing so will now cost you \$120 for Home and \$200 for Pro per device unless you buy a new device preloaded with Windows 10. Note that Extended Support for Windows 7 will not end until January 14, 2020 and for Windows 8.1 will not end until January 10, 2023, but see Foley, “Windows 10 Free Upgrade is Still Available Using Windows 7 and Product Keys,” ZDNet.com August 3, 2016. Also, users running Windows 10 Pro or Enterprise can delay the 2016 update by at least four months,

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which they might want to do since the update requires around 25 GB of free space and somewhere between one half to one hour in order to be installed properly and complete a Microsoft account device registration. Also, if you do not like Windows 10, you can roll back to your previous operating system within the first 30 days.

According to Terry Meyerson, the Executive Vice President of Microsoft’s Windows and Device Group, the Update Edition is far more than a service pack and moves Windows 10 towards making it Windows as a Service. He says it comes with six major buckets of new features in this Update Edition, those being (1) more enterprise security features, (2) Edge browser improvements, (3) Edge browser extension support, (4) Windows Ink for better pen use, (5) new Cortana enhancements, and (6) cross-device gaming support. These and other improvements are dealt with in more detail below.

[Major New Features](#)

As for **enterprise security features**, “Enterprise Data Support,” which has been renamed “Windows Information Protection,” makes its debut with this Update Edition. It provides file-level encryption for business data and apps with the objectives being data separation and leak prevention. The other major brand-new enterprise security feature that is included is “Defender Advanced Threat Protection,” a threat-intelligence and attack detection service.

Edge is the new default integrated browser for Windows 10, thus replacing Internet Explorer. While there were serious flaws with the initial version that came with the original Windows 10, including slow speed, it is significantly im-

proved now. The Update Edition introduces some much needed support for extensions (some 13 of them initially) that are similar to those offered by Google Chrome and that can be turned off and on, and it even offers integration with Cortana (see further discussion below re Cortana). One extension of note is the free LastPass password manager, which responds to the number one user requested extension addition. Another is a set of two Adblock extensions that have the ability to control ads, malware and tracking. A third one of note is Evernote's Web Clipper extension. There is also improved support for syncing passwords and browser favorites between devices through settings in your Microsoft account and a click-to-play Flash feature.

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Windows Ink is an attempt to reintroduce digital pens and ink datatype that were first introduced with Tablet PCs in 2002. You gain access to pen-enabled apps by clicking the pen icon in the notifications area of the Ink work place or by a click of your pen stylus. It comes with a collection of native Windows ink-powered apps for Sticky Notes, Sketchpad, and Screen Sketch, plus a series of some 40 other inking apps that are available in the Windows Store (see further below re Store). The user consensus about these Updates seems to be that, until Microsoft makes it possible for Ink to interpret its letters as rich, editable text that can be imported into Word or Outlook (or dare I mention WordPerfect too), it will not be ready for prime time, although it is currently handy for making quick notations regarding things.

As for **Cortana**, Microsoft's answer to Apple's Siri and Google Now, if you do not like this intelligent personal assistant sitting on your Start menu, it now has an opt-out feature whereby you can completely disable it (thus it acts only as a search box) and even hide it completely from the task bar. In addition, the keyboard shortcut to invoke it in

listening mode had been changed to Win + Shift + C to lessen the number of previous unintended activations of it in listening mode. Alternatively, you can set it to recognize saying "Hey Cortana" to invoke it in listening mode without having to log in. While Cortana is no Siri or Google Now, it comes with improved usable speech recognition together with support for several languages, as well as many useful services including an on screen calendar that reminds you of almost anything and warns you of potential scheduling conflicts, local weather information, a calculator, a translator, a source for sports scores and news and search results, a package tracker, a trip planner, and cross-platform notifications for missed calls and voice mails. One key addition that makes

Cortana especially useful is its ability to hangout on your locked screen. Also, you can now set a "reminder" for random facts, such as your hotel room number. The best summary of Cortana's many capabilities can be found in the Cortana Notebook that comes with it. Also, if you

install the Cortana app on your PC, you can send text messages to Android and iOS phones running Cortana. Cortana can also ask for information from a wide variety of connected accounts, such as LinkedIn, Uber and Xbox Live, although these are set to "off" by default.

In terms of **upgrading** and moving this program towards the Microsoft objective of Windows as a Service, this will necessitate frequent installations of large feature updates that could typically take 20 to 25 minutes to install after they are downloaded. The Update Edition improves some on this process. While it still offers no way to defer these automatic updates from downloading, you can at least define an active hour period of up to 12 hours per day when you actively use your PC and do not want these updates to occur. In addition, when an update has been downloaded but not installed, you can manually set an alternative time for the update to be installed.

The Update was supposed to take the **Windows Hello** biometric authentication system a step further, finally delivering on the "Passport" promise of the original program whereby your face or fin-

gerprint would serve as your “password” both to your PC and the web. Full implementation of this improvement has been delayed system wide until the FIDO 2.0 standard is rolled out by the Fido Alliance (www.fidoalliance.org) in a few months, but for now Hello can be used to authenticate yourself at the Windows Store (see further below re Store) depending on if the visited websites have adopted Hello authentication.

The **Start** menu has been tweaked in this Update Edition. It incorporates a scrolling All Apps tiled list that is permanently available on your screen vs. only through an All Apps button. At the same time, the power button and shortcuts to frequently used folders has been shrunk down to a slim column of icons on the left side of the screen, and there is a “hamburger” button that can expand that column to include labels.

