

Special Points of Interests:

- Does Force5 run in Windows 10?
- Do tablets work well on board a boat?
- Force5 Tip - Why backing up is so important
- Tech Tip - The best PDF program to use

Force5 & Windows 10

Of course it works! My advice... Don't jump on a new operating system on your old computer if it works well with Force5 and Windows 7 or 8.1. Leave it alone! Upgrades to Windows 10 on existing computers...that is, letting Microsoft perform an upgrade to Windows 10 over your existing well working computer is risky. It is too new and you may have incompatibility issues. If you are not going to heed my advice then I urge you to do a complete mirror image backup of the computer before you start, or at least do the recovery disk (when advised) during the upgrade process.

Note: Windows 8.1 users and Windows 10 users...I know that

Microsoft put their version of Adobe Reader called (MS Reader) imbedded into 8 and 10, but my experience is that it is confusing to use (at best) and does not update the PDF file that you edit and for review automatically. This is very bad when you are using Force5 to create a PDF and you are reviewing the PDF before you send it to the client, it is often not the latest revision you are viewing. Another long explanation... Just download the latest version of Adobe Reader DC (or whatever it is today) and let it be the default PDF Reader for your operating systems. I have tried to live with MS Reader and find a way to work around the quirks (or features) as Microsoft calls them. Just can't and why



should I...Adobe has a great product that just works, and it's FREE !

To make Adobe Reader the default in those operating systems, just go to Control Panel and select the Default Programs icon, then select or click on Adobe Reader and click on the little green arrow telling you to make it the default program for all PDF functions. Click done and Adobe Reader will be back in control of your PDF files!

Latest Big Question - Force5 tablets onboard ?

Lately I have been getting a lot of questions about taking tablets and laptops to the boat for surveying while onboard.

Wow, this is a very personal decision. The questions you should be asking yourself are...

- 1) Would it fit into my surveying work flow (gather information) through the vessel? Is the process I have been fine tuning for years going to let it smoothly integrate taking a computer onboard with me?
- 2) If I get part way through the survey and something happens to the device or the survey file, and I can't

get the work or data file out of the device, would that cause me to have to go to a Surveyor's Notes document and do it again from scratch... Probably!

- 3) Is using the tablet, going to save me time or cost me time?
- 4) Is it going to have enough battery to last a whole day of surveying? (Probably need five real hours of battery life.)

The big question is... Are you going to save time or get a better survey doing this? Just because you spend the big

bucks on a laptop or tablet it really won't let you see it in bright sunlight and it does not function any better maybe faster depending, but it may survive a drop to the deck or the cabin sole from five feet and maybe that is worth the extra money. * I had a customer last year call me to ask if he should buy a mil spec Panasonic Tough Book. It was an 11" tablet and basically water resistant and shock resistant, to some impressive standards as the Tough Book line always is. He did not heed my warning and the laptop went up on eBay two days after he tried it onboard. However, if

you are traveling a lot and checking your luggage with a laptop in it, or bouncing around in an off road jeep, going to the back jungles (like my doctors and dentists do to donate their time to the poor souls of God forsaken countries) then it may be a real good idea to have a Tough Book. My reports from users that need them say they are wonderful. My advice...Don't waste your time or money. If you are going to try this approach, then start cheap. Take a laptop you already own to the boat or buy an inexpensive Windows 8 tablet. I think a Windows 8.1 tablet with an 8" screen (about \$100-\$149) can be used as well and you can address more things in the

Latest Big Question (cont...)

survey, running Force5 rather than with the current SmartNotes program that only runs on Android. You can do everything in Force5 on the boat, Findings and Recommendations, the full Introduction and General Information, Summary Valuation, etc. It is the same full blown desktop or laptop version of Windows, plus you know how to run it already and it won't cost you an additional \$395 for SmartNotes.

If you have to spend more or don't want to end up with a disposable tablet, then check out this one: My personal choice!

