

# STAR Watch

Statewide Technology Assistance Resources Project

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## Office 365 To The Cloud...

Almost every office that has more than two computers in it, has its computers networked. The problem is very small offices don't have money or staff to implement functionality that could help the employees to do their jobs faster and/or better.

Microsoft has a service available that could be helpful to many organizations.

### What is Office 365?

Office 365 is a subscription-based service provided by Microsoft via the Internet that provides users with a suite of products very similar to the traditional Office product. But Office 365 has additional features that could make it desirable to organizations with limited budgets.

Instead of laying out the cash to purchase a copy of Office for each person in the organization, a User Subscription License (USL) is acquired for each employee. The organization pays Microsoft a monthly fee for each USL. The number of USLs that a company has can be increased or

decreased as needed. There is no up-front setup charge.

Depending on the needs of the users and complexity of the organization, there are a variety of plans that offer varying levels of functionality, methods of integration with existing IT infrastructure, different support options, and of course, varying pricing levels. Depending on an organization's needs, the price per user can range from \$6 - \$27 per month.

Many smaller organizations that have simple IT needs could get along very well with the \$6/month plan.



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For \$6/month, Office 365 will provide the following:

- The ability of users to connect to Office 365 from anywhere an Internet connection is available, including mobile devices.
- An email and calendaring system. Each user gets 25GB to store email.
- A package of web applications that are best described as "Office Lite" (You may add the full-featured version of Office for an additional \$15/month or \$12/month with a 1-year contract).
- The ability to access and view files from a mobile device
- 10GB (plus 500MB/user) of storage for document and file storage. Included with the space are tools that allow the organization to manage access to the files and documents.
- The ability to manage, share and/or edit online Access databases.
- The ability to connect to online meetings that include audio, video, and web conferencing with others inside and outside your organization. This includes the sharing of desktops and online whiteboards.
- Tools to design and maintain a public web site.
- Online help only

While this may work very well for a small office with a simple IT infrastructure, more sophisticated operations will definitely require more features. All of these

"Enterprise" solutions contain the following features:

- 24/7 Live support
- Active Directory integration
- Messaging, calendaring, email, email archiving (for up to 10 years). All of these features accessible via the web or mobile devices.
- Online meetings and Instant messaging
- Anti-virus and anti-spam filtering via Microsoft ForeFront

This basic plan will cost \$10/month per user. For another \$6/month, you can add the ability to view, edit, share content created by Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

For \$24/month per user, users get the full-featured version of Office Professional Plus, advanced archive capabilities, unlimited email storage, and hosted voicemail. This is the plan that is offered in the 30-day trial.

#### **Must all users be on the same plan?**

No. Microsoft allows an organization to choose multiple plans which best suit the individuals using them.

Additionally, there are a multitude of other products and services that can be added to USLs as needed.

While Office 365 may not be a good fit for every organization, we are sure that it can be beneficial to some.

With regard to discounts for not-for-profits, the Microsoft website refers to TechSoup-Stock.com as a provider of this product, but we could not find Office 365 on their site. We will keep watching.



# Windows 8?

**Just when people are getting ready to move to Windows 7, along comes talk of its successor**

Recently, information has become available about Microsoft's plans for a successor to Windows 7.

The first source is Microsoft itself. At the All Things Digital D9 Conference (Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 5/31/11 – 6/02/11), Microsoft Windows Unit President Steven Sinofsky and VP Julie Larson-Green demo'd a prototype of the operating system that will eventually replace Windows 7.

The second source of information is a series of slide presentations, allegedly authored by Microsoft, that was deliberately leaked or inadvertently shared on an Italian web site. According to several articles, Microsoft has been asked to comment about information in the slide presentation, but will not authenticate the content of the slide shows. On the flip side, Microsoft does not deny their authenticity.

## **The biggest change...**

It appears that the major thrust of Windows 8 will be a complete re-think of the user interface. The new interface is intended to work equally well on any-

thing from an 8-inch tablet to a monster-size display screen on a full-blown computer workstation.

Windows 8 will support two kinds of applications. The first is the classic Windows application, which would run on a desktop as it does in Windows 7 and Vista. New to Windows 8 is a type of application (likely written in HTML5 or Java) that would have the look and feel of a mobile application that runs on a smart phone or tablet computer. This new type of user interface will allow for the use of touch screens as well as mice and keyboards.

The new Windows 8 interface is intended to be used on 16:9 display screens that have a resolution of 1366x768 or greater. This will allow two of the new Windows 8 applications to be displayed. If the resolution is slightly less, only one of the new Windows 8 applications would be displayed. If the resolution is 1024x60 or less, only the traditional Windows desktop would be displayed.

Instead of the traditional "Start" button, the new interface has a "Start screen"



similar to the one on Windows Phone 7, including the live application tile feature. Users will be able to revert to the traditional desktop by choosing the “Desktop” tile on the screen. When traditional applications run, the screen will automatically revert to the traditional interface.

### What else?

Faster startup. The goal is to allow a PC running Windows 8 to start up “nearly instantly in some cases” and be “ready to work without any long or unexpected delays”.

Security. Microsoft is toying with the use of facial recognition as a method to log users onto their PC’s. When creating a userID, the user’s face is captured by the webcam connected to the computer. Whenever the user sits down in front of the computer, the operating system identifies the user from the stored image and logs him/her in.

