

Microsoft End of Life (EOL) and What It Means

A Microsoft product lifecycle normally ends with Microsoft users no longer receiving new features and security updates. **Windows 7** has entered the **End of Life (EOL)** phase beginning **14 January 2020**, while Microsoft has scheduled **Windows 8 and 8.1's** End of Life and End of Support starting **January 2023**. If you are still using a Microsoft EOL operating system, you may want to consider upgrading to Windows 10 to receive the latest security patches and new features. Your computer can still be switched on and used with an EOL operating system, but you would need to ensure your computer is tightly secured with a reliable antivirus software and tools to patch every security hole and flaw. The last thing you want to deal with is personal data theft and other cybersecurity issues.

Microsoft End of Life (EOL) and What It Means

Product lifecycles keep businesses on their feet in producing newer, better products among their competitors. EOL products will eventually reach to the end-stage for the following reasons:

- a. The product discontinues because there is not enough revenue to support its manufacturing and maintenance costs.
- b. The business wants to venture into other markets.
- c. The business wants to replace older products with better ones.

Difference Between End of Life (EOL) and End of Support (EOS)

End of Life refers to a fixed date where the manufacturing of a specific product ceased. In other words, the product has been discontinued. When a product discontinues, naturally it will be “the end” in terms of sales. A Microsoft product is still valid for use even when it passed the EOL phase, but it will not have up-to-date patches and features like what Windows 10 has to offer.

End of Support (or Service), on the other hand, is when service for a specific product such as repairs, tech support and parts availability will still be provided until they are discontinued.

Risks of Using Outdated Technologies

1. Exposed to IT Security Risks

When a digital product has reached its EOL, it no longer receives essential security patches from the manufacturer, allowing hackers to profit from low-security companies. Not only can unprotected company data be easily stolen, but it also places the company in legal liability for not securing their customers' private data. Such companies are at the risk of security breaches and legal disputes if they continue to use products past their EOL dates.

2. Restricted Usage of Certain Applications

Staying ahead requires the latest computer applications and tools. They will ultimately make your work life more efficient and secure. For example, Windows 10 picks up Secure Boot from Windows 8 and makes it even more secure. There are also smartphone tie-ins compatible with Android and iOS, allowing you to make your phone work in-sync with your computer. Using EOL Microsoft products may restrict you from the convenience Windows 10 can provide as well as putting limitations on your work capabilities.

Whether you choose to upgrade your operating system or remain with older ones like Windows 7, 8 or 8.1, be sure you know what the End of Life means for your daily computer use. It is also important to take note of the differences between End of Life and End of Support for every software or hardware item.