

Table of Contents

When Should I Start Moving from Windows XP to Windows 7?	3
Trinus Recommends: Plan Now, Implement Later	3
What Versions are Available for Windows 7?	3
Trinus Recommends: Version Selection	4
What Upgrade Options are Available for Windows 7?	4
Trinus Recommends: Upgrade Options	5
What are the hardware requirements for Windows 7?	5
Trinus Recommends: Hardware Requirements	5
Should I use the 32 bit or 64 bit versions of Windows 7?	5
Trinus Recommends: 64 Bit Windows 7	6
What Are My Options For Upgrading Windows XP to Windows 7?	6
Trinus Recommends: Fresh Install All Windows 7 Systems	7
How Should I Migrate to Windows 7?	7
Trinus Recommends: Upgrade to Windows 7 with Hardware Upgrades	8
Appendix A: Windows 7 Business Ready Versions Comparison	9

When Should I Start Moving from Windows XP to Windows 7?

The simple answer is “Immediately!” This does not mean that you should necessarily install Windows 7 on all of your business workstations today but you should start assessing your environment to determine what you need to do to get to Windows 7.

While your systems may be running just fine today with Windows XP, it is only a matter of time before you will no longer be able to purchase Windows XP. It is unclear at this time when that will be but best guess is that you will not be able to purchase new copies of Windows XP or systems with Windows XP pre-installed by **April 2010**.



Trinus Recommends: Plan Now, Implement Later

The best plan of attack for Windows 7 is to start planning to move to Windows 7 immediately but wait to actually make the move. The general rule of thumb that Trinus follows for any new operating system is to wait for Service Pack¹ 1 to come out before deploying it into client environments. Service Pack 1 is estimated to come out April 2010.

What Versions are Available for Windows 7?

One of the decisions that you will need to make about Windows 7 is around the version that you will be purchasing. For Windows XP, there were two versions that you could purchase. Windows 7 is a bit more complicated. There are several different versions of which not all are available in all areas.

Standard Editions

Windows 7 Starter

The least-featured edition of Windows 7; the Windows Aero theme is not included, and it won't be available in a 64-bit variant. This edition will be available pre-installed on computers through system integrators or computer manufacturers.

Windows 7 Home Basic

Windows 7 Home Basic will be available in emerging markets such as Bangladesh, Brazil, People's Republic of China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Thailand. It will not be available in countries such as Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, The Netherlands, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, New Zealand, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Some Aero options are excluded along with several new features.

¹ A Service Pack is a large number of fixes for an operating system that are all installed at once that improve performance of the system and make the system more secure.

Windows 7 Home Premium

This edition contains features aimed at the home market segment, such as Windows Media Center, Windows Aero and touch-screen controls.

Windows 7 Professional

This edition is targeted towards enthusiasts and small business users. It includes all the features of Windows 7 Home Premium, and adds the ability to participate in a Windows Server domain. Additional features include operating as a Remote Desktop server, location aware printing, Encrypting File System, Presentation Mode and Windows XP Mode.

Windows 7 Enterprise

This edition targets the enterprise segment of the market and will be sold through volume licensing to companies which have Software Assurance contract with Microsoft. Additional features include support for Multilingual User Interface (MUI) packages, BitLocker Drive Encryption, and UNIX application support. Not available through retail or OEM channels, this edition will be distributed through Microsoft Software Assurance (SA). As a result it includes several SA-only benefits, including a license allowing the running of multiple virtual machines, and activation via VLK.

Windows 7 Ultimate

Windows 7 Ultimate contains the same features as Windows 7 Enterprise, but unlike that edition it will be available to home users on an individual license basis. Windows 7 Home Premium and Windows 7 Professional users will be able to upgrade to Windows 7 Ultimate for a fee using Windows Anytime Upgrade if they wish to do so. Unlike Windows Vista Ultimate, the Windows 7 Ultimate edition will not include the Windows Ultimate Extras feature or any exclusive features.



