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# GLOBAL NEWS

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## Microsoft Doesn't Pull Plug On Win98, ME Support



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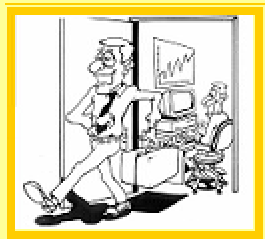
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Microsoft was to stop posting security fixes for Win98 in mid-January 2004. Now they are extending support to the end of June 2006. Older operating systems such as Windows 95 have not been supported for some time. With 80% of businesses still running at least one PC with Windows 98 or below, what impact does the end of support have on them? What this means is that the Internet viruses, worms, Trojans and who knows what else will have 'free reign' over the older machines potentially compromising their business or the entire Internet. The largest potential risk to companies using Windows 95 and 98 is the probability of an internet-based security exploit being discovered after support ends. When hotfixes are dropped and if a bad guy finds an exploit that affects the system, that exploit then becomes an issue for companies with internet-facing machines. The old systems can become the company virus spreader, or the back door for hackers. Also you will also no longer be able to get hold of a copy your old operating system from Microsoft. This means it is very important to protect your current installations by storing your operating system CDs securely or getting your system fully up to date with all patches and then storing an image of the system to allow for disaster recovery.

### Upgrading your computers operating system can increase your safety while on the internet.

So upgrading to Windows XP looks like the right solution to solve the problem, but what do you need to be aware of to take advantage of the continued support for Windows XP:

- ? You will need to buy a copy of XP for each PC or a corporate license
- ? You cannot buy one copy of XP and install it on many PCs
- ? You need to assess the CPU and memory of each PC for compatibility with XP .
- ? You need to review all of your business critical programs for use with XP, it is strongly recommended that their compatibility is fully tested before making the investment decision
- ? You need to test all peripherals for compatibility and that drivers are available for XP

Having ticked all of the boxes you can go ahead and upgrade, but it is strongly recommended that a trial is run on one PC first to ensure there are no hidden issues. Call your local computer professional to discuss the issues with remaining on Windows 98 or upgrading to Windows XP. Windows 98 users have been given a bit more time to work this through, so make good use of the time and do not wait until the last minute.

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