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Programming/Tech Alert Re: Windows 10 Update Interruption of Radio Services

For those broadcast facilities employing Windows 10 Home and/or Pro editions, and utilizing Internet transport for any program delivery via Barix, Comrex and similar devices, you may be experiencing unexplained “drop-outs” of audio due to Windows 10 updates taking place “in-the-background,” even though you may believe that you have adequately defeated or time-shifted downloads of those regular updates.

Worse, most if not all Windows 10 Home editions reportedly have had as the factory default setting that your machines may in turn and in fact could be uploading the updates that you received, in a bandwidth “sharing” arrangement, such that your Internet service might be being used to update other machines elsewhere on the web, to include as well those that are not your own. If you even only suspect that this might be happening, most especially if you have had unexplained losses of audio during programming, you are urged to do Internet searches for solutions to control the Windows 10 updating processes, which may involve Windows registry editing and/or group policies modifications that could be beyond the routine purview of your programming/technical personnel.

Above all, do NOT assume that the Windows 10 update “checkboxes,” etc. are accurately reflecting how your updates are actually being handled. This could result in anything from excessive bandwidth requirements to audio drop-outs, which are related to the uncontrolled updates. Moreover, if you have the Windows 10 “Home” version, specifically, be prepared to have to upgrade to the Windows 10 “Pro” edition or risk being unable to stop these updates from occurring during critical hours, and potentially interfering with your on-air or program delivery between sites, especially for those networks and/or affiliates that do not maintain adequate engineering or IT staff. This condition began affecting broadcast operations and reported most seriously beginning as of July of this year (2017), and continuing to date.

This information is provided for educational purposes only, and includes no warranties that it applies to any situation in particular, and presumes a certain amount of familiarity with the relevant principles involved in general. Careful attention is advised.

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