

COMPUTER NEWS from the



SEPTEMBER 2021

Volume 9 NO. 9

As found on the web and other sources.

Microsoft Explains Windows 11 Changes



By John Lister on August, 5 2021 at 04:08PM EDT

Microsoft has explained the thinking behind some of the main changes in Windows 11. It's also tweaked a notification feature that could have been unnecessarily annoying.

According to Microsoft it used a "new approach" in designing Windows 11. It suggests that the "new approach" was to give users what they wanted.

The move to "human-centered design practices" involved giving users several pieces of paper marked with different operating system features and asking them to arrange them in order of importance.

In an amazing coincidence, Microsoft says "the research matched up perfectly with the feature redesigns we envisioned for Windows 11." (Source: [windows.com](https://www.windows.com))

Central Location 'More Consistent'

The gist of the process is that Microsoft has now realized that people don't turn on a computer to use Windows, but rather to carry out a task such as editing a document, opening a website or playing a streaming video. As a result they want Windows to make this happen "and then get out of the way."

These revolutionary findings are, according to Microsoft, the basis for moving the Start menu to the middle of the bottom of the screen, rather than the left-hand side. The logic is partly that this is more familiar to smartphone users and partly to make the placement more consistent across different types of device and screen set-ups.

It's also why Microsoft has redesigned the Settings menu to have a single list of categories that appears on every screen, with the individual and advanced settings only appearing when needed.

Endless Flashing Ditched

Meanwhile the latest test build of Windows 11 has revealed a change to the initial design, likely due to test feedback. It involves the way Windows indicates to the user that a particular application needs attention.

Originally the icon in the taskbar at the bottom of the screen would flash repeatedly until the user went into the application and dealt with the issue. To Microsoft's apparent surprise this turned out to be distracting.

Instead the icon will now briefly flash, then display a pale pink background behind the icon and a small red horizontal line beneath. (Source: [theregister.com](https://www.theregister.com))

What's Your Opinion?

Does Microsoft's explanation make sense to you? Are you encouraged by the apparent move to taking more notice of user feedback? Is it better to redesign software to make it simpler to use or does it just cause more confusion to people already

Recent Update Glitches Windows 'Alt-Tab' Shortcut



By John Lister on August, 23 2021 in “infopackets.com”.

A recent Windows 10 update appears to have broken the Alt-Tab feature. Thankfully there's a simple fix that doesn't involve compromising security or performance.

Holding down the Alt button and then hitting Tab is one of the more long-standing and useful Windows keyboard shortcuts. For those who've somehow missed out, it lets users quickly switch between open windows, including those not currently visible at the foreground.

In later editions of Windows, including Windows 10, the shortcut displays a small image of every open windows showing its current content. That's useful when running two or more windows of the same application, for example when having multiple documents open in a word processor.

Full Screen Windows Fail

Unfortunately the feature appears to be broken for some users by two recent updates including the main August update that's codenamed KB5005033 by Microsoft. The affected users are finding that if they try to cycle through tabs that include a window running in full screen mode, they'll either wind up with a blank screen or on the desktop. (Source: lifehacker.com)

One way to get round this is to simply uninstall the latest update, which can be done in the "Update & Security" section of the Windows Settings tool. That's not an ideal solution at all as this also removes any benefits from the update, which is particularly significant given KB5005033 includes security fixes.

News And Interests Behind Blip

Another option involves the new News and Interests feature in Windows, which seems the best bet for the root cause of the problem. It's designed as a personalized display of live news, weather, traffic and other information and appears when hovering over a weather icon in the taskbar. (Source: techradar.com)

