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Top 3 Reasons to Migrate your Fleet to Windows 11.

Are you ready?

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Executive Summary:

Every time a new major operating system release is introduced to the market, CIOs face the same dilemma: Do we migrate our fleet of devices? If so, do we do it now?

This is a high-stakes question that doesn't get any easier with each release – and CIOs everywhere are about to face it again with the introduction of the Windows 11 operating system.

The good news: We've done a lot of the legwork for you and explored the reasons to migrate to Windows 11. Here are the top three:

1. Enhanced security.
2. Easy IT deployment and management.
3. Improved user experience.

This report examines each of these three areas to help facilitate your decision-making process. It's important to note that business users will be upgraded to Windows 11 only when their IT departments allow it, unlike with consumers who can update their operating system at any time. Therefore, the deployment of Windows 11 can be planned well in advance and staged in phases if necessary.

Still unsure? There are a few third-party solutions that can help manage and automate this deployment, including Ivanti. Ivanti is a leader in this space with the Ivanti UEM portfolio (on-prem, mobile, and cloud) having recently released updates that fully support Windows 11.

Introduction

More than six years after Microsoft launched Windows 10, Windows 11 is finally here. It has been one of the longest waits between operating system versions in Microsoft history. This could mean a lot of hard work from Windows admins as they attempt to stay ahead of Microsoft's October 2025 end of life (EOL) date for Windows 10 support. Adding further complication, Windows-based devices will grow at 1.9% CAGR, commanding some 75% of the laptop market, with a significant installed base of 857 million by 2025[1].

Why did Microsoft bother with releasing windows 11? First, Windows has been losing share to both Apple and Chromebook. Windows's share of computing devices fell from 84% in Q2 2020 to below 80% in Q2 2021. Also, some features that were included in Windows 10X, which was intended to compete with Chromebooks but was canceled in May 2021, are now included in Windows 11 . The other reason: security, as most malware coders target Windows or Android devices because that's where the security holes are. Once Windows 11 achieves wide usage, that may change. Microsoft has taken the bold step of requiring essential security hardware, even though it means some PCs won't be able to upgrade. We will look at these PC hardware requirements later in this report.

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Key outcomes of Windows 11 deployment

From an organizational perspective, there are two key areas to consider when deploying Windows 11: IT and individual business units. From an IT viewpoint, key outcomes of deployment could include: 1) reduction of risk of data breaches; 2) increased efficiency by simplifying device management; and 3) elimination of passwords (if using Windows Hello for Business). From a business unit viewpoint, key outcomes could include: 1) reduction in complexity of running multiple versions of Windows; 2) empowering the remote workforce; and 3) better employee experience. Regardless of which perspective is taken, the benefits far exceed the risks of maintaining the status quo. Furthermore, deployment enables the enterprise to gain control over their IT investments and more efficiently manage the Everywhere Workplace.

Next up: An examination of the top three reasons for migration to Windows 11.

① Reason #1: Enhanced security.

By far the most important reason to migrate to Windows 11 is the enhanced security that is inherent by design, and zero trust-ready. However, this enhanced security comes along with a PC requirement to have Trusted Platform Module (TPM) 2.0 or later, UEFI, and Secure Boot capability. Given that enterprises are under constant, increasingly sophisticated attacks and that ransomware is an ever-present threat, this is a big deal for IT – so much so that all other Windows 11 capabilities pale in comparison to its importance for IT. The good news is that most PCs sold in the last three or so years will likely be able to run Windows 11. The bad news for organizations, assuming they want to upgrade to Windows 11, is that Microsoft's minimum hardware requirements also apply to virtual machine platforms such as Microsoft HyperV, VMware and Oracle VM Virtual Box.

Trusted Platform Module (TPM) uses hardware-based encryption to encrypt disks using Windows capabilities and can stop attacks against passwords, among other capabilities.

Additional hardware requirements include that a PC needs at least 4GB of memory and 64GB of storage, UEFI secure boot must be enabled, and the graphics card must be compatible with DirectX 12 or later, with a WDDM 2.0 driver.

Additional security features worth mentioning in Windows 11 include hardware-based isolation, encryption, and malware prevention that are all turned on by default, in addition to simplification of steps to deploy Windows Hello for Business (passwordless integration).

Most PCs sold in the last three or so years will likely be able to run Windows 11.

② Reason #2: Easy IT deployment and management.

If IT admins approach operating system updates as an ongoing process, they will automatically improve their ability to deploy updates. This approach enables admins to stay current with less effort, and less impact on productivity.

