Memo

To: DePaul Employees considering a Surface Pro 4 Purchase
From: Josh Luttig, Director of Infrastructure
cc: Jason Yao, Associate Director of Operations,
Date: May 5, 2016
Re: Surface Pro 4 Issues

Greetings,

IS has been evaluating the Surface Pro 4 tablet computer since its release in Fall 2015 in hopes of including it in the catalog of supported computing devices on offer to DePaul employees. As a casual web search will reveal, there have a variety of widespread, serious issues with this computer since it was launched. Microsoft has released new firmware for this device every month since its release and IS has continued to test each new firmware release in hopes that the issues we have observed will be addressed. Though we are still experiencing a significant issue with our test device, our research indicates that many consumers feel their issues have been resolved.

Because this is a consumer-oriented, rather than an enterprise-oriented device, some hardware components used in these computers do change over time, with the result that a computer purchased today may suffer from different issues than a computer purchased several months ago, or have no issues at all. There have been a wide variety of problems reported, but the two major issues we have been tracking with this device are an occasional inability to wake from sleep, and abnormally high battery drain, particularly during a sleep state. In our testing with the latest firmware available, we are still unable to reliably wake up our device from a sleep state, and a full hardware reboot is required to get the computer back to a functional state.

To date, this computer has not met the standards of reliability we expect from computing equipment we support for DePaul. Our hope has continued to be that Microsoft will release software which fixes the issues we have seen with our test device. While that has not occurred yet, IS does recognize the possibility that a device purchased today may not have the same issue(s) that we have experienced with our test device.

Now that you've read through all of that, if you still want to order a Surface Pro 4, you can. As of May 5th, 2016, IS will allow Surface Pro 4 purchases, and support their use. As detailed above, you may have a wonderful, issue-free experience with your Surface Pro 4, we certainly hope that is the case. Alternatively, you may experience a number of different issues which IS may not be able to fix. You can choose to return the device within the return window,
or keep the device and hope that a future software release addresses the issue(s) you’re having. To get the latest device software, you will need to periodically manually run Windows Update from Settings, Update & Security (check the box for ‘Check online for updates from Microsoft Update’).

For those of you who do purchase the device, please share your experience with IS (particularly if you experience no issues) so we can share it with other potential purchasers. Feel free to send Jason Yao or I an e-mail with this information, and thanks in advance for doing so, you’re essentially helping us perform additional testing.

Sincerely,

Joshua Luttig

Director of Infrastructure, DePaul Information Services

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