The New Microsoft Update Process

- **Office 365 Updates**
  - o Microsoft provides several update options, called Update Channels, that put application updates into different frequencies that you can customize to your user environments. It is important to note that the way Microsoft Office now updates is different than it used to be in that it is done automatically outside of regular Windows updates. This can mean that you may come into the office one day and see a new version of Office installed on your computer, or a new feature available without Daxtech having any involvement. In addition these update cycles are now outside of our control to prevent or postpone aside from the options below.

    Here's an outline of the three channels and their primary differences.

    - ▪ Semi-Annual Channel
      - • This is the default for Office 365 Pro Plus, and is the most basic of the options available. (Note this is not the default for some Office 365 plans such as Business Premium.)
      - • Security updates in this channel are provided monthly, non-security updates are semi-annual.
      - • New features are released a couple or few times per year, in January and in July.

    - ▪ Semi-Annual Channel (Targeted)
      - • The purpose of this channel is to provide a set of your users the option to get new features twice a year, in March and September, about four months earlier than the Semi-Annual Channel.
      - • Security updates in this channel are delivered monthly, non-security updates are monthly.
      - • New features are released a couple or few times per year, in March and in September.
      - • This is a common pilot-user or application testing user channel, as it provides an early look at what will arrive in the Semi-Annual Channel.
      - • Features that are included in Semi-Annual Channel (Targeted) have already been released previously in Monthly Channel.

    - ▪ Monthly Channel
      - • This channel provides users with the newest features of Office as soon as the features are made available.
      - • Security updates in this channel are delivered monthly, non-security updates are monthly.
      - • This is suitable for users who don't have many line of business applications or macros or other application add-ins that could be impacted by new features in Office suite applications.

- Monthly Channel is typically available each month but this is not a hard schedule. Updates in this channel are cumulative; the current Monthly Channel release includes all features, security updates, and non-security updates from previous Monthly Channel releases.
- Monthly Channel is the default channel for Visio Pro for Office 365, Project Online Desktop client, Office 365 Business (the version included in some Office 365 plans such as Business Premium).
- There is also a Monthly Channel (Targeted) update channel that provides early access to the next Monthly Channel release, typically about a week in advance. Windows 10: https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/deployment/update/waas-overview

- **Windows Updates**
  o As with Office 365 updates, Windows 10 Operating system updates have also changed and include a few different update channels.

    ▪ Feature Updates – Can be deferred by 0 to 365 days
      - With Windows 10, Microsoft will package new features into feature updates that can be deployed using existing management tools. Because feature updates are delivered more frequently than with previous Windows releases — twice per year, around March and September, rather than every 3–5 years — changes will be in bite-sized chunks rather than all at once and end user readiness time much shorter.

    ▪ Quality updates - Can only be deferred by 0 to 30 days
      - Monthly updates in previous Windows versions were often overwhelming because of the sheer number of updates available each month. Many organizations selectively chose which updates they wanted to install and which they didn't, and this created countless scenarios in which organizations deployed essential security updates but picked only a subset of non-security fixes.

      - In Windows 10, rather than receiving several updates each month and trying to figure out which the organization needs, which ultimately causes platform fragmentation, administrators will see one cumulative monthly update that supersedes the previous month's update, containing both security and non-security fixes. This approach makes patching simpler and ensures that customers' devices are more closely aligned with the testing done at Microsoft, reducing unexpected issues resulting from patching.