Windows 10 and Windows 11 are designed to coexist, allowing IT Administrators to use the same familiar tools and process to manage both operating systems. The tools that IT admins use for core workloads during Windows 10 deployments can still be used for Windows 11. Additionally, admins can analyze endpoints, determine application compatibility, and manage Windows 11 deployments in the same way that they would with Windows 10. And they can do all this with fewer feature updates – only once per year, as compared to twice with Windows 10 – which reduces update time, effort and headaches.

Businesses can use existing Microsoft enterprise management tools, including Microsoft Endpoint Manager, Windows Update for Business, and Autopilot, for Windows 11 deployment and management. No new tools have been released for Windows 11.

Organizations can also move eligible PCs directly to Windows 11 using third party tools such as Ivanti Endpoint Manager or Ivanti Neurons for UEM, if the organization is running any supported version of Windows 10.

Windows Autopilot

A critical note:

IT admins shouldn't overlook the importance of user readiness to deliver an effective, enterprise-wide deployment of Windows 11. Windows 11 has a familiar design, but users will see several enhancements to the overall user interface. That leads us to the third reason for migration.

③ Reason #3:
Improved user experience.

The end user will no doubt see significant improvements in the interface and overall design of Windows 11. While a full review of improvement details is outside the scope of this report, it's worth calling out some of the more noteworthy enhancements:

New start menu

When you click the start button, the start menu launches to hover just above the bottom center of the screen, rather than being anchored to the left as it is in earlier versions of Windows. It has also been reduced in size, and you don't scroll through it as you do with the Windows 10 start menu. Additionally, the large tiles that take up so much screen real estate on the Windows 10 start menu have been replaced with smaller application icons.
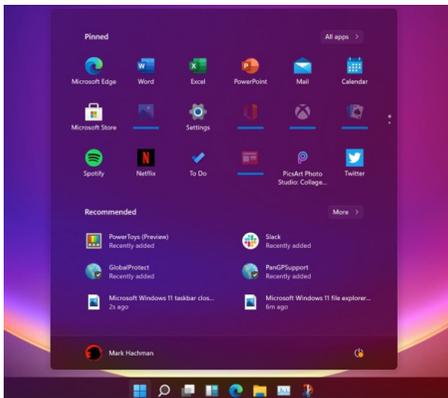
Windows widgets

Windows 10 included several widgets such as a news feed, weather, and more. Although you could run them individually, these widgets never really had a home of their own. In Windows 11, that has changed. Click the widgets icon on the taskbar (it's a square divided vertically into two sections), and a large panel appears on the left side of the screen showing a preselected set of widgets, including weather, news, sports and others.
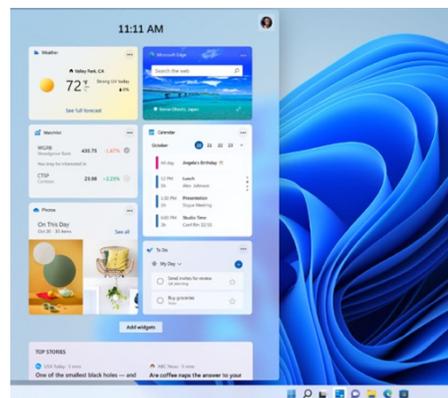
MS-Teams integration

With Windows 11 (consumer version), Microsoft is thinking that chat and video meetings will remain an important part of work and private life as we settle into the Everywhere Workplace and embrace a permanent shift to a hyperdigital world. The Microsoft Teams feature puts an icon front and center on the taskbar for Teams collaboration, chat and videoconferencing. When a user clicks the icon, a Teams screen opens with their contacts. As a side note, this feature is not turned on by default. Expect that over time, business and enterprise versions of Teams will become part of the Windows 11 integration.

Ability to run Android apps form the Amazon App Store

Future updates to Windows 11 are scheduled to include the strongly anticipated feature of Android apps to the OS, thanks to a partnership with Amazon and Microsoft's own Android app store on its tablet devices. Right now, the feature is only available to users of the experimental "insider" version of Windows 11.

OS updates will be 40% smaller

This is great news for both users and IT admins, as the smaller updates will reduce downtime and increase user productivity.

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The bottom line

If security is one of your top priorities as an organization, migration to Windows 11 should be on the agenda for device fleet migration plans in the next 12-18 months.

Easy deployment of Windows 11 will facilitate this migration, with simple IT management and an enhanced user experience as the prizes on the other side. According to Gartner, "Windows 11 changes the hardware baselines required to run the OS as well as the update and upgrade cadence, potentially impacting enterprise OS roadmaps."

