

Key Steps for a Smooth Windows® 7 Deployment



Virtually every IT professional has a story about a major deployment that didn't go as well as they'd hoped. With a little planning on the front end, Zones is here to help mitigate any potential issues and to help ensure that you have a smooth rollout with no surprises.

Our team has been testing Windows 7, and here are some of the things we've learned from our experiences.

Steps you should consider in the planning stage:

1. Identify what you currently have in your infrastructure

a. Hardware:

- i. Desktops and notebooks
- ii. Peripherals that require drivers

b. Software:

Create a list of critical and non-critical applications.

c. Licensing:

Your current Microsoft licensing contract will help determine the programs to leverage and upgrade paths you'll want to pursue.

- i. If you have a current Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (EA), then you'll be able to upgrade to Windows 7 with no additional purchase required.
- ii. If your company has a Software Assurance (SA) agreement, you're eligible for the Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack (MDOP), a suite of six innovative technologies designed to increase desktop manageability, reduce TCO, and improve overall infrastructure satisfaction.
- iii. If your organization is without an EA or SA agreement, you must purchase the full upgrade license.

2. Determine which version of Windows 7 to deploy

a. Windows 7 Home Premium:



Designed for home use and doesn't include the capability to run Windows XP Mode. This version is not recommended for business use.

b. Windows 7 Professional:



Designed for businesses and includes most of the new features such as Windows XP Mode and Domain Join.

c. Windows 7 Enterprise:



Windows 7 Enterprise offers the same features as Windows 7 Professional, plus includes BitLocker Drive Encryption.

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to see a complete list of features for each version of Windows 7.

3. Check hardware requirements and compatibility

In general, if your PC can run Windows Vista, it can run Windows 7. But if you're not running Windows Vista, or are just not sure if your system is ready to run Windows 7, there's a quick way to do a simple check. Just download, install, and run the Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor Beta. You'll get a report telling you if your PC can run Windows 7 and if there are any known compatibility issues. If an issue can be resolved, you'll get suggestions for next steps. For example, it may let you know that you need an updated driver for your printer and where to get it.

4. Test software compatibility

a. Standard applications:

Check the Microsoft website or the software publisher's website for information. Most standard, mainstream applications should be Windows 7 ready.

b. Custom applications:

If your business uses custom applications, you'll want to test them in a Windows 7 environment prior to deployment. Fortunately, Zones is offering a mobile pilot program that will allow you to test your software in real time.

c. Windows XP Mode:

If your application isn't able to run in Windows 7, rest assured that you can run your software in Windows XP Mode.

5. Network set-up

Network and security models are all set up and ready for interaction with new Windows 7 clients coming online.

6. Develop optimum procurement method for Windows 7

Microsoft offers many different licensing programs for you to take advantage of. To ensure you choose the best one for your particular scenario, you can rely on Zones and our software licensing ExpertConnect team. This cross-functional team of professionals is experienced in the myriad of Microsoft licensing programs, and will help determine the right solution for your organization.

7. Upgrade necessary hardware

If you have legacy systems that don't meet the minimum requirements, now is the time to look at replacing or upgrading your hardware. Contact your Zones account executive for the latest in desktop, notebook, and server systems.

- World-class IT reseller nationwide for more than 15 years
- More than 175,000 IT products from leading manufacturers, including Symantec, IBM, Lenovo, HP, Cisco and Microsoft

- Lowering cost of IT procurement through strategic partnerships and automated systems
- Chosen as primary IT supplier by many Fortune 1000 companies

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8. Determine deployment process
Microsoft recommends a few targeted strategies for deploying the Windows 7 operating system. These strategies range from manually configuring the Windows 7 software on a few computers to using automation tools and technologies to deploy the software to thousands of computers.

Following are details about four recommended deployment strategies.

- a. **High Touch with Retail Media:**
A hands-on, manual deployment, where you install the Windows operating system on each client computer by using the retail installation DVD, and you manually configure each computer.
- b. **High Touch with Standard Image:** This strategy is similar to the High Touch with Retail Media strategy, but it uses an operating system image that includes your customizations and application configurations.
- c. **Lite-Touch, High-Volume Deployment:** This strategy requires limited interaction during deployment. Interaction occurs at the beginning of the installation, but the remainder of the process is automated. Prior deployment experience is not required, but it is beneficial for

using this strategy. This will likely be the preferred method for most small and medium sized businesses. Zones has outlined a step-by-step deployment reference you can review at www.zones.com/win7

- d. **Zero-Touch, High-Volume Deployment:** This strategy requires no interaction during deployment. The process is fully automated through Configuration Manager 2007 R2. This is designed for larger enterprise deployments with a dedicated IT staff well versed in large-scale OS deployments.

9. Leverage Microsoft tools
Microsoft provides several tools to help simplify deployment.

- a. **The Windows Automated Installation Kit (Windows AIK)** helps you to install, customize, and deploy the Microsoft Windows family of operating systems.
- b. **Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack (MDOP)** is a dynamic, desktop solution available to Software Assurance customers. It helps you reduce application deployment costs, deliver applications as services, and better manage and control your enterprise desktop environments.

- c. **Microsoft Assessment and Planning Toolkit (MAP),** a detailed collection of tools and checklists.
- d. **Microsoft Deployment Toolkit 2010** decreases the time and cost of deployments through unifying the tools and processes into a common console and collection of guidance.

10. Choose Zones as your Microsoft partner

In addition to receiving assistance from our ExpertConnect software licensing team, the Zones professional services team eases Windows 7 deployment by offering a variety of services, including:

- Planning and project management
- Configuration and imaging
- On-site installation and testing
- Staff augmentation

Call your Zones account executive or visit us online at www.zones.com/win7 for more information about Windows 7, deployment strategies, software licensing options and more.



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