

DESKTOP AND LAPTOP COMPUTING STANDARDS

Purpose

To provide a reliable desktop and laptop platform in which end users have confidence and which will enhance the workflow and productivity of the university community. These standards will lead to high quality service and support. If a college or department needs other desktop products to provide for the scholarship or special needs of that department, then it is important to devote the resources needed to guarantee assistance for users of those products. These standards are set forth to provide consistency, support and the exchange of information as well as access to, and use of, the University's business systems

I. Policy Statement

Desktop and laptop computing standards apply to all colleges, departments, and offices of Boise State University to promote the sharing of information throughout the institution. Standards allow for compatibility and thorough, consistent support from the Office of Information Technology, co-workers, and vendors. Standards ensure that information can be distributed in a format and manner that the University community can read, use, and understand thus promoting our productively working together. A process for exceptions provides for specialized needs.

These standards are for doing the "business" functions of the University, not the "scholarship" of the University.

A. "Business" functions include e-mail, calendaring, strategic planning, budgeting, and such things as documents that others need to receive and review to efficiently do the business of the university. Thus most of the hardware and software in faculty, staff, and administrator offices are covered by the standards.

B. "Scholarship" includes teaching and research functions. Thus most of the hardware and software in teaching and research labs are not covered by these standards.

II. Modification of Standards

A. Responsibility for Standards:

1. Responsibility for these standards belongs to the Director of Information Technology. Standards will be periodically evaluated and reviewed. Hardware and software, including groupware applications such as virtual white board, distance learning and collaborative computing will be examined on a regular basis.

2. The Executive Director of Information Technology will select a standing committee with representation from all areas of the University to make recommendations on additions, deletions and/or modifications to these standards. This committee will review the current standards on a

regularly scheduled basis. Others wishing to make recommendations may make them directly to the Executive Director of IT.

B. Updates of Supported Products: A list of supported products will be updated regularly and be made available to the University community on the web.

<http://helpdesk.boisestate.edu/facstaff/standards.shtml>

1. It is the responsibility of individual departments and users to access the web and stay current on what products and versions of products are supported and recommended.
2. These standards apply to all acquisitions independent of acquisition method or funding source, e.g., including grants, donations, rental or leases, etc.

C. Exceptions to Standards:

1. Any college, department or office that wishes an exception to these standards will present its appeal in writing to the Executive Director of Information Technology. The appeal will state the following:

- a. The requested exception
 - b. Justification
 - c. A signed statement of support from the appropriate Dean or Director.
 - d. Processing and review will require one week.
2. The user must commit funding and other appropriate resources to providing hardware and software support for the exception. Only the Executive Director of Information Technology can authorize an exception to these standards.

III. Standards

A. Full Support – Support from the product vendor is still available, the product is fully compatible with campus administrative systems, OIT staff members are fully product knowledgeable and documentation is available. For fully supported products users may expect problem resolution, user seminars may be offered, and product consultation may be arranged.

B. Partial Support– The product may or may not be supported by the vendor, the product may not be fully compatible with campus administrative systems or specific known compatibility issues exist, and product documentation and user training is not available. Under these circumstances OIT staff will provide a best effort to support the product with no claims as to customer satisfaction.

C. Office Productivity Suite – Microsoft Office is supported for its compatibility with the campus administrative systems. The campus administrative systems dictate which versions of Office are covered by full support <http://helpdesk.boisestate.edu/hardware/standards/index.shtml>.

All versions of Office will be supported throughout Microsoft's stated product life cycle (<http://support.microsoft.com/gp/lifeselect>).

D. Web First -- Users should remember that the Web is an extremely valuable way to distribute information, especially in a commuter institution like BSU. It is often preferable to the distribution of paper.

E. Mail and Calendaring – the University's mail client is available to provide a collaborative environment for our campus community. The University's mail client is fully supported.

F. Web Browsers – The following web browsers are supported.

1. Netscape
2. Microsoft Internet Explorer
3. Mozilla FireFox
4. Safari

The browsers and the different versions are supported throughout the browser's (and specific version) life cycle. The campus administrative systems dictate which browsers are covered by full support. Information about Browser versions can be found at <http://helpdesk.boisestate.edu/hardware/standards/index.shtml>

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G. Desktop Computers Standards

1. The Operating System installed on the computer will be fully supported within the manufacturer's support product life cycle or end of life statements. The campus administrative systems dictate the rate at which new Operating System versions can be introduced to campus <http://helpdesk.boisestate.edu/hardware/standards/index.shtml>

. Microsoft Windows Life Cycle

information can be found at <http://support.microsoft.com/gp/lifeselect>.

2. An Apple or Windows based computer will be fully supported for 4 years after the purchase date. After 4 years the computer will be partially supported.

If a computer requires more than \$300 dollars of repairs and/or upgrades it is recommended that a replacement is considered instead of the repair.

H. The Office of Information Technology will only support licensed versions of software.

I. Laptops are a good, practical, business purchase. They are no longer luxury items. Desktop machines should be purchased for those who work mainly in their offices. Rugged laptops may be very appropriate for faculty, administration and professional staff who move around the institution, travel, or attend frequent meetings. The appropriate choice is encouraged.

J. Handheld devices are a good, practical, business purchase. Devices such as Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), Smart Phones, and other mobile devices can be an appropriate choice for the on-the-go faculty member, administration staff, and/or professional staff. The appropriate device allows the person to stay in contact with the office, organize daily tasks, and carry important information electronically such as contacts or documents. Detailed Handheld support information can be found at <http://helpdesk.boisestate.edu/hardware/standards/index.shtml>.

IV. Electrical Power

A. Surge protectors, not to be confused with power strips, are to be acquired with all computing equipment (PCs, printers, FAX machines, etc.).

B. The addition of computing equipment is straining the University's electrical system. Those who wish to acquire computing equipment should contact the Facilities Operations & Maintenance Work Order Desk and ask for an inspection of the availability and quality of electrical power in the appropriate room.

V. Backups

A. Backups are an important part of computing and the following information is to remind users of that as they acquire new computing resources. Lost or corrupted data means the re-entering of data and/or the possibility of data that can never be recovered.

B. Responsibility for all data stored on local drives belongs to the assigned user of the computer. All files created or revised each day should be backed up if they are stored on a local drive. Weekly backups should also be made of all your files.

C. Mission critical data must be stored on a file server where backups are performed automatically. Check with the network administrator to determine what backups are performed. More information on server backups can be found in [Boise State University Policy 8020](#).