



Helping You Benefit From Today's Technologies

Windows 10 Support is Ending How to Prepare Your Business

If your business is still running on Windows 10, now is the time to take action. As of October 2025, Microsoft will stop providing security updates, bug fixes, and technical support for Windows 10. While your systems will continue to function, using an unsupported operating system exposes your business to security threats, compatibility issues, and potential downtime. The good news? Windows 11 offers enhanced security, productivity tools, and a free upgrade.

Here's how to prepare.

The Risks of Staying on Windows 10

- 1. Security Vulnerabilities** – Without security patches, your business becomes an easy target for cyberattacks, putting sensitive data at risk.
- 2. Software Compatibility Issues** – New software will be optimized for Windows 11, meaning older systems may struggle to keep up.
- 3. No Technical Support** – Microsoft will no longer assist with troubleshooting Windows 10 issues, potentially leading to costly downtime.
- 4. Limited Extended Security Options** – Paid extended support will be available, but only temporarily and at an increasing cost.

Is Your Business Ready for Windows 11?

Before upgrading, check whether your current hardware meets Windows 11 requirements. Key



specifications include a compatible processor, at least 4GB of RAM, and TPM 2.0 for enhanced security. To simplify the process, use Microsoft's PC Health Check Tool to verify system compatibility.

If your devices don't meet the requirements, you have two options:

- Upgrade your hardware: Minor improvements like adding more RAM may be sufficient.
- Invest in new devices: While costly upfront, newer hardware enhances performance and ensures long-term compatibility.

Preparing for the Upgrade

1. Back Up Your Data

From The Desk of David Snell

Is It Spring Yet?

I've got my grow lights and starter soil pods set up in the basement and I'm anxiously waiting for those first sprouts to appear! Pam has been sending me reel after reel on how to prune tomato plants and other vegetables for optimum growth. Those, and chicken outfits! We don't have chickens, we WON'T have chickens, but she loves to see the crazy things people do for them!



Speaking of Pam, on Tuesday, March 25, she was surprised and honored to be presented the Membership Engagement Award by the Cranberry Country Chamber of Commerce at their Annual Meeting. The Massachusetts State Senate's Citation and Chamber's Award were for her commitment to Strategic Marketing Partnerships and Member Education. She loves this chamber and was thrilled!

She's always been committed to forming partnerships with other business members; you can see that when you read their articles in our newsletters and on our websites,

including the OfficeManagersSociety.com

That brings us to this newsletter:

Attorney Helene Horn Figman gives us an update on "**ANTI-SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICIES AND TRAINING FOR YOUR EMPLOYEES**" on page 4.

Deb Paret and Kaitly Almeida of Right Fit Recruiting's article "**Hire for Attitude, Train for Skill**" is something that we practice, too.

You'll also see an article by Brian Hoffman of **Red Ball Promotions** and **Red Ball Cares**. He was the Businessperson of the Year recipient from the Cranberry Country Chamber. His article on **Employee Recognition** was also in the magazine that she put together, and Susan Rooks edited, to be included in the event's swag bags. His article is on page 6.

Susan Rooks, the Grammar Goddess, our editor, and another Cranberry Country Chamber Ambassador, writes "**Editors Can Help Businesses Shine.**" We know it's true; page 7.

As of this writing, we don't know how the tariffs will affect computer prices or inventory. Our article "**Windows 10 Support is Ending - How to Prepare Your Business**" covers the risks and benefits of upgrading. It's something that every business must consider.

See the box to the right that reminds you to consider the hardware requirements for Windows 11, and your own software, before upgrading. Visit our website for a quick video and more information.

Wishing for Spring Weather,

Continued from front page

- Using external hard drives for physical backups.
- Leveraging cloud storage for automated, real-time syncing.
- Ensuring all key documents and software settings are backed up.

2. Plan a Smooth Migration

To minimize disruption, schedule the upgrade during non-peak hours or roll it out in stages across departments. Inform employees in advance and encourage them to save their work before the transition.

3. Check Software & Peripheral Compatibility

Confirm that essential business applications and external devices (printers, scanners, etc.) work with Windows 11. Updating drivers and software patches may be necessary.

