

Hang on ...
you haven't
prepared for
The 2020 Problem?

Here's why you need to move fast



2020 has finally arrived...

And this promises to be an exciting decade for technology, with predictions ranging from flying cars and holidays to the moon (yeah right), to paper thin mobile phones (that sounds more like it).

It's going to be a time of great change. Which is one of the reasons why Microsoft has been so keen to phase out its old software in favour of more up-to-date, 2020-compatible software.

Windows 7, Office 2010 and a whole host of other important software reached end-of-life on January 14th 2020, this is what's known as The 2020 Problem.

The bad news about that is, if you're still using this old unsupported software, you're

now running your business on borrowed time.

IT experts like us have been warning business owners about The 2020 Problem for the past year.

We've seen first-hand the impact that failing, unsupported software can have on an organisation.

Once software is no longer supported by the maker (in this case Microsoft), it can be a real pain trying to keep it working properly.

New bugs won't be fixed, hackers can exploit loopholes without anyone closing them, and you're not compliant with GDPR if you use out-of-date software.

In our experience, there are three types of people; **let's call them Harry, Karen and Joe**



Harry is always prepared. He doesn't like to take chances in life or work, so he always makes sure his IT systems are up to date, safe and fit for purpose. Harry is one of the many business leaders who upgraded his old software this time last year. So he can sail through The 2020 Problem unscathed while his peers are starting to panic.



Karen views IT as an expense she could do without, but she appreciates that her business relies on it. She was initially reluctant to upgrade. But having read numerous reports and spoken to other business owners she knew it would save her money in the long run. Now 2020 is here, Karen's business is fully supported, more productive than ever, and safe from cyber criminals.



Joe is more of a "fly by the seat of his pants" kind of guy. He doesn't believe in wasting time on things that don't demand his attention straight away, so he just pushes it further down his to-do list. Besides, he's a firm believer that IT companies are just out to make a quick buck at his expense, and he's nobody's fool. Joe's answer to The 2020 Problem? Just ignore it - what's the worst that can happen, after all?!

Fast forward **a few months**

Harry and Karen are getting on just fine. Joe, on the other hand, is dealing with some pretty major IT issues. Not only have his systems started to get glitchy and cause significant downtime, he's also been the victim of a cyber attack after hackers exploited a vulnerability in Windows 7. Confidential customer data has been stolen, he's at risk under GDPR, and he's spent a small fortune on damage limitation.

Don't be like Joe.

If you continue to use any of the following systems this year your business **WILL** suffer:

- Windows 7
- Office 2010
- Office 2016 for Mac
- Exchange 2010
- Project 2010
- SharePoint 2010
- Visio 2010
- Visual Studio 2010
- Server 2008
- Windows Server 1809
- Small Business Server 2011

But what if it all looks ok?

If things still seem like they're running along problem free, don't be deceived. Your PCs might look perfectly fine for a few weeks yet, but every day they will become more vulnerable. The withdrawal of support from Microsoft means you'll no longer have any security patches or updates, which makes you a sitting target for hackers.

It also means that nobody will be able to help you fix bugs, identify risks or provide technical support for any new or existing problems. With the estimated cost of downtime coming in at around £192 per hour, we're guessing that techy problems are not the way you want to start your year.

It's estimated that **one in three** businesses will be affected by The 2020 Problem over the coming months.

One of the biggest issues that presents is GDPR compliance. If you can't prove you're using up to date and secure software, your client's data is at risk.



While the ICO have only imposed a few fines so far, now the legislation is in its second year, and the team in charge of data breaches are really finding their feet. Organisations that fail to get their houses in order are being made examples of. So if you still refuse to follow advice and get your systems upgraded, you can count on problems ahead.

The threat of cybercrime is greater than ever

Cybercrime is already the biggest threat to businesses around the world, and out of date software multiplies the risks to a whole new level.

The global cyber crime industry is estimated to have generated a whopping \$1.3 trillion in 2018 alone - and that's a conservative guess. In the UK, the cost of hacking is estimated at £27 billion per annum, with organisations of all shapes and sizes falling prey to increasingly sophisticated attacks.

Malware (malicious software) is still the number one choice of attack, with reports of successful attacks going up by 11% between 2018 and 2019.

The vast majority of cyber attackers are finding their way into computer systems by way of phishing emails (emails that pretend to be from someone else).

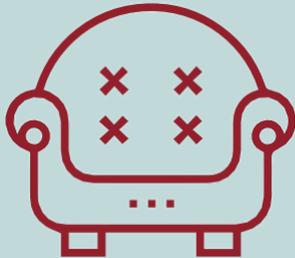
Proving that organisations everywhere are still failing to educate their staff about the perils of clicking on dodgy links.



So, what are your options?

You could:

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Continue to do nothing...

Now, we don't mean to be rude, but this would be very silly. Failing to take this situation seriously is a bit like running through a field full of lions wearing a suit made of bacon. The bottom line is this, if you make yourself an easy target the hackers will find you - and be only too happy to tear your business to shreds.

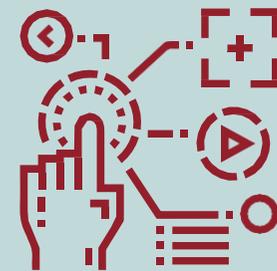
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Upgrade your software

Moving across to Windows 10 and Office 365 won't just keep you safe from The 2020 Problem, it will help your business become more secure and productive too. The latest software from Microsoft is all about empowering organisations to make better decisions and do things more quickly and efficiently, from pretty much anywhere in the world.

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Upgrade your devices

If you're going to make a change, you may as well go the whole hog. A new IT infrastructure which incorporates modern devices that are all expertly designed to run your upgraded software is a great way to start the year. You will be amazed by how much time, money and effort upgrading your kit will save you in the long run.

Whichever upgrade option you choose, Gregory Micallef Associates (GMA) have got all the skills, experience, and technical know-how you need to make an change to your IT setup pain and hassle free.

Contact us today for a no obligation conversation about how to stop your business becoming a casualty of The 2020 Problem.



GMA

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