As for **User Controls**, ever since Windows 8, Microsoft has been deliberately moving the user controls from the old Control Panel to the new Settings app. The Update Edition of Windows 10 makes a major move in this direction. Several major groups of options, including networking, have been moved to the new Settings app and new icons have been introduced.

With regard to the **Action Center and Notifications**, these have been made more user friendly. The Action Center icon had been moved to the right side of the system clock, and there is a badge over the icon that tells you how many notifications are available. Also, you can now tweak the notification settings for each app separately and customize the Quick Action settings. In addition, each notification app is now given equal weight in the notification priority arena. Also, a simple click on either the Taskbar or the time/date will also show a concise view of your calendar for that day and allow you to manage your events. In addition, switching between audio sources is now simply a matter of clicking on the volume icon and the arrow above the volume slider. If you tie your Windows 10 license to your Microsoft account, the license will be permanently stored in the cloud for later retrieval as needed. Once that is done you can use the Troubleshoot feature that is found here to troubleshoot upgrade issues.

In May of 2016 Microsoft launched a **OneDrive** app that was intended to help address the loss of “smart” or “placeholder” files in the original release of Windows 10. This app is viewed by many

users as a “somewhat acceptable compromise” in that, even though the placeholder files still are not there, this app functions like the OneDrive website and lists the files you have stored in the placeholder app cloud, plus you can drag files onto the app and OneDrive will upload them.

Quick Assist, whereby one person requests assistance and the other person provides help by screen sharing, works much better than the old Remote Assistant app and comes with time-limited security codes. While not as great as it could be, it is good enough for basic remote trouble shooting if access to your files and remote control of your PC is not a problem for you.

In the **Store** area, two things are of note, the new apps and descriptions that populate it and its unnecessary poor redesign whereby they added boxes at the top for such things as “top apps” and “featured apps” and “picks for you.” Similarly, it is hamstrung by two issues: its relatively limited selection of apps as compared to those offered for Android and iOS, and its unnecessary need to push those apps at you. The speed and quality of its downloads and updates have been improved and more modern progress bars and notifications have been added. In addition, it is now possible to browse extensions directly from their own home in the Store. It still needs some indicators for how many downloads a given app has already had and when the most recent version was published.

Skype Preview is intended to prepare users for the re-release of Skype as a UWP (Universal Windows Platform) app, thus replacing the “Get Skype” app that was in the original Windows 10 release, as Microsoft bought Skype in May of 2011 and Skype has been powdered entirely by Microsoft-operated supernodes since May of 2012. This tool is simple and effective as it is. It supports a number of chatbots and does calls and messaging. All in all most users are generally very comfortable with this tool as it is pending release on the anticipated Skype app.

The new **Projection to a PC** feature is handy, at least in concept, but it is not ready for prime time yet as currently released. With it you can project the screen display from a laptop or a Windows 10 mobile device to another Windows 10 PC by using a Wi-Fi Direct connection. There is a caution on the screen for this App that indicates that

this device might have problems displaying your content because its hardware wasn't specifically designed for wireless projectors.

The **Connect** app joins together your Windows 10 Mobile device with your Windows 10 desktop wirelessly without the extra cost of the Display Dock and puts your phone content within a window on your PC.

In **Task View** and **Snap**, not much has changed all that much except Task View adds the ability to pin windows from a particular app to multiple desktops and windows rather than just one. It also allows you to "pin" a chat app or music player where it's always accessible. With Snap you can move apps to the four corners of a screen or one to each side and swap between apps with an easy to use keystroke combination, which makes this a laptop user's answer to using multiple monitors. Also, the Calendar app is now integrated with the Calendar in the Taskbar so that, if you click on the date in the Taskbar, your monthly calendar and appointments will pop up.

Some **miscellaneous additions and fixes** include the following: The erratic movements from using a Bluetooth mouse have been fixed. So have the memory leaks in Edge that could cause pages to become unresponsive when the LastPass extension is enabled. Support for DirectX 12 graphics technology, which is exclusive to Windows 10 devices, has been expanded and improved, although most PC games are still being released in DirectX 11. One click access to Windows 10's Dark theme has been added, although it only works with the Windows Store app (see further above re Store), and websites that support it. To be expected, there are the usual bug fixes too.

Some of the **best hidden features** of the Update include the following: The addition of a

miniplayer for Windows 10's music app, Groove Music, with minimal controls that are visible if you minimize the app to the Taskbar. Cortana now has the ability to remember a small obscure fact for a day, an hour or indefinitely, although coordination of these with user's smartphones is not yet available. You can now switch between audio output sources simply by clicking the volume icon in the Taskbar and then going up to the source menu vs. having to use the Control Panel settings.

Brad Chacos, who has written extensively about the Windows 10 Upgrade, in his recently updated PC WORLD column, No. 2874400, dated August 8, 2016 (*PCWorld.com*), lists the following 10 features as the best new features in the Windows 10 Upgrade to try first:

- the Start Menu;
- the Store app;
- Cortana;
- the Edge browser;
- the Virtual Desktop and Task View;
- the Action Center;
- the revamped core Mail and Calendar apps;
- the Xbox app;
- Continuum; and
- Windows Ink.

Based on my review of the Windows 10 Upgrade I would more or less agree.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the First Anniversary Update Edition of Windows 10 seems to be well worth considering if you have not already downloaded it, although the verdict is still out about whether or not this Update comes with enough new features to convince users that now is the time to switch to the Windows 10 operating system.

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