The Benefits of Upgrading to Windows 11

Windows 11 isn't just about staying updated – it offers tangible benefits for business productivity and security:

- 1. Enhanced Security** – TPM 2.0 and built-in malware protections help safeguard your data.
- 2. Improved Multitasking** – Snap Layouts and Snap Groups make organizing open Windows seamless.
- 3. Microsoft Teams Integration** – Communication and collaboration tools are built directly into the OS.

4. AI-Powered Windows Copilot – Automates tasks and boosts efficiency with intelligent assistance.

5. Streamlined Interface – A modern design with a centered Start menu for a cleaner workflow.

Adjusting to Windows 11

While Windows 11 is user-friendly, some employees may need time to adapt. Providing a short training session on features like Snap Layouts, Widgets, and the new Start menu can ease the transition. Address any compatibility concerns early and ensure all systems are performing optimally post-upgrade.

It's also worth giving your people a brief overview of any new features or layout changes in Windows 11 to help them get comfortable with the system right away.

Final Thoughts

Upgrading to Windows 11 is an essential step in keeping your business secure and efficient. Preparing now ensures a seamless transition with minimal disruption. If handling the migration feels overwhelming, consider working with a professional IT service to manage the upgrade smoothly.

Don't wait until the last minute – start planning your move to Windows 11 today.

Get in touch – we can help!



Don't ignore hardware requirements for Windows 11

Microsoft has warned that forcing Windows 11 onto unsupported hardware is a risky move. Sure, you can do it – but you'll be on your own if things go wrong.

<https://ACTSmartIT.com/hardware-require-win-11>

ANTI-SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICIES AND TRAINING FOR YOUR EMPLOYEES

Under MA General Laws, Chapter 151B, employers with six or more employees are REQUIRED to adopt a written policy against sexual harassment.

An employer's policy must include notice to employees that sexual harassment in the workplace is unlawful and that it is unlawful to retaliate against an employee for filing a complaint of sexual harassment. The policy should also assert the employer's commitment to investigate any complaint of sexual harassment. If you do not have a policy or you need an updated policy, please let us know.

Further, MA law encourages employers to conduct education and training programs on sexual harassment for all employees on a regular basis (suggested annually). At the time of an employee's hire, and again at the anti-harassment training, the written policies against sexual harassment are distributed. If the training is done virtually, we can provide the materials in hard copy or have you upload the policies to your employee portal.

Should you wish to schedule your annual anti-sexual harassment training session before the summer (when many employees take their PTO), kindly reach out to this office by email and indicate preferred dates for May and June. We will do our best to accommodate the dates requested.

*Attorney Helene Horn Figman combines specialized legal knowledge in employment law with the skills and perspectives uniquely suited to Human Resources Consulting.
www.figmanlaw.com*

Information about her anti-harassment and anti-discrimination education programs can be found at www.workplaceawarenesstraining.com

This article has been prepared by the Law Offices of Helene Horn Figman, P.C. for general informational purposes only. It does not constitute legal advice and is presented without any representation of warranty whatsoever.



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Hire For Attitude. Train for Skill.

This is an old HR tenet, which all HR professionals know well. As an HR professional with 35 years experience in a variety of industries, I have learned that that old HR tenet is the best philosophy to adopt when hiring.

You may find the candidate with the experience, but the wrong attitude for your organization, business or practice. There is another thing I have learned over the years as an HR professional, and that is, you cannot train for attitude. An employee with a poor attitude is not valuable to me as an employer.

I can teach someone the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for the job, but I cannot teach them how to have a good attitude.

This includes interpersonal skills, which are often overlooked.

How do we know anything about a candidate's attitude and interpersonal skills?

We have signs from the very first contact with the candidate, and then every interaction following that. Take note of the professionalism and respect how the candidate shows when communicating with the recruiter, or employer, from the first email, the first phone conversation and even scheduling of the interviews. Does the candidate respond promptly, and use professional language in their communication, both oral and

written? I have had candidates supply one-word answers to me when communicating via email. That is not a sign of respect. I have had candidates fail to respond to my outreach efforts, only to, weeks or months later, blow up my phone repeatedly asking for an interview. Candidates show you what they will be like on the job from the moment they contact you. Pay attention to all of it, as their attitude is on display.

