New in the Library: 'Windows 10 for Dummies'

Book Review by Choy Lai & Clemens Pratt

With the recent release by Microsoft of Windows 10 in July, there has been a lively interest in this latest operating system within MelbPC, and many members are already trying it. At 419 pages and a price of $35.95 the recently published 'Windows 10 for Dummies' from publishers John Wiley & Sons is not just for dummies! The "for Dummies" tag merely indicates that its treatment of the subject is a simple step by step guide for navigating through both the old and new features of Windows 10; for non-beginners it is a comprehensive reference.

It would be particularly valuable for anyone new to computing for whom Windows 10 is their first operating system.

Microsoft has designed Windows 10 to look and feel the same when implemented on PCs, tablet computers and smartphones, and author Andy Rathbone provides material for all three. He is an experienced writer whose use of headings, figures, lists, informative panels and marginal indicators makes it inviting to browse and easy to find useful information. Even experts in MelbPC will discover valuable features that they have previously been unaware of.

This book shows how to manage Windows tasks, troubleshoot problems and make quick fixes. It comprises 7 parts:

1. Windows 10 Stuff Everybody Thinks You Already Know
2. Working with Programs, Apps and Files
3. Getting Things Done on the Internet
4. Customising and Upgrading Windows 10
5. Music, Photos and Movies
6. Help!
7. The Part of Tens

Various icons in the margins highlight

- *what's new in Windows 10*
- *tips*
- *technical stuff*
- *warnings*
- *remember* and
- *touchscreen*.

It is worthwhile taking note of the icons, as they help the reader looking for a particular aspect.

The 'Start' button is back, with access to apps as well as settings, shutdown and restart options. Some features new to Windows 10 are:

- Action Centre serves as a hub for system notifications, such as when Windows wants to let you know updates have been installed, and quick access to some key settings. Action Centre is a sensible, useful addition to the interface.
- Windows Explorer in Win 7 is now renamed as File Explorer and enhanced with the addition of a Quick Access section. For folders that are regularly accessed, right click them and add them to Quick Access. They are then there in Explorer and just one click away.

- A new taskbar icon called Task View is very handy. Click it and all your apps are tiled on the desktop. Alt-Tab is great at flipping between application windows. The Task View icon offers a two-click method of switching. The ability to swap between multiple desktops will prove to be indispensable. For instance, one desktop may have Word, PDF document, and Excel to view. Alt-Tab switches between these windows. A second desktop may have reports to write. Seriously, this is a beneficial new feature.
- Another built-in application is Virtual Desktops. It runs several desktops on a single monitor. It does not take up precious system resources or space with the additional desktops because you are not creating a virtual machine. It provides more desktop space for separate task and also allows quick access to what you need.
- Internet Explorer has been replaced by a new browser, Internet Edge
- Universal Apps which make it simple for developers of Android and Apple iOS to convert their wares to Windows. These apps will run on Windows 10 phone, tablet, PC, laptop and X-box.

The last two parts of this book are great for problem solving. As with other books in the "for Dummies" series, it finishes with its so called Part of Tens, in this case:

- Ten Things You'll Hate About Windows 10 (and How to Fix Them)
- Ten or So Tips for Tablet and Laptop Owners

These are worth perusing for making some DIY adjustments.

For both the novice with no prior knowledge of Windows and the expert, the book explains each step in its execution. It is simple and easy to follow. Being one of the early books on Windows 10, it provides a speedy way to become skilled in this latest Windows version.