### Removing friction with facial recognition

- Camera integration will likely be ubiquitous in 2012
- My PC could detect my presence and log me in automatically



Help and Support. When users need help, Windows 8 will connect them to the latest information available from Microsoft Support and their PC manufacturer.

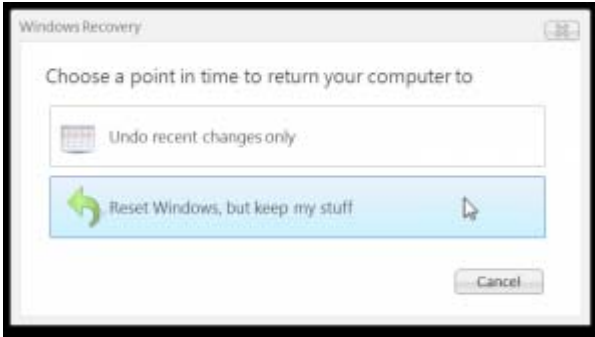
### Scenario Description

- Windows 8 will arm users with an effective set of tools that will both deepen their understanding of the state of their PC, and enable them to fine tune their PC experience. Users will be presented with helpful and intuitive views of the system, applications running, resources being used, helpful personal and historical context, along with actionable, timely and pertinent advice and suggestions.
- Possible Areas of Investment
  - Startup Performance
  - Task Manager – Run-Time Issues
  - Power/Battery Performance

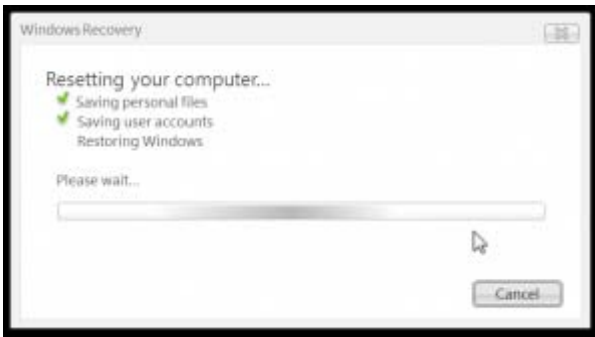
Windows Store. Anyone who has a smart phone is familiar with the “app store” as the place to purchase applications for his/her smart phone. At this point in time, Microsoft is seriously considering including the functional equivalent of an “app store” in Windows 8. This feature, if implemented, would allow users to quickly and easily purchase applications for their computer.

Windows 8 Reset. If this works, it would be fantastic. Consider the following scenario: A user notices that his/her computer is acting strangely or performing poorly. After exhausting all simple fixes, the user wishes to completely re-install Windows 8 plus all of his/her applications without losing any information stored on his/her PC. This is one of the ideas that are being explored for Windows 8. As described in several articles, the user would only need to do the following...

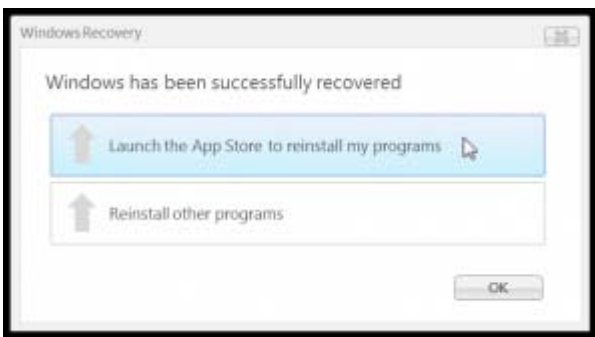
- The user would select “Reset” from a menu somewhere in Windows 8.



- The System would retain personal files, user account information, and personalization settings.
- Windows 8 would be restored.



- The system would reinstall personal files, user account information, and personalization settings
- Any applications purchased at the "Windows Store" would be reinstalled on the PC



Hardware requirements. One of the few things that Microsoft has confirmed about Windows 8 is the hardware requirements will be the same as or less than those of Windows 7.

### What else?

While planning Windows 8, Microsoft is paying serious attention to Apple and how it creates and maintains customer loyalty. It appears that Microsoft has just discovered a key component of Apple's success: It just works.

### How Apple does it: A virtuous cycle

- Apple brand is known for high quality, uncomplicated, "It just works"
- Product UX is designed to help people realize value
- Realized value leads to product satisfaction, which in turn feeds brand loyalty
- This is something people will pay for!



### In summary...

Based on the information that has surfaced to date, what's not to like? But this is very early in the product development cycle. Microsoft could decide to remove some of these features and add others. More concrete information about Windows will be coming in Microsoft's developer conference in Anaheim, CA mid-September. Stay tuned.





## WNYLC Web Statistics For July 2011

Total Hits.....456,255  
 Number of Pages Viewed.....167,136  
 Total Visitors.....70,284  
 Average Hits/Day.....14,717  
 Average Pages /Day.....5,391  
 Top Web Browsers Used:  
 Internet Explorer 8.x.....34%  
 Internet Explorer 7.x.....32%  
 Internet Explorer 6.x.....17%  
 Firefox.....12%  
 Google Chrome.....1%

### Top Operating Systems Used:

Windows 7.....14%  
 Windows Vista.....12%  
 Windows XP.....38%  
 Mac OS.....3%



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