For any position, within any industry, I would rather hire someone with a good attitude who I could train, than hire someone with the experience and a poor attitude. I have to keep in mind that hiring someone with a poor attitude will ultimately impact the rest of my workforce, and sometimes, rather quickly. Then, I will have more than one problem to deal with.

Remember: Hire for attitude. Train for skill.



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Employee Recognition

In today's workplace, with job mobility, hybrid workspaces and positions, and seemingly endless enticements saying **"WE'RE HIRING,"** why spend resources on employee recognition if they're just going to move on?



Well, here are 5 very good reasons:

1. Improving Retention: Recognition plays a pivotal role in retaining talent. When employees feel appreciated, they are less likely to look elsewhere or to respond to the endless enticements that come to them via their networks.

2. Enhancing Team Collaboration: Recognition can foster a sense of belonging. When individuals are acknowledged for their contributions, it encourages them to work together more effectively to achieve common goals. Stronger teamwork and increased employee engagement can result in improved overall performance.

1. Increasing Employee Loyalty: Timely and effective recognition is far more likely to develop loyalty than money alone – yes, money is good, but loyal employees are often willing to go the extra mile and act as brand ambassadors. And that's good for your brand!

3. Driving Continuous Improvement: Recognizing employees can foster a culture of continuous improvement. Recognized employees are much more likely to identify areas for innovation – and see themselves in that vision. Recognition can lead to increased efficiency and competitiveness for the company.

4. Boosting Employee Morale and Motivation: Recognizing employees for their hard work and accomplishments can significantly boost their morale and motivation. When employees feel valued and appreciated, they are more likely to stay engaged, and STAY!

Recognizing employees isn't just good business – it's good for business!

Congratulations, Brian!

Brian Hoffman was awarded the Business Person of the Year by the Cranberry Country Chamber of Commerce at their 2025 Annual Meeting!



Brian M. Hoffman, Director of Business Development

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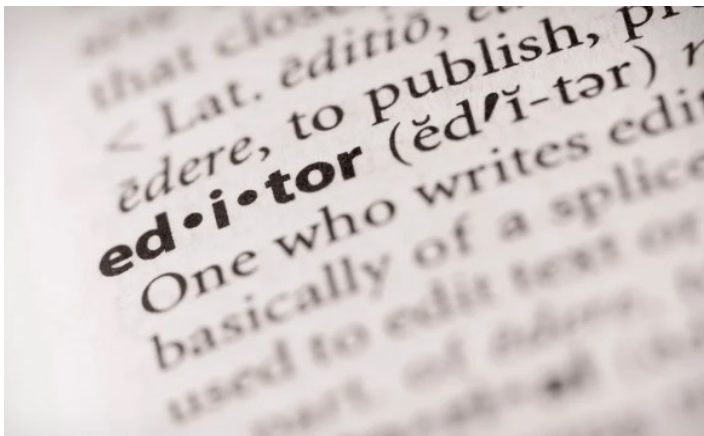
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Editors Can Help Businesses Shine

Does your business have a website? Who created the content? Who checked to ensure all the words and punctuation were the right ones?

Does your company have bloggers who write about the products you sell, the customers you're hoping for, or other descriptions of your business's journey?

Are those folks who know so much about your company and/or industry also well versed in the ins and outs of the American grammar rules?



They could be one of the otherwise smart content creators who have lost track of the American grammar rules, so the results aren't being seen in the best light. Like most of us, they may have taken their last grammar class when they were too young to give a rat's ... rump about using pronouns or

punctuation correctly.

And they may also rely too much on spell-check, which only checks spelling. It does NOT check usage! So if the wrong it's/its or their/there/they're is used, spellcheck won't flag it.

And that's where an editor can help.

An editor may know little about your company or industry, but they're going to know a lot about writing, grammar, punctuation – all that stuff that can make a huge difference in a customer's eyes.

They can smooth out the content, knowing the reason(s) for it, and specifically who the target audience is.

They can make suggestions to strengthen the content, and ensure that it works as was intended.

Editors are a valuable asset to have, either on your company's staff or brought in as needed.

Their only goal as I see it is simple:

To help their clients look and sound as smart as they are.

Grammar Goddess Communication

I will help you look and sound as smart as you are.