I am using an 11" Lenovo Yoga 2 convertible/tablet. It has an Intel Pentium processor, a screen that is a good size, has a full keyboard you can fold over itself and use it as a tablet or tent type. It has a full 500GB hard drive, 4GB RAM, full size SD slot, USB 3 and 2 ports, HDMI connection, 2 cameras front and back and can be used as a spare computer in the office, if you have a failure on your main

box. Not a total loss, but a good fall back unit and it gets an honest 5 hrs. of usable battery time. It cost me \$499 at Best Buy and I think it is a great little device for anyone who is taking a computer onboard. Of course it has the same limitations of any tablet or laptop, but it can run the full Force5 program and other Windows programs too. With an 11" screen (and some reading glasses) I can use it as a traveling companion computer. So, if you survey something out of town, it's light enough to take onboard and you can use at the hotel to finish your report. You can convert to PDF hook up to hotel Wi-Fi and send off your finished survey report right from the device.

I do not survey anymore (as most of you know). I hung up my old AMS number #132 by 1994, when we first introduced Force5. Just to prove (I think) I am smarter than needing to heed my own advice, I upgraded my Yoga to

Windows 10, just the other day to experiment with it, but it broke my tablet mode ☹. Now, when I fold the screen over, the keyboard for tablet mode it still leaves the mouse pad functional. That stinks, because you are holding it as a tablet by the keyboard and mouse pad folded under the screen. Normally it turns off the keyboard and mouse in that mode and it did it that well in 8.1. So leave it on 8.1 for a few more months till 10 gets smoothed out and we get the first "service pack 1" update and BIOS updates.



Tech Tip

If you are using Windows 8 or 10 and you are using the Windows default imbedded PDF program called "Reader", I suggest you download the new Adobe Reader DC, because Windows Reader has some idiosyncrasies that are inconsistent in showing the latest PDF after editing and viewing over and over is confusing to say the least. In my humble opinion, It is not anywhere near as user friendly to use as Adobe Reader is and since Adobe is free why not make it your default browser.?

Force5 Tip - Backing up your surveys

Tip for those of you that don't backup your Force5 to an external device (like a hard drive, USB drive or flash drive) you should start ASAP!

Computer hardware failures, operating system failures, data corruption, viruses and other data killing things happen. They really do happen and when they do it is often instant without warning. So it can and does hurt business productivity. As my clients say "this happened at the worst time" well I am sure that's true, even if it actually happened in the middle of the night two days before you didn't notice it until you went to use your computer and of course it is the "worst possible time". The good news is you read this and you have a recovery plan and a recent backup... Yeah!

How do I do that?

We have 21 video tutorials under the pull down menu of "Help" in Force5. The three that I suggest you take a look at are: 1) Backup All and Restore All 2) Backup a Survey File 3) Restore a Survey File *Important Hint:* It is highly recommended to Print Preview before backing it up... Because if it will print preview successfully it will restore from a backup to that point in time. So if you have made a couple of successful backups during survey report production and you print preview beforehand, those are good to restore to that point. But if you make a new backup and don't verify it can print preview and for some reason it is corrupted, you will likely unknowingly make a backup of a corrupted

file over your last good restorable backup. That really hurts to find out later when you think you are finished with the survey report and you go to print preview and it gives an error. It is very likely that your un-verified backup is corrupt too.

I suppose there is no need for me to say this, but if you have an error while working with your survey and you have been backing up all along, **DON'T Backup Now!** You will be replacing a known problem survey file over what should be a good one. Thank goodness these things don't happen very often, but they do happen. So get into good safe backup habits and you will be able to restore just like the video shows you and it will be successful. The Backup All should be used

to backup your entire Force5 folder, this includes everything you have produced on this computer using Force5 (surveys, item choice files, all templates, PDF, backups etc.). Everything that is (or was) produced by you using Force5 since it was installed. You can use it to copy all your Force5 surveys to another computer, so it has everything that your main computer has. If you want to just move your item choices or just one or two surveys and you need help, call me for help. Of course that kind of help is included in your annual support fee. Watch the Video it is not too painful or long and if you don't understand it then call and I will help you.