



Welcome to the PC Connection – Microsoft Monthly Newsletter! This newsletter is designed to deliver you, our valued Microsoft Customer's, the latest Licensing, Product, Security, Events, and Promotional information from Microsoft.

## Announcements

### Volume Licensing Promotion Extensions

Four active Volume Licensing Promotions have been extended:

- **SharePoint Enterprise CAL**  
End date has been extended to September 30, 2008 (original end date was June 30, 2008). This promotion is available in Select.
- **Forefront Client Security Competitive Migration**  
End date has been extended to December 31, 2008 (original end date was July 31, 2008). This promotion is available in Open Value and Select. Note that the Forefront Client Security for Config Mgr promotion is not being extended; it will end as scheduled on July 31, 2008.
- **Project Server CAL**  
End date has been extended to September 30, 2008 (original end date was August 31, 2008). This promotion is available in Select and EA.
- **Windows Server CAL 2008**  
End date has been extended to September 30, 2008 (original end date was August 31, 2008). This promotion is available in Open Value.

#### Value to Customers

Additional time available for you to utilize these promotional discounts to save budget

For More Information:

- Check out the [Microsoft Incentives website](#)
- Work with your Account Manager for additional details

### Last Chance to Claim on the Big Easy Promotion

The Big Easy Promotion ended June 27th, customers have until July 31 to claim their subsidy! Submit your claim today, it's easy:

1. Visit Microsoft's [Big Easy Offer Website](#).
2. Then click the **REDEEM NOW** button, enter your agreement number and choose PC Connection as the partner to spend the subsidy with.

[↑ Back to Top](#)

## Product Focus

### Windows Vista: Look How Far We've Come

When Windows Vista debuted in January 2007, we declared it the best operating system we had ever made. "Windows Vista is beautiful," The New York Times raved. It's humbling that millions of you agree.

But we knew a few of you were disappointed by your early encounter. Printers didn't work. Games felt sluggish. You told us "loudly and times" that the latest Windows wasn't always living up to your higher expectations for a Microsoft product.

Well, we've been taking notes and addressing issues.

So as we prepare to [stop selling Windows XP on June 30](#), it felt like the right time to update you on our progress, highlighted by the recent release of Windows Vista Service Pack 1 (SP1).

While we're at it, we'd like to clear up some confusion and lingering misunderstandings about Windows Vista and our plans for its predecessor, Windows XP.

### Top questions we hear about Windows Vista

#### Why do I keep reading that Windows Vista won't work with my hardware or software?

We know that's what some people are saying on the Internet. And in its early days, Windows Vista did experience some compatibility problems. But thanks to our industry partners' efforts during the past 18 months, here's where things stand today:

- Now supports nearly 77,000 hardware products and components more than double the number supported at launch. In 9 out of 10 cases when you plug in a device, it should just work. No installation disc is required.
- Runs 97 of the top 100 consumer software programs, including Apple iTunes, Adobe Photoshop, Intuit QuickBooks and more. In total, more than 2,700 applications are now certified to work on Windows Vista and more join the list each day.
- Runs the leading small business applications. Windows Vista supports software from Adobe, Autodesk, Avanquest, CA, Corel, Intuit, McAfee, Sage, Symantec, Trend Micro, and others.
- Received a top-to-bottom tune up thanks to Windows Vista Service Pack 1. Released in February 2008, Vista SP1 updates file copying speed, shutters security loopholes, and much more. ([Read more](#) about Windows Vista SP1.)

See how we're going to keep improving Windows Vista in the years ahead.

#### Is Windows Vista really just a prettier version of Windows XP, just shy of its seventh birthday?

Windows XP is a great operating system. Its continuing popularity, just shy of its seventh birthday, makes us proud.

Our goal is always to make each new version of Windows better than the last. With Windows Vista, we're convinced we succeeded.

What does Windows Vista have over its predecessor? Some highlights:

- Stronger security. Windows Vista has [fewer than half](#) the security vulnerabilities of Windows XP. It's also [60% less likely](#) to be infected by spyware or malware than Windows XP SP2. And in early 2008, [Windows Vista was shown to have 89% fewer vulnerabilities than MacOS X 10.5](#), making it the most secure Windows release to date.
- Faster searching. Find stuff—documents, e-mail, photos, movies—fast with powerful, speedy [Instant Search](#).
- TV, music, movies & photos. Watch and record TV with [Windows Media Center](#). Edit HD video with [Windows Movie Maker](#). Manage your mushrooming digital snapshot collection with [Windows Photo Gallery](#).
- Greater productivity. Work smarter, not harder. [Windows Mobility Center](#), [Windows Meeting Space](#) and [Sync Center](#) help you efficiently synchronize and stay connected to key information, people and devices.
- More peace of mind. Protect your family with powerful new [Parental Controls](#). Safeguard your precious data with the new [Windows Backup and Restore Center](#) and Windows [BitLocker Drive Encryption](#).
- Sexier! Sure, Windows Vista gets a lot of compliments on its aesthetics. But its style serves an important purpose: to put everything within a click's reach and make you more productive.

See the [complete list](#) of features in Windows Vista.

\*Windows Media Center and Windows Movie Maker HD are available in Windows Vista Home Premium and Windows Vista Ultimate.  
\*\*Windows BitLocker Drive Encryption is available in Windows Vista Ultimate and Windows Vista Enterprise.

#### How well does Windows Vista perform?

There's lots of ways to think about operating system performance. Let's consider a few of the most common ones:

##### • Speed

Nobody likes to wait. Most computers running Windows Vista boot up into activity in under a minute. In fact, the sleep and resume features we introduced in Windows Vista can help your computer wake up in less than three seconds. Plus, by installing Windows Vista Service Pack 1, you'll be waiting less than you used to. Microsoft tests on new PCs show that SP1 can slash average startup and shutdown times for Windows Vista by as much as half.

Meanwhile, a series of [independent speed tests](#) found that Windows Vista with SP1 performed comparably to Windows XP SP2.

Why doesn't it win? Simple. Behind the scenes, Windows Vista is doing a lot more on your behalf than Windows XP does. It's indexing your files so you can find them fast, keeping your hard drive organized, saving your work so nothing gets lost, and defending your computer against hackers and tricks.

And with [Superfetch](#), which is new functionality we built into Windows Vista, your computer adjusts to your schedule which means your applications are ready to go—even before you launch them.

##### • Power consumption

"How much battery life do you get?" It's a question we often hear. With Windows Vista you're likely to get a lot more. Our engineers put a lot of thought into power management. For your sake, and the planet's.

The latest generation of Windows Vista drivers can slash laptop power consumption as much as 10% when your computer is idle. In sleep mode, Windows Vista draws about as much power as a common nightlight.

##### • Online Safety

The most dangerous online threats today are based on phishing—when someone tricks you into trusting a fake website used for stealing identity and other illegal activities. Because [phishing attacks are over