Trinus Recommends: Version Selection

Based on the requirements that most businesses have, Trinus recommends for most of its clients that they use **Windows 7 Professional**. The advantages that are afforded with Windows 7 Enterprise or Windows 7 Ultimate do not warrant the additional cost or effort for the majority of small businesses. The only exception to this is in the case where you have to upgrade more than 5 systems. If this is the case, **Windows 7 Enterprise** may be more cost effective.

What Upgrade Options are Available for Windows 7?

Some cost savings can be realized by upgrading present systems to Windows 7. If you have a licensed copy of Windows 2000, Windows XP, or Windows Vista, you can purchase an upgrade to a comparable version for less cost. For example, if you want to go from Windows XP Professional to Windows 7 Professional, you can purchase a single upgrade.

If you want to go from Windows XP Home to Windows 7 Professional, then you will be required to purchase two upgrades. First, you will need to upgrade Windows XP Home to Windows 7 Home Premium. Then, you would have to purchase an upgrade from Windows 7 Home Premium to Windows 7 Professional. Once you take into consideration the costs associated with the two upgrades, it may be to your advantage to not upgrade and simply purchase a complete new license.



Trinus Recommends: Upgrade Options

If you are planning on upgrading, it is recommended that you upgrade only when you can perform a single upgrade and you have less than five systems to upgrade. If you need to perform multiple upgrades, you are probably better off purchasing a new license of Windows 7 Business. If you have more than five systems to upgrade, it may be worth looking at Windows 7 Enterprise to reduce your costs.

What are the hardware requirements for Windows 7?

According to Microsoft, Windows 7 Professional will run on the following hardware set:

- 1 gigahertz (GHz) or faster 32-bit (x86) or 64-bit (x64) processor
- 1 gigabyte (GB) RAM (32-bit) or 2 GB RAM (64-bit)
- 16 GB available hard disk space (32-bit) or 20 GB (64-bit)
- DirectX 9 graphics device with WDDM 1.0 or higher driver



Trinus Recommends: Hardware Requirements

Even though the minimum requirements for Windows 7 are relatively low, it has been determined that such a system would be almost unusable or extremely frustrating. Trinus believes that the following would be a more realistic and useful hardware set:

- 2.4 gigahertz (GHz) or faster 64-bit (x64) processor
- 4 gigabyte (GB) RAM
- 120 GB available hard disk space
- BIOS supporting virtualization

Should I use the 32 bit or 64 bit versions of Windows 7?

One of the important decisions you need to make around Windows 7 is whether or not you will run on a 32 bit or 64 bit architecture. The biggest advantage to running a 64 bit version of Windows 7 is that you will be able to install and use more than 4 GB of RAM. While this may not seem to be a big issue at this time, it

is important to keep in mind that, while 4 GB of RAM seems like a lot of memory now, this will change over the next couple of years and 8 or 16 GB of RAM will quickly become the standard.

64 bit Pitfalls

There are a few issues around running 64 bit Windows 7 that need to be addressed prior performing the actual upgrade.

Acquire 64 bit drivers

It is critical that 64 bit drivers be available for all of the hardware that the Windows 7 64 bit system accesses. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Printers
- Scanners
- Copiers
- Keyboards
- Mice
- Storage Devices

If the manufacturer of the product does not provide 64 bit drivers, the products may not work correctly with your system. It may be necessary to replace the equipment with new equipment that supports 64 bit.

Ensure software runs with 64 bit

Just like drivers, some software is dependent of a 32 bit system and may not work properly on a 64 bit system. Contact the manufacturer of the software to ensure that it works properly in a 64 bit environment.

System compatibility

Not all systems can run a 64 bit version of Windows 7. Make sure that your system is 64 bit capable before upgrading to Windows 7.



Trinus Recommends: 64 Bit Windows 7

Even though there are a number of pitfalls associated with moving to a 64 bit operating system, it is just a matter of time before your business will need to go to a 64 bit system, either because 32 bit versions of operating systems are no longer available or RAM requirements are going to push you to it.

What Are My Options For Installing Windows XP to Windows 7?

When installing Windows 7 on a Windows XP system, there is **no upgrade option**. This means that you cannot put the Windows 7 disk into your Windows XP computer and use the “Upgrade Now” option.

