

Yes, it's that time of year when I congratulate myself on completing another year of weekly blogs



So what's happened during that year?

### **November 2013** - [a year of Windows 8.1](#)

Hard to believe that it's a whole year since Windows 8.1 was released. It's still with us and I still maintain that it's not as bad as a lot of people think.



### **December 2013** - [more on Windows 8.1](#)

I said that I didn't care about the tiled apps in windows 8 and none my clients' needs have pushed me into spending much time on them in the year that has followed. A client recently asked me if it is a good idea to buy a Windows mobile phone and I had to reply that, even if he does like the tiled apps, he might be better off with an Android phone or an iPhone as the developers of "apps" don't yet seem to think it's essential for them to develop Windows versions.

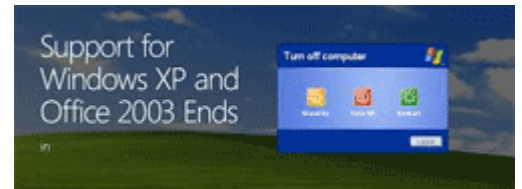
[Figures released in June by Statista](#) show the number of apps on the major "platforms" as

- Google Play (Android) - 1,300,000
- iPhone - 1,200,000
- Windows Mobile - 300,000

### January 2014 - [making your computer sleep-friendly](#)

I am still a big fan of using f.lux to automatically reduce the blue light emitted from a computer screen in the evening. Whether or not it does actually help in getting to sleep, f.lux certainly makes a computer screen easier to look at in the evening with tired eyes.

### February and April 2014 - [Windows XP is still with us](#)



There's no sign of XP disappearing just yet. Some of my clients are still using it and I came across it in a local medical centre last week. We haven't yet seen a massive attack on XP computers, but I still think it's very likely to happen. If you are still using XP then I urge you to make sure you are taking regular backups of things you can't afford to lose. [See this link as well.](#)

### February 2014 - [PC World](#)

in this blog I said that the service in PC World may be getting better. I was dis-abused of this notion last week when trying to buy a Microsoft Surface Pro 3. For some odd reason, John Lewis aren't stocking the model I want. My saga with PC World went as follows:

- Oxford Street branch - hadn't got the machine and they said their Tottenham Court Road branch hadn't got it either
- Tottenham Court Road - despite advice from Oxford Street, they did have it - but no matching keyboard/cover
- Kensington High Street - they told me I needed to have it specially made to order as it isn't a standard model (huh?)
- Brixton - their website said they had it but they hadn't
- Old Kent Road - success!



*This is getting silly*

### **February 2014** - [a cleaner desktop](#)

My Windows desktop is still cleaner than it used to be. I now just periodically dump every icon I've not used recently into a folder of un-used icons that sits on the desktop. I don't agonise over which ones to move: I just move nearly all of them. They're easy enough to fetch back out of the folder, but I rarely need to. Very therapeutic having an uncluttered desktop.

### **March 2014** - [Windows 8 File History](#)

I still think this inbuilt backup routine is better than nothing, but I was disappointed to find that it can't be used to automatically create backups to OneDrive (Microsoft's cloud storage service).

### **April 2014** - [Faststone Image Viewer](#)

I continue to recommend this to my Windows computer support clients and to install it for them. It may not be cutting edge software, but it makes photo viewing and editing a lot easier and more intuitive than Picasa. [Get Faststone Image Viewer from here.](#)

### **May 2014** - [closing my LinkedIn account](#)

I'm still thinking of closing this account. I am certainly not going to sign into any other account by using my Linked In credentials as I do not trust Linked In not to steal the data that would then be open to them.

### **August 2014** - [Gmail shortcuts](#)



Do you use gmail's webmail interface? Try using some shortcuts

### **September 2014** - [the new ".london" domain](#)

Maybe I got off the mark too soon when I changed from davidleonard.net to davidleonard.london . There are some places in cyberspace that refuse to accept that an email address ending in “.london” is genuine. It looks as if some web programmers need to re-visit the validation routines on their website forms. This is going to become a bigger problem for them as more and more domain suffixes are released. Did you know, for instance, that the following are all new domain suffixes - .mail, .club, .training, .marketing, .photography?



### October 2014 - [the Microsoft Surface](#)

As mentioned above, I've gone and got one (despite PC World's best efforts to quash any impulse buying). Haven't yet had time to install everything, but it's definitely a very nice machine. I was right about the small screen, though. I don't think I could use it for very long towards the end of the day if I hadn't got a pair of glasses specifically optimised for reading at the distance of a computer screen.

### October 2014 - [Windows 10 Technical Preview](#)

If you've heard bad things about Windows 8 then you probably need to hold out for about 10 months before buying your next computer if you want to avoid Windows 8 altogether. It's likely that 2-3 months before that you will be able to buy a Windows 8 machine with a voucher for a free upgrade to Windows 10 when it is released.

That's it, then. On to year five...

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