

Sort I.T. Computer Services Newsletter

Issue 8 – April 2016

Welcome

Winter is coming! But first we should enjoy autumn as personally this is still my favourite time of year in Central, we can get warm sunny days, but cool (or cold) evenings and nights that allow the fire to go on and in our house, all to sleep easier under our duvets.

A warm welcome any new subscribers to this newsletter and don't forget to advise any friends and family to also sign up so that the information and education about computing grows.

Microsoft Office

Microsoft Office is the suite of software that includes Word, Excel, Outlook and more. It has been around for a long time, but how we purchase it has changed significantly. There are now a few different varieties of the package that you can buy and the way it is installed on your computer can seem complicated. This was especially apparent when I tried to install the latest version for a customer recently, although the installation guide inside the box made it sound simple, I had to call upon my I.T. knowledge to get the software installed successfully.

The current version of Microsoft Office is Office 2016, although this is also packaged as Office 365. Office 2016 is the actual software version that you install on your computer. Office 365 is the subscription package that you purchase, and there are a few different subscription packages available.

Up until Office 2010, if you wanted to buy the software you could go to a store or supplier and purchase the version you wanted. Office Home & Student 2010, had Word, Excel and PowerPoint and was a good way to get the basics of the suite. To purchase this version, you would simply pay the required amount, take the disk from the package, insert in your PC and follow the instructions that appeared on the PC's screen. A license number within the package would be required and the software would be activated when you first tried to run the program. The same principle would apply to the other versions; Office Home & Business and Professional and with each version you received more software such as Outlook and Publisher.

With me so far?

So, the big change now is that rather than purchasing the disk and license for a one off fee, Microsoft have introduced subscription payments, this started with Office 2013. Depending on what version of Office you require and how many different installations you need, the amount and subscription package will change.

For example;

The equivalent of Office Home & Student 2010 is Office 365 Home. Rather than buying as mentioned before, you can chose 3 different ways to actually purchase the product.

1. Pay \$16.00 per month. This allows you to install the full Office suite (Word, Excel, Outlook, Publisher and Access) **on 5 PC's**.
2. Pay \$10.00 per month. This allows you to install the full Office suite (Word, Excel, Outlook, Publisher and Access) **on 1 PC's**.
3. Pay a one-time purchase of \$239.00. This allows you to install Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote.

Additionally, this applies to Apple Mac users, they receive the same deal now and have no need to purchase an alternative version that was usually more expensive.

Still with me?

What this means, is that you have the choice of paying monthly (or annually) for the full Office suite. This equates to you receiving \$4295.00 worth of software for an annual price of \$165.00 (Option 1). Or \$859.00 worth of software for an annual price of \$119.00 (Option 2). I have tried explain this to a few customers and it does seem confusing, however, the bottom line is that you really are receiving good value for money.

The full list of the various Office plans can be found here: <https://products.office.com/en-nz/buy/compare-microsoft-office-products>.

Installation

Having purchased your software, you now have what I consider the hardest part of this! Getting the software installed has been made really difficult by Microsoft. Rather than inserting a disk, you now have to create a Microsoft account and download the software. Following the Microsoft guide on this seems straightforward, however, the reality of this can be very different. Here are a couple of tips that may help:

- Microsoft will want you to create a "Microsoft Account". You can use your existing email address (user@gmail.com or user@xtra.co.nz) if you wish. You do not have to use an address that they suggest.
- When you have created the Microsoft account, they will advise you to check your email account for an email that requests you to 'verify' your account. You may need to view the resulting link sent to you in a different web browser such as Chrome or Firefox.

Once you have successfully navigated your way through the initial stages of installation, you'll be taken to your account page, where an install link will be available, by downloading and running the file, you'll get the software installed and (hopefully) running.

Summary

The new Office plans and packages are really well priced and allow the software to be more affordable and usable for a variety of users, be they home or business. Unfortunately, the plans are confusing to most people and the installation very clumsy and frustrating. However, if you are able to get past the initial stages the frustration is definitely worth it.

I can see why Microsoft have changed to this system, by removing the installation disks and licence numbers, they are reducing the counterfeiting of their software. They are also reducing their manufacturing costs and I feel that they have passed this onto the customer by making the subscription amounts quite reasonable.

Having navigated my way through a few installs now, I am more than happy to offer assistance on getting the new versions of Office installed on users PC's.

Sort I.T. Tip – Office 2016 Quick Start Guides

Microsoft offer a variety of guides on using the new Office software.

You can access these guides here:

<https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Office-2016-Quick-Start-Guides-25f909da-3e76-443d-94f4-6cdf7dedc51e>

If you would like additional information or have any other questions, please contact us at contact@sortitcomputers.com.