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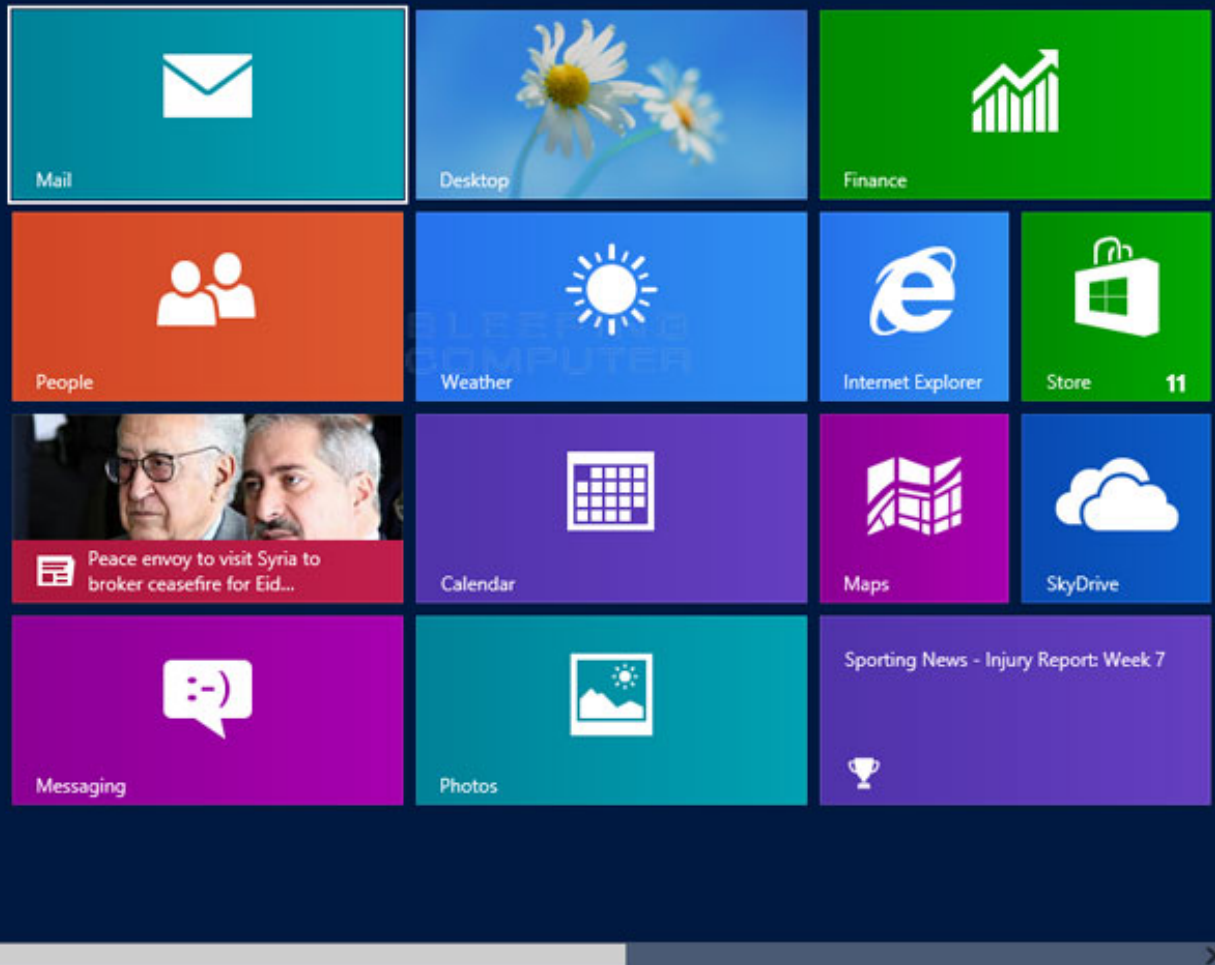
Why Accounting Firms Shouldn't Move from XP to Windows 7 or 8 During Tax Season

So Microsoft announces the end of support for the one-third of the computing world that still uses Windows XP...and magically announces that on the same date they will release an update to Windows 8 that makes it look and work almost exactly like Windows 7. Along with a hint that they may give the update away for free.

Dave McClure • Mar. 25, 2014

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There are two things **accountants and tax preparers** need to know about changing out operating systems between now and the end of tax season:

1. Don't do it (yet).
2. If you do it, don't call me for help.

There is nothing that with the operating system that any office needs to perform between now and the end of tax season, and a great many reasons to do nothing. However, this may require that your firm shut off automatic updates for the Windows operating system until after April 15.

Here is what we think we know about Windows 8.1, update 1 (also known as the Spring, 2014 update to Windows 8.1):

- The update has been released into the wild, and is available for download from a number of sources.
- This may or may not be the actual release (or RTM, the Release to Manufacturing version). If your computer is mission critical, wait for the official release.
- There are six different files that have to be installed, in the correct order, with reboots between each. These are KB2919442, KB2939087, KB2919355, KB2932046, KB2938439. and KB2937592.

It is still uncertain exactly what changes will be in the final, but multiple sites report that it will include a “boot to desktop” option that will bypass the Windows 8 Metro interface entirely. The system will also seek to strengthen the ties to the Microsoft OneDrive cloud storage solution, though there is no indication that it will enable direct backups to OneDrive, as most of its competitors already enable.

More information as it becomes available...

[**Update:** As some of our commenters have noted, Windows 7 is a viable upgrade option (and still supported by Microsoft) for those still on XP but who do not want to go with Windows 8. The key point in this article is that it would be best for tax professionals to wait until after the April 15 deadline to make any major change to your computing systems, since any difficulties during transition will be a major headache during the last two weeks of tax season.]

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