



Bob's Help Desk

When you need help you can trust!



Life With XP after End of Support!

April 8, 2014 is the deadline!

Are you still running Windows XP on your computer? Is it running just fine, Thank You! and you have no intention of trashing the computer and buying a new one with Windows 8 on it?

I think there are a large number of you out there. Windows XP was a great operating system. There are a number of circumstances where it can continue to serve for some time to come:

1. As a kiosk computer to be used by the public. If you can get your hands on a copy of Windows SteadyState 2.5 that Microsoft killed in 2010, (hmmm... I happen to have a copy and have put it on the website so you can download it) you can set up a Windows XP machine that can not be infected nor corrupted. Allow anyone to use the computer all day long, and at night have it automatically reboot. Next morning, you have a nice clean computer to start the day. Someone loaded porn on the computer during the day, and you don't want other users to be embarrassed by it? Reboot the computer and it is spanking new. I have one of these machines at home that I use to test programs, web links and attachments I get in email. It can't be infected. :-)
2. If you are a careful computer user who doesn't surf the web to unfamiliar territory, doesn't download software of unknown origin, etc. You can dump the Internet Explorer from Windows XP and use either Firefox or Google Chrome as your default browser. These browsers will be supported into the far future even if they are running on Windows XP. Just beware, that on the web, people will be building websites with traps for unsuspecting Windows XP users. Keep your data backed up and create frequent restore points. Also, get yourself a GOOD antivirus program such as Avast! and keep it updated. And once again, think before you click and think about what you are doing and where you are going.
3. Ok, the third option is to change your operating system. If your computer has a good fast processor and enough memory, you might be able to upgrade to Windows 7 or 8 and function well enough. If it is an old computer and has a slow processor, you might think about using this computer with an alternative operating system such as Linux Mint. It has a real nice GUI operating system that isn't such a harsh change from Windows, and you can find all sorts of programs to do most everything you need that will run on it. Hey, give it a whirl!

So, suffice it to say, after April 8, you can still run Windows XP, but you will not get any more security updates. So, whatever weaknesses are found in it, will not get fixed by a Microsoft update. In fact, that is the point where I would remove Internet Explorer from the computer. It was needed for obtaining updates, in the past, but after April 8, it will be the weakest link in the operating system and should never be used again.

Good luck with it. I will definitely keep my SteadyState machine around for quite a while. Please be smart about it.

Bob