



## What Are The Signs Of A Failing Hard Drive?



*Anthony Glover is a Senior Network Engineer and Service Manager at Tech Experts.*

As a network engineer by day, I can say that have seen a lot of hard drive problems and, if they're not taken care of properly, they can

cause a severe technical headache. It is important to notice the signs that are present to you and, fortunately, there's several to note. Sluggish performance of your workstation is one of the main issues.

This can occur without warning and it can even seem like a virus or cause a blue screen of death (BSOD).

Another sign is your PC or workstation making clicking or grinding noises. This can cause a read failure to occur and cause the drive to be inaccessible, which in turn causes data loss.

Read failures/physical hard drive failures like this should be handled by an IT professional. Some users can experience disappearing files and folders.

This happens when sectors on the hard drive are bad or corrupted. Even if the data was created previously, it will act

as if the data never existed.

### Two types of hard drive failures

There are two types of hard drive failure: one is physical and the other is logical. The difference between the two are that physical failure is when the actual mechanical components in the hard drive have failed. This only applies to standard hard drives with moving parts.

With logical failure, this involves the circuitry on the hard drive and this failure can happen to any hard drive, standard or solid-state drives (SSDs). Also, the end user can experience freezing during operation causing frequent reboots or halts during operation.

So what do you do if you're experiencing these hard drive issues?

The best solution would be to bring your workstation to a professional such as Tech Experts and they can decide what the best options are going forward. Frequently, we recommend replacing whatever drive isn't behaving the way it should.

It's likely to act up again, so to avoid any sudden irrecoverable failures or data loss, we simply replace the drive. If there's still some "life" left to the drive and accessible, we can make a backup of your important data to copy

to the new drive or a device such as a USB.

If your drive is already in a permanently failed state, it would need to be replaced to make the computer functional again. Your files would be lost as a result, if you only stored them on the drive and didn't have a backup.

If you have data you absolutely need from a failed drive, there are services that use intense methods of data recovery to attempt to retrieve it, however success isn't guaranteed.

These services are expensive, but depending on the data in question, it may be worth the cost to you.

When it comes to hard drive issues, it's much better to be proactive and repair or replace the part at the first signs of trouble rather than waiting until it's nonfunctional. A failed hard drive can mean losing important files like family photos or business-dependent data.

If a failed drive is in a server, it can bring an entire business to a grinding halt until the issue is resolved, meaning lost productivity on top of the total cost of repair.

Questions about failing hard drives? You can reach Tech Experts at (734) 457-5000 and we'll be happy to offer some advice.

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## Double Your Screens, Double Your Productivity

*“Don’t let the initial investment scare you off; you’ll immediately find yourself (or your employees) less frustrated and more productive... and dreading ever going back to one monitor again.”*



Ron Cochran is a Field Service Engineer at Tech Experts.

When you think of a computer with more than one screen, you tend to think of a gaming computer or command

center, but adding a second monitor can save money and improve productivity throughout the day.

Having more than one monitor can save each employee several minutes to a couple hours each day, depending on the type of work.

Let’s break it down. It takes a few seconds to move the mouse and click a window or document; if you have to open that document, there is delay while waiting for it to load.

Multiply that by how many times documents, programs, and windows are utilized throughout the day — then multiple that figure by the day, month, and then year. You could be saving thousands of dollars with just one employee.

You can add a second monitor to a laptop or desktop computer relatively inexpensively.

There are even monitors and stands on the market that will let you rotate into portrait mode (but don’t forget to change your display settings in your operating system as well).

There are a number of recreational and business reasons to consider getting a second monitor. One example is utilizing two or more screens for editing different types of publications, video, or still images.

With dual monitors, you can edit and make changes to an image while comparing it against the original one on a separate monitor. That way, you can see in real time what you’re changing and with more workspace.

With many operating systems, you can have the monitors in a wide range of configurations. You could have: both in landscape mode (the way the typical user has a monitor — wider than it is tall), both in portrait mode (taller than it is

with the supplied stands or you can purchase a larger stand for both monitors. They also make a clamp style mount that would clamp or mount to the backside of your desk or desktop, which would free up more desk space.

Some may think that having two screens may force the user to focus on too many things at once or clutter up their workspace, but the effect is typically the opposite.

It has a staggering effect on productivity by making more resources readily available — to the point that some find it hard to go back to one monitor after using two or more (we use three at Tech Experts).

Utilizing more than one monitor



wide), or one of each orientation (one landscape, one portrait). You could also have one screen on top of another.

There are a couple drawbacks to adding a second monitor, but they can be lessened or resolved by getting one of several different mounting solutions. You can just set the monitors on your desk

has many benefits and very few negative points and is something that should be seriously considered, especially for a business.

Don’t let the initial investment scare you off; you’ll immediately find yourself (or your employees) less frustrated and more productive... and dreading ever going back to one monitor again.



## Who Should Be An Administrator On Your Network?



Luke Gruden is a Help Desk Specialist at Tech Experts.

In the world of computers, administrators have access to everything in Windows.

Having administrator rights

allows you to download anything, change any policy, and even change registry entries in Windows. An administrator has enough control over Windows to radically change how it works, even break Windows permanently.

So, who should be an administrator?

The answer is different depending on the environment and work being done. In general, the administrator account should only be used by a person who is very experienced and knowledgeable in computers, like a professional IT tech.