**Editing / Proofreading of
Annual Reports — Blogs — Business / Nonfiction
Books — Podcast Transcriptions — Websites**

**Never ask: How smart is that person?
Always ask: How IS that person smart?**

April 2025—In This Issue:

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«First Name» «Last Name»
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*This newsletter was thoughtfully edited by
Susan Rooks, the Grammar Goddess,
so we can look and sound as smart as we are.*

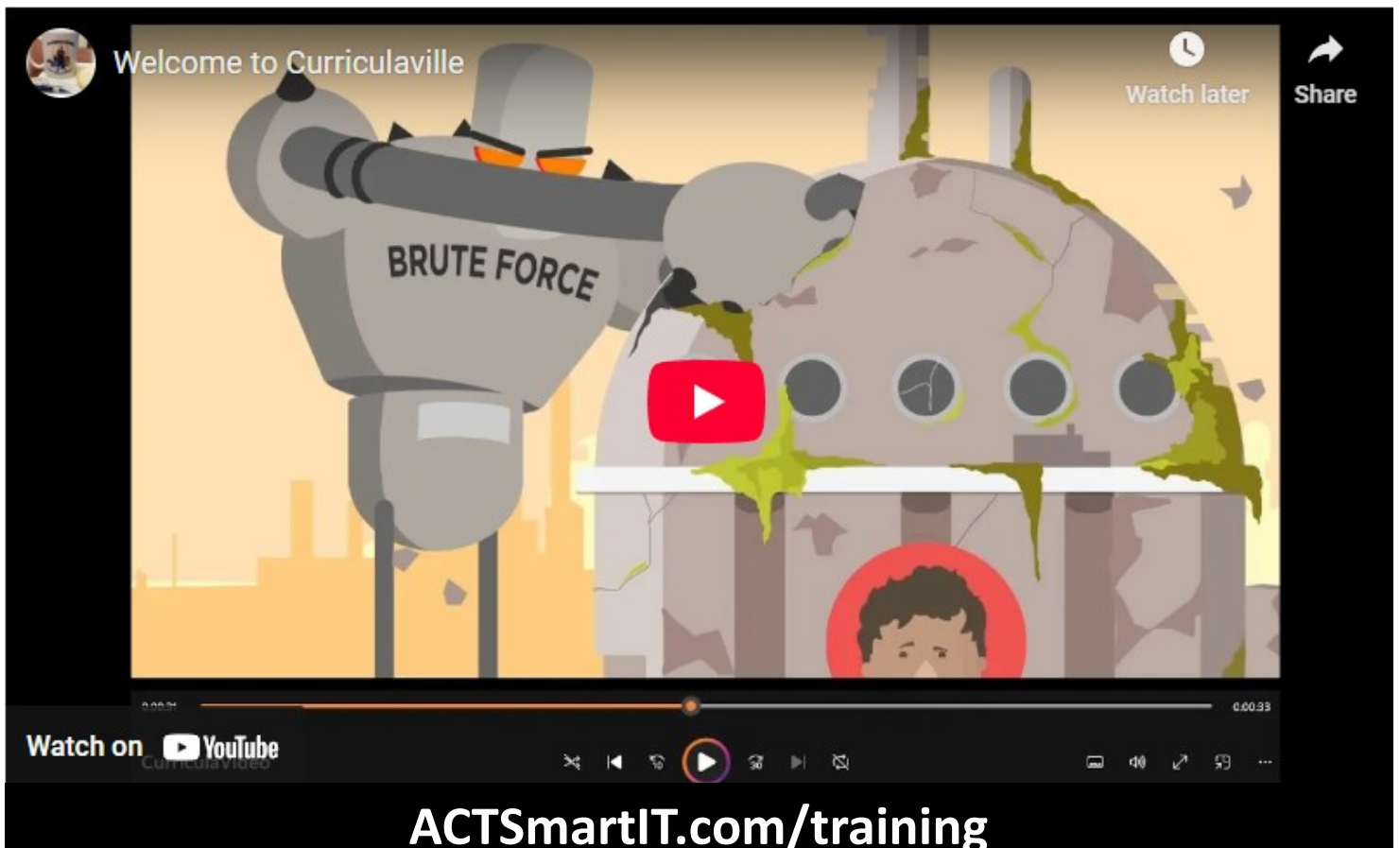


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