Managed IT Services, PC Consulting, Sales, & Service in Central Maryland

News Roundup

There's a lot going on right now in the computer industry, and for once, it's not all warnings about yet another evil email going around. As always, call if you need help with any of the products involved.

Windows 10 Upgrade Pricing is Still Unclear

There are news reports that Windows 10 free upgrades after the free upgrades end July 29th will be $119. The official word is, well, vague, here on the official blog: https://blogs.windows.com/windowsexperience/2016/05/05/windows-10-now-on-300-million-active-devices-free-upgrade-offer-to-end-soon/

There's a price of Windows 10 on new devices and full versions for $119, but no mention of an upgrade price. So if you're going to upgrade, do it before July 29th.

For those of you who have asked, here, again, is my updated answer:

Yes, upgrade, if most of these situations apply:

- Touch-screen notebook or convertible device running Windows 8 or 8.1.
- Windows 7 security patches run to January 2020; if your computer is new enough

that you expect the hardware to last past then, say built after 2013, consider upgrading.
- You have looked up any mission-critical software for compatibility.
- (Very short list: QuickBooks 2015 or newer is OK, Microsoft Office 2007 or newer. Older versions of those programs are not compatible.)
- You have a full image backup of the existing system.
- You have a budget for an unexpected upgrade to a software product or hardware gadget (scanners, frequently) that turns out not to work in Windows 10.
- You've seen Windows 10 running and like it.

No, don't upgrade, if any of these situations apply:

- You have software older than 2 years that can't be updated and that you can't do without.
- Your computer hardware is old enough that you would replace it before January 2020 anyway.
- You don't enjoy change.

Ads in Windows 10? Yes.

There are ads starting to show up in Windows 10, on the lock screen, and 'suggested apps' showing up in the menus. They're not blatant, so far, and are mostly for Microsoft games, so far. They can be turned off, in Settings, Personalization, Lock Screen, and switch from 'Windows Spotlight' to either picture or slideshow.

WordPerfect X8 is Available

The new version of WordPerfect is available for purchase directly from Corel now, and boxed versions will follow late in May. The new version has improvements in document import, PDF fillable-form creation, adds a search-inside-documents feature for WordPerfect files into Windows Explorer, and allows Reveal Codes to be on the left or right side of the screen–that works well on wide monitors. *Not all features are in all versions*; there are lists of features by product family and by product version on the Corel site, here:
http://www.wordperfect.com/us/product/office-suite/

Graphcat 6.4 for WordPerfect X8 will Arrive Soon

My oldest software product is Graphcat Photo Cataloger for WordPerfect, and the current version 6.3 builds photo or clip art catalogs in any version of WordPerfect up to X7. There will be a new version of Graphcat soon, adding support for WordPerfect X8, and free upgrades for any purchases of Graphcat in 2016, and half-price upgrades ($10 off) from any previous version, all the way back to version 1.0 for WordPerfect 5.1/DOS, back in 1991.

Microsoft OneDrive Free Accounts are Shrinking

If you have a OneDrive free account, and had 15Gb of storage, or had any of the 'permanent' free bonuses, that's changing. If you are running Windows 10, there's a OneDrive cloud storage program pre-installed, and Microsoft pushes hard to have you store everything there. As of August 10th, OneDrive free accounts will shrink to 5 Gb. Paid plans start at $1.99/month for 50 Gb–that's not cheap for cloud storage. Google Drive is $1.99 for 100 Gb, and DropBox is $12.50/month for 1 Tb (1000 Gb).

All these cloud products, and there are hundreds of them, are only as good as their software, so some are good for sharing files, others for backup. The software for OneDrive is somewhat like DropBox; it's not a backup in any way--it's a storage box for files that works across multiple computers.