An inexperienced person with an administrator account could permanently damage the operating system or even destroy the computer itself on accident.

A user that has admin (administrator) rights, even without being in the core files, could still cause unintentional harm to the computer. This can happen because malicious files can be accidentally downloaded and ran and, when you run a program as an admin, you give that

program the rights to change your computer inside and out.

Malicious programs run by an admin can ruin entire networks of computers. This, sadly, has happened to many businesses.

### Domain networks

On a domain network where many computers are connected to a server, there should be a very small amount of administrators. Ideally, just one.

The more people with admin rights, the more likely the wrong program ran by the wrong person can ruin an entire building of computers or an entire business. This is usually how cryptoware spreads.

For domain networks, only professional IT techs should be administrators. The risk is too great to have someone accidentally change a policy or spread an infection that can do irreversible damage to all the computers on the network.

### Business computers

A computer used for business should be treated with more security and care as to make sure no avoidable threats harm or compromise the device.

Confidential data and work can be stolen if the wrong websites are visited or by downloading the wrong software on a business computer.

For a business computer user, you might want to consider using a normal account and only use the admin

account in extreme situations where recovery needs to be done.

If your IT tech has access to the admin account, they can make sure that only best practices and the proper programs are implemented on that profile.

### Home computers

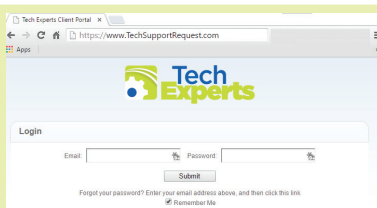
Computers that are used for everyday activities that do not have confidential work data should still be choosy on who has admin access. Having children or teens freely exploring the Internet and downloading odd programs or messing with the internal settings of Windows could potentially cause serious issues.

Home computers should have an admin user with a solid knowledge of computers who will be wary of suspicious websites and programs. More inexperienced users should not run admin accounts.

Generally, the best rule of thumb for admin accounts is that they should be granted to people who can handle the responsibility. Those with less experience or less important needs should have accounts with limited access.

However, if a business or network is bigger, it's even more important than the only people granted admin privileges are their professional IT team or those who have experience. The title of administrator should be looked as one with responsibility in doing what is best for a computer, a server, and a business network.

*“The more people with admin rights, the more likely the wrong program ran by the wrong person can ruin an entire building of computers or an entire business. This is usually how cryptoware spreads.”*



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## Why You Should Upgrade Your Business PCs To Windows 10



*Jared Stemeje is a help desk specialist at Tech Experts.*

As of April 2017, Windows 10 holds around 25% of the computer operating system market share for all computers in the world and it continues to grow. Windows 7, on the other hand, is still the overall leader, retaining a staggering 49% of the entire OS market share. The remaining difference is held by Windows 8, Linux, and Mac OS users.

These numbers show many stick with 7 — the Windows they know and love — but as each day passes, this is less and less of a feasible solution for the long term.

### End of Windows 7 extended support is coming

Windows 7 was initially released in July of 2009 and quickly became the most popular Windows ever created. Almost ten years later, many still feel the same.

However, this popularity is not saving Windows 7 from the end of its security and support updates. Official support of the Windows 7 OS actually ended back in January 2015, then went into extended support.

Now, the end of the extended support has been labeled with a

January 2020 termination date. This may seem distant, but these next three years will pass faster than most think and, once this support ends, users will be forced to use Windows 10 if they want to remain secure.

This is especially true for business that are required to meet certain security compliances. Now, pair this with the learning curve for some that would be involved with adjusting to Windows 10.

You don't want your employees spending time figuring out the changes when they could have already been acclimated.

### Windows 10 then vs. now

Many refused to leave Windows 7 as Windows 8 was so different... and not in a good way. Many believed Windows 10 would be the same as Windows 8 and, in many ways during the initial release, it was. This is no longer the case.

It truly is an understatement to say that Windows 10 is better now than when it was first released. The updates, including the newly released Creators Update, have taken Windows 10 to new heights of accessibility, ease of use, and features.

Unlike Windows 8, Windows 10 has the start menu you know and love. Along with this, 10 provides additional file accessibility with Cortana voice control and customizable tiles for your favorite applications.

There is also the universal notification and security center. The notification center has links to other useful features like the Windows 10 Settings app, VPN settings, and quick toggles for things like location and Quiet Mode.

If you have a Windows machine connected to a touchscreen, there's also a button to quickly switch between desktop and tablet modes. Finally, Microsoft has already stated that 10 will receive at least two massive updates a year and will continue to evolve over a foreseeable long lifespan.

### What you should do

The sooner businesses upgrade to Windows 10, the better off employees and administration will be.

Sadly, Windows 7 does not have much time left and investing any more time into learning the quirks and shortcuts of 7 will be wasted time after January 2020.

Though the free upgrade for Windows 10 Home and Pro users have expired, any Windows Enterprise users can still upgrade to Windows 10 for free.

You can access all Windows support lifecycle information here: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/13853/windows-lifecycle-fact-sheet>

If you're looking toward upgrading or need help to ensure that the upgrading process goes smoothly, you can reach us at (734) 457-5000; we would be happy to help.

**Create new service requests, check ticket status, and review invoices in our client portal: <http://www.TechSupportRequest.com>**

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