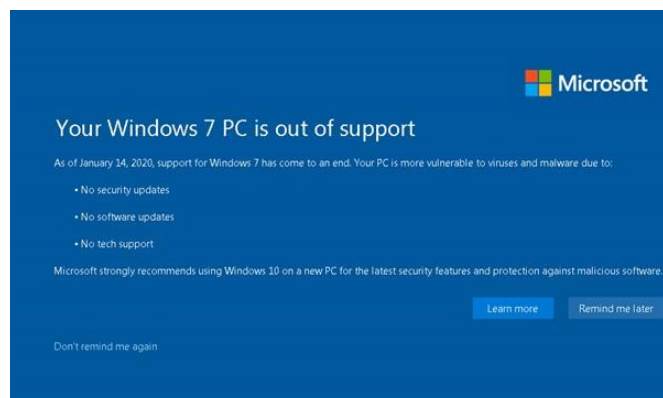


# What does the end of Windows 7 support mean for SCADA Users?

## A Problem to be solved or Opportunity to be seized?

As you are probably aware, Microsoft ended support for Windows 7 on January 14, 2020. Your computers will still function, but Microsoft will no longer provide security updates, software fixes or updates and will no longer provide technical support for any issues. If you are still running SCADA on Windows 7, we highly recommend that you upgrade as soon as possible. While your SCADA will still function on Windows 7, it will be at greater risk for viruses and malware.

For the majority of Windows 7 users, Microsoft recommends replacing your old computer with a new one running Windows 10. SCADA users know it isn't that simple. Most SCADA users still running on Windows 7, froze their SCADA software at that operating system revision to avoid costly software maintenance fees. But SCADA software running on Windows 7 may not run on Windows 10. So an upgrade to Windows 10 will also require a SCADA software upgrade. In many cases, the upgrade fees will be virtually the same as purchasing a new SCADA license.



Full-Screen user notification

Furthermore, moving from an older version of SCADA to the vendor's newest release isn't necessarily a plug-n-play scenario. Some SCADA upgrades will require multiple steps with testing to validate operation at each step.

Here is the real downside, after all of this effort to update your software, the "new" SCADA won't provide any additional process control functionality. It is like investing a rebuilt engine and transmission into your 1983 minivan. It will cost you a lot of money but still drive and smell the same. And to make matters worse, this upgrade cycle will repeat itself when Microsoft ends support for Windows 10.

While Windows 7 retirement certainly presents a costly problem to be solved, it also presents a opportunity to be seized. **So why not use this problem to explore some possibilities?** A lot has changed in the SCADA world since Windows 7 was released. Not only has SCADA functionality improved, but new SCADA software vendors have emerged with advanced technology and more cost-effective licensing options. Why not apply the funds required for a software update to a systems upgrade? Here are **two options**.

## Move to a modern SCADA platform

The most advanced SCADA packages utilize web-based technology running on virtually any version of any operating system (Windows 7, Windows 10, Mac OSX, Linux and Cloud servers). In addition to deployment flexibility, this also means that future retirement of an operating

system won't force another costly SCADA software update. Furthermore, newer SCADA vendors in the market offer licensing options that make the transition to a new technology more attractive than simply upgrading an old SCADA. Better yet, licensing that provides unlimited users and unlimited tags mean that future expansion will certainly be less expensive. If system enhancement is planned anyway, moving your SCADA software to the next level now makes even more sense.

## Move to Subscription-based SCADA Service

Another recent SCADA innovation is a move away from a traditional SCADA purchase and towards Subscription-Based SCADA Services. The life-cycle of a control system is typically 5-10 years. It starts with a big capital procurement accompanied with recurring support costs. During a system lifespan, there will be multiple software updates, repairs, and obsolete components to replace. Each incident will incur some combination of hardware, software and/or service costs. Budgeting for repairs and updates is often problematic because the timing of these incidents is difficult to predict. Nevertheless, the older the system, the more difficult and costly it will be to maintain. Sourcing obsolete replacement parts drive up costs, extend down times and eventually justify a replacement. And then the cycle starts all over again.

Subscription-based SCADA Services eliminates the problems associated with the traditional SCADA life-cycle. First of all, there is **no large capital procurement** on the front end. The equipment, software and services required to design, install, validate operation and train operators are all included in the monthly subscription fee. Second, the **support costs are included**. If something breaks, the supplier fixes it. If software needs to be upgraded or a component becomes obsolete, the vendor deals with it. All system management and maintenance are included in the subscription. And the monthly price is fixed for the length of the contract, so there are **no surprise expenditures**. In effect, a SCADA subscription service eliminates the SCADA life-cycle with all of its problems.

You didn't choose the Windows 7 problem but it may provide an opportunity for greater control systems potential. Contact your friends at InstruLogic for a one-day system evaluation to help you determine the most effective option for you. [Windows 7 Migration](#)

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