Rather, you will be required to migrate all of your data and setting off your computer and then install a fresh version of Windows 7 onto that system. While this may sound like a very difficult process, it is actually going to provide the best user experience in the long term.



Trinus Recommends: Fresh Install All Windows 7 Systems

If you are going to upgrade any systems to Windows 7, it is recommended that you perform a fresh installation regardless of the operating system that you are coming from. This will give you the best user experience and help to eliminate many of the smaller issues on the system that have accumulated over time.

How Should I Migrate to Windows 7?

There are several different ways that you can move your environment over to Windows 7. Here are some of the typical strategies that businesses employ:

Upgrade All Systems to Windows 7 at Once

Many companies will decide that they would like to upgrade all of their present workstations and laptops to Windows 7 at once by purchasing new/upgrade licenses or software assurance agreements.

Pros

- This will ensure that all of the employees are on a standard computing platform

Cons

- Can be the most costly way to upgrade
- Highest risk of failure and potential of lost productivity time

Perform a Staggered Upgrade to Windows 7

Some companies will break up all of the workstations into a number of groups and then upgrade one group at a time.

Pros

- Issues can be mitigated as they arise and can then be avoided for the next group of upgrades

Cons

- Can be a costly way to upgrade
- Multiple operating systems will need to be supported for a period of time

Upgrade to Windows 7 with Hardware Upgrades

Another popular strategy is to leave all of the workstations on Windows XP. As old workstations are replaced with new workstations, order the new workstations with Windows 7.

Pros

- Issues can be mitigated as they arise
- No extra costs associated with present systems
- Removes issues of hardware compatibility

Cons

- Multiple operating systems will need to be supported for a period of time
- Can take several years to complete upgrade, depending on refresh cycle



Trinus Recommends: Upgrade to Windows 7 with Hardware Upgrades

For sheer ease of upgrading and reduced costs, waiting to upgrade specific systems to Windows 7 when you replace hardware is the recommended way to upgrade to Windows 7. This provides you with the least expensive way to perform the upgrade while giving you the most amount of time to train and prepare for the upgrade.

Book your Windows 7 Readiness Assessment Today

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computer

Trinus Technologies has the expertise and skill to help plan your path to Windows 7. With our Windows 7 Readiness Assessment, you can be sure of your migration path for your organization. We will...

- uncover hardware, software, or driver incompatibilities to Windows 7 and 64 bit computing
- receive a complete hardware and software inventory to assist planning for budget requirements
- deliver a custom Windows 7 upgrade plan for your organization

Call us now to schedule an appointment with one of our Windows 7 advisors.

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Appendix A: Windows 7 Business Ready Versions Comparison

Features / Availability	Professional	Enterprise	Ultimate
	Retail and OEM licensing	Volume licensing	Retail and OEM licensing
32-bit and 64-bit versions	Both	Both	Both
Maximum physical memory (64-bit mode)	192 GB	192 GB	192 GB
Maximum physical CPUs supported	2	2	2
Home Group (create and join)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Backup and Restore Center	Yes	Yes	Yes
Multiple monitors	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fast user switching	Yes	Yes	Yes
Desktop Wallpaper Changeable	Yes	Yes	Yes
Desktop Window Manager	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows Mobility Center	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows Aero	Yes	Yes	Yes
Multi-Touch	Yes	Yes	Yes
Premium Games Included	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows Media Center	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows Media Player Remote Media Experience	Yes	Yes	Yes
Encrypting File System	Yes	Yes	Yes
Location Aware Printing	Yes	Yes	Yes
Remote Desktop Host	Yes	Yes	Yes
Presentation Mode	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows Server domain joining	Yes	Yes	Yes
Windows XP Mode	Yes	Yes	Yes
Aero glass remoting	No	Yes	Yes
AppLocker	No	Yes	Yes
BitLocker Drive Encryption	No	Yes	Yes
BranchCache Distributed Cache	No	Yes	Yes
DirectAccess	No	Yes	Yes
Subsystem for Unix-based Applications	No	Yes	Yes
Multilingual User Interface Pack	No	Yes	Yes
Virtual Hard Disk Booting	No	Yes	Yes