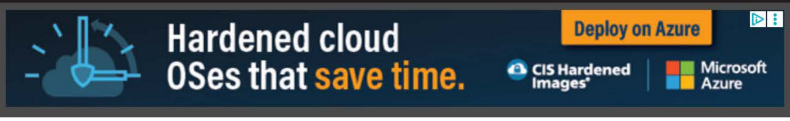

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NEWS

Microsoft To Kill Cortana in Windows

By Chris Paoli | 06/05/2023

Microsoft is ending support for Cortana -- the company's voice-activated virtual assistant -- in Windows 10 and 11.

"We are making some changes to Windows that will impact users of the Cortana app," wrote Microsoft in **a support message**. "Starting in late 2023, we will no longer support Cortana in Windows as a standalone app. However, you can still access powerful productivity features in Windows and Edge, which have increased AI capabilities."

Microsoft also clarified that Cortana will continue to be available in Microsoft Teams rooms, Teams Display, Teams mobile and Outlook mobile after Windows support has ended sometime at the end of this year.

The company's voice-activated assistant, which was named after the AI character in its Halo series, made its debut in 2014 on Windows 8.1, and was included in other Microsoft services, including Office and mobile devices.

The recent announcement of the end of Cortana should not come as a surprise, as Microsoft recently **announced Windows Copilot** at last month's Build conference. The new service will offer an AI-powered assistant through the taskbar, just as Cortana provided. Copilot will also extend across many of its apps and services, to provide a single experience across the company's ecosystem. Microsoft said that it is still planning on releasing Windows Copilot in preview this month.

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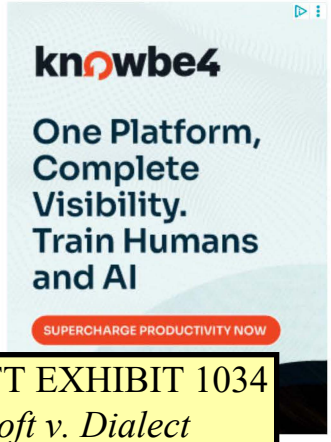

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Microsoft's announcement pointed to alternatives for users, like the aforementioned Windows Copilot preview.

"We know that this change may affect some of the ways you work in Windows, so we want to help you transition smoothly to the new options," wrote Microsoft. "Instead of clicking the Cortana icon and launching the app to begin using voice, now you can use voice and satisfy your productivity needs through different tools."

It also highlighted to its new **Windows 11 voice control experience**, which allows users to control their system and dictate text through the feature, as an alternative, and said that many of the features coming to the Windows Copilot preview can be used in its Microsoft 365 Copilot, which is available for users now.

The demise of Microsoft's previous voice-powered assistant has been a long time coming. In 2019, the company **released a report** (PDF) showing that its efforts were falling short (19 percent usage), compared to competitors like Apple Siri (36 percent usage) Google Assistant (36 percent usage) and Amazon's Alexa (25 percent usage).

The following year **Microsoft announced** that Cortana support for some apps and mobile devices would be coming to an end, with the company emphasizing some of its earlier AI-based assistant capabilities in Microsoft 365 as alternatives.

About the Author

Chris Paoli (@ChrisPaoli5) is the associate editor for Converge360.

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