Managing Software

Program, software, and applications are terms that are synonymous with each other. For now, we'll go ahead and use the term software to refer to any of these. There are certain types of software that perform specific functions like drivers, which allow us to interact with our hardware. There are applications that we use for our day-to-day job functions. And there are utilities that we use like a calculator, settings, and other tools. With the seemingly endless options for software, how do we know which ones to use? How do we deal with them in a workplace setting and in our personal lives? Software is always changing. Developers are releasing updates. Software companies change, features are added, and so on. This constant change is completely out of our control and it can cause a lot of headaches in the IT world. Let's say the company that builds your payroll system pushes out a software update that causes settings to change, or even worse, completely breaks the compatibility with your own company. It can happen. You should always test new software before letting your company use it. Another thing to worry about is old software. When you run old software on your machine, you risk being exposed to cyber security attacks that take advantage of software bugs. A software bug is an error in software that causes unexpected results. For now, know that software updates usually contain critical security updates and new features and have better compatibility with your system. A good guideline is to update your software constantly. Another problem that plagues the IT world when it comes to software is software management. If you're setting up a computer for someone, you want to make sure that they'll have all the necessary tools they need to hit the ground running. That means you'll need to install all the software required for their job. That may also mean that sometimes you want to remove software that isn't required for the job. We may not realize if a piece of software we installed is malicious software, which causes harm to your computer. It's always a good idea to check if software comes from a reputable source before you install it. A common industry practice is to not allow users to install software without administrator approval. This prevents users from installing unwanted software because they're actually blocked with an error message that says they need an administrator to enter their login credentials. Before we get too far ahead of ourselves, let's cover the basics of software management, which include installing, updating, and removing software.