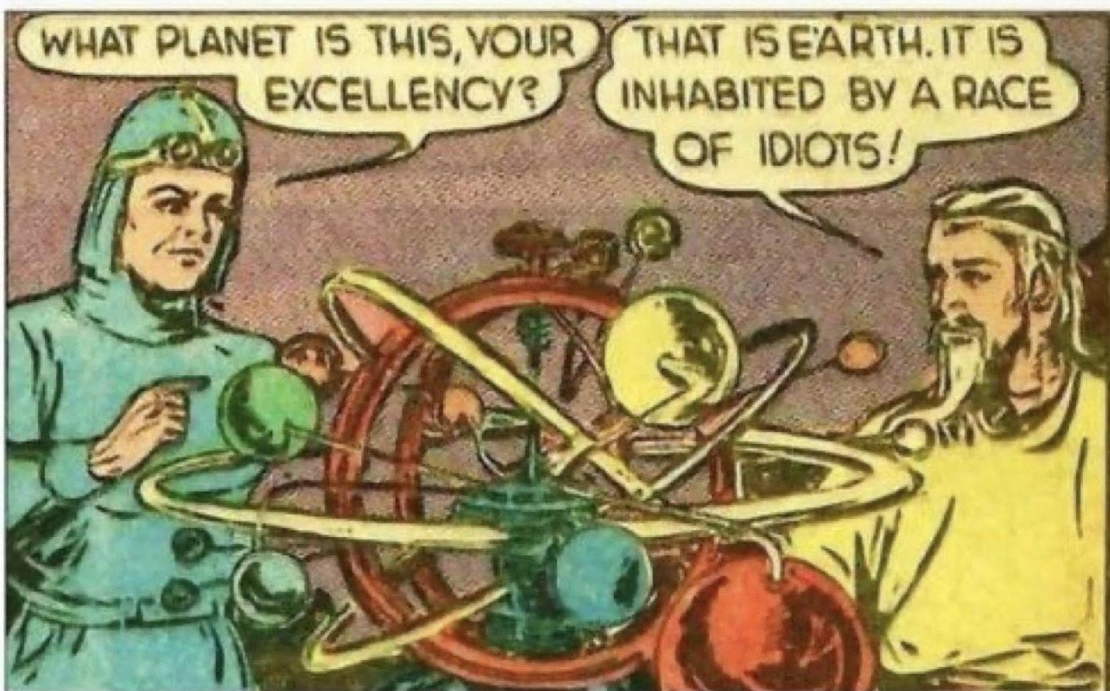
To remove the feature, users can right-click on the taskbar (at the bottom of the screen). The next step may vary depending on the setup, but 'News and Interest' will appear either as its own entry or under 'Taskbar Settings'. From here, users can simply choose the 'Turn Off' option.

What's Your Opinion?

Have you experienced this problem? Do you use Alt-Tab frequently? Should Microsoft cut down the number of new features it adds to reduce the risk of breaking existing features?

Why Twitter shouldn't delete user accounts

By Mike Eagan



If any social network should function as the world's "town square" or "social network of record," it's Twitter. and that's why Twitter should strive to provide a platform for everyone to say just about anything — good, the bad and the ugly.

After years of dragging its feet, Twitter has gotten more active at banishing users — deleting the accounts of people who violate terms of service around hate speech, disinformation and personal attacks.

The background of all this is the absurd historical attempt to figure out if social networks are "public utilities," like the phone system, in which the phone service providers don't know and don't care what is actually said, or more like a magazine, in which editors choose, approve and are responsible for every word published.

Obviously social networks like Twitter are somewhere in the middle, controlling content on the edges but mostly not caring what's said.

More accurately, social networks can't be reasonably compared to either telephones or magazines. They're something else entirely.

The weird thing about Twitter is that right up to the point where it terminates an account, it radically amplifies it.

For example, Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene has been approaching the brink of deplatforming on Twitter for weeks because of her comments questioning the efficacy of Covid vaccines. But until Greene gets terminated forever, Twitter is actively amplifying her views by allowing its algorithms to deliver her tweets (and other people's tweets about her tweets) to many times more people than who actually follow her. Her name is one of the most frequent trending topics on Twitter.

This is madness. Why does Twitter amplify, amplify, amplify then terminate?

I think there's a better way. For the worst offenders, Twitter should neither amplify nor terminate.

THOUGH FOR THE MONTH!

Nothing is foolproof to a sufficiently talented fool.