# What to Do with Your Old *Windows XP* PC

There are several strategies for dealing with your old *Windows XP* computer after the April 8, 2014 Microsoft support expiration date for *Windows XP*:

1. If your *Windows XP* computer is less than 2 years old and has an i3 or i5 processor you can copy your data to a flash drive, external hard drive, network drive or cloud drive for safekeeping and then upgrade the RAM on your PC to 8GB, put in a new hard drive and **install *Windows 7* or *Windows 8.1*** on the computer, reinstall your programs (*Word*, *Excel*, etc.) and finally copy your data back to the "new" PC.

2. If your *Windows XP* computer is either/or older than two years or does not have an i3 or i5 processor you can:

    A. Copy your data to a flash drive, external hard drive, network drive or cloud drive for safekeeping and then wipe the hard drive on your old *Windows XP* PC and **give the PC away** or bring it to a recycling center.

    B. Disconnect the *Windows X*P computer from the internet and **use the PC in "offline" mode only**. As long as its not connected to the Internet there isn't much chance it can get an infection especially if you don't allow anyone to insert flash drives or non-commercial CD/DVDs, or any other removable media into the computer. This will of course severely limit the functionality of the *Windows XP* computer meaning that you will not be able to send or receive email, surf the internet with a browser (like *Internet Explorer* or *Google Chrome*, etc.) or make any other connections to the Internet with this computer. You CAN still listen to local music (MP3s) and watch DVD movies and edit documents, print them, and save them to LAN (Local Area Network) drives for retrieval from other Internet-connected PCs on your LAN. If you use this strategy you will want to disable DNS on the *Windows XP* OS so you would not be able to accidentally connect to the Internet.

    C. Another strategy would be to copy your data to a flash drive, external hard drive, network drive or cloud drive for safekeeping and then wipe the computer clean and **install an alternate operating system like the free *Ubuntu*** (*Linux*) operating system (OS). *Ubuntu* has very minimal hardware requirements and is secure, especially if you install (free or paid) antivirus software inside of it. *Ubuntu* comes with free word processing and spreadsheet applications, and there are many free and paid programs available for downloading from the *Ubuntu* online store.

    D. A final strategy for keeping an old PC that can't be upgraded to *Windows 7* or *8.1* would be to **install *Ubuntu* in a dual-boot mode**. This gives you the ability to boot into *Windows XP* (like in strategy B above) when you need to work "offline" and to boot into *Ubuntu* when you wanted to go on the Internet. If you use this strategy you will want to disable DNS on the *Windows XP* OS so you would not be able to accidentally connect to the Internet but you would still have access to your LAN resources like drives, folders, files and printers. When you boot into the *Ubuntu* OS you'll have access to both your local resources and the Internet. You can set which OS as your default within *Windows*.

*Please Contact Dave at 410.480.5256 to discuss your Windows XP End of Life Options.*

*Remember: Microsoft Support Ends for Windows XP and Microsoft Office 2003*

*on April 8th, 2014.*