

## To Vista or not to Vista.....Huh?

To Vista or not to Vista?.... that is the question!



Buying a new computer? If you are buying a new computer on-line or from one of the big box stores, the statement above is a mute one. You are probably going to be getting Microsoft's newest operating system on your new computer if you like it or not! Is that a good thing or a bad thing? I would say at this point, let's stop for a moment and evaluate. We will begin by saying Vista is coming like the preverbal freight train. The questions really are *when* do you get on board, *do you* get on at all, and if I do what *version* of Vista do I get. I will tackle the last question first! If you are buying your computer for home use, Computer Connection's recommendation would be Vista Home Premium. That is also the standard for this article.

If you are getting a brand new computer and are not concerned with data transfer or your applications running on a current computer, it may be the right time to make the learning curve leap to Vista. A couple of things to know about Vista, if you are leaning this way. The number one issue is memory, get plenty of memory. Microsoft says it will run on 512MB of memory. Based on our experience you need at least 1GB of memory. The second thing to look for is speed. Be sure and get a PC based on the new 64-bit architecture. AMD or Intel both have super new processors to handle the speed issue. Finally get a video card that will support all the cool features of Vista. Any 3-D video card with at least 256MB of on-card memory will work great. On any new release of an operating system, drivers are always the fly in the ointment. If Vista comes pre-installed, then the drivers you need are there and you ready to go. Just be sure, any equipment such as printers, scanners, etc. are Vista capable. You can find that out at [www.microsoft.com/vista](http://www.microsoft.com/vista) and click on the compatibility link.

If you are upgrading your current computer to a new computer and want to move your pictures, documents and music to your new computer, you have an option. That option would be to purchase your new computer as Vista **Ready**, but load Microsoft XP as your operating system. Why do that? The answer to that question lies in *your* ability to learn a new operating system, as well as put up with all the fixes, patches and quirks that any new operating system has in the beginning of its life cycle. Our stance to our customer base, especially our business customers, is to wait. Microsoft is busy, as are the folks who built your printers, scanners, video cards, etc., patching and fixing bugs, and creating drivers for Vista. Windows XP will be supported by Microsoft till April, 2009, and will of course, work far beyond that. That gives you at least a two year window to let the dust settle and Vista come into its own. This option also allows you to create a relationship with a local computer dealer like Computer Connections who can load the operating system of your choice on your new computer and move all your important documents and pictures to your new system.

Finally, if you are considering doing a software upgrade of your older computer from Windows 98, ME, 2000, or XP to Vista, STOP! First be sure that your processor and memory will handle the upgrade. Remember, I mentioned at the top, that memory and speed are VERY important to Vista. A rule of thumb to go by is, unless your PC is running XP already, do NOT upgrade to Vista. You can't anyway unless you are running

Windows 2000 or XP. From a hardware standpoint, unless your computer is at least a Pentium 4 running at 1GHz, or an AMD Athlon 1GHz, be very careful. What could happen is you suddenly have a machine that before the upgrade worked great, but is now so slow and unresponsive, that it is useless. A visit or call to your local computer store can help you make that decision.

To Vista or not to Vista? If you want to keep working with the Microsoft Windows product, you can't ignore Vista and hope it will go away. It will be here for many years to come and will be Microsoft's base for building operating systems in the future. Don't panic and think you have to jump to it right away or something will quit working. Investigate, take your time and seek good advice. Microsoft's Vista is just another step in the ever evolving world of computing!