Does your organization use Microsoft tools to help manage Windows 11 devices? If so, you may want to consider a comprehensive third-party tool. For example, Ivanti solutions enable you to provide customers with day zero support for Windows 11 endpoint devices using Ivanti Endpoint Manager (on-premises), Endpoint Manager-Mobile (mobile), and/or Ivanti Neurons for UEM (cloud-based solution). For additional information, visit Ivanti's website or contact Ivanti Support.
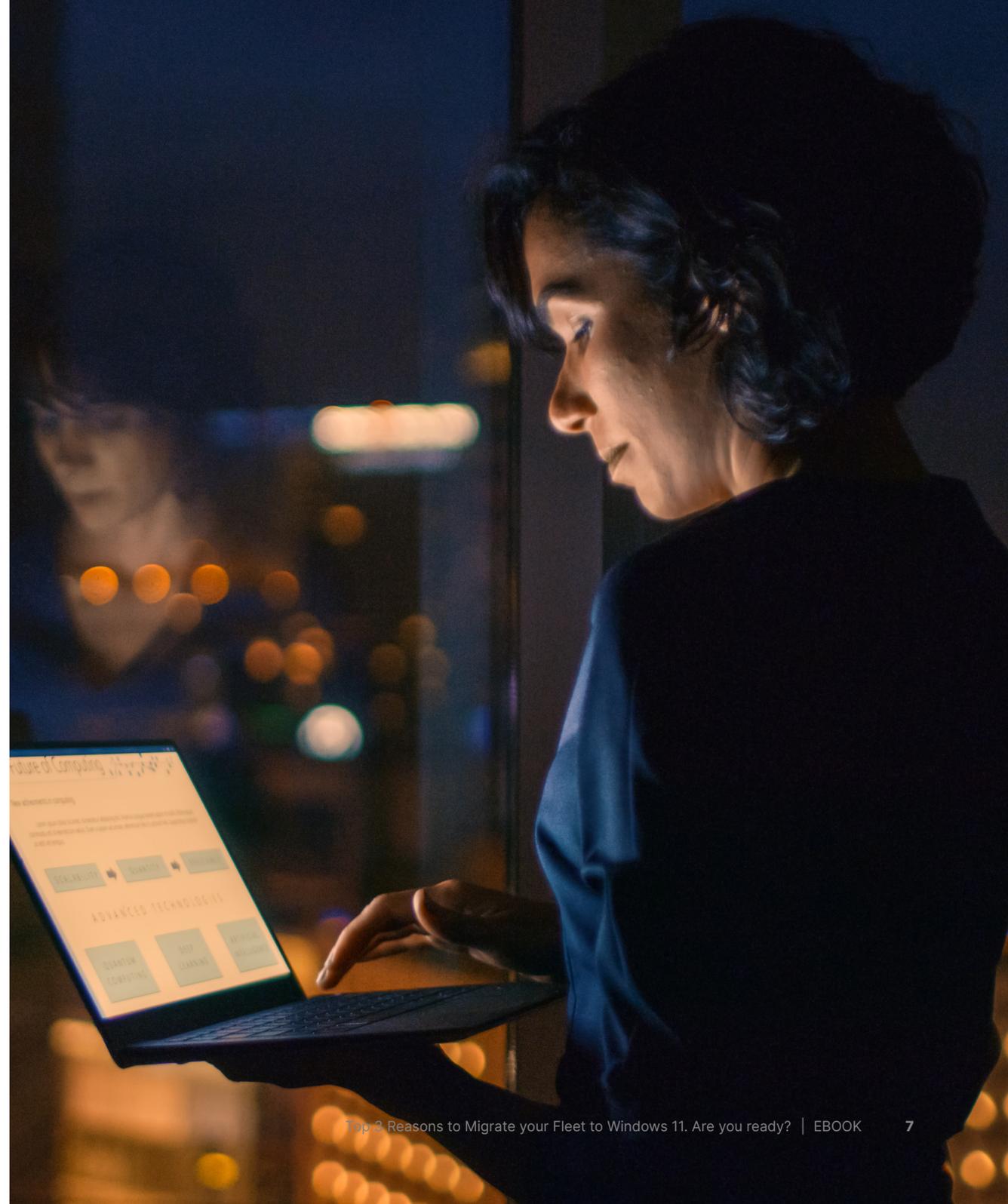
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About Ivanti

Ivanti makes the Everywhere Workplace possible. In the Everywhere Workplace, employees use myriad devices to access IT networks, applications and data to stay productive as they work from anywhere. The Ivanti automation platform connects the company's industry-leading unified endpoint management, zero trust security and enterprise service management solutions, providing a single pane of glass for enterprises to self-heal and self-secure devices, and self-service end users. More than 40,000 customers, including 78 of the Fortune 100, have chosen Ivanti to discover, manage, secure and service their IT assets from cloud to edge, and deliver excellent end user experiences for employees, wherever and however they work. For more information,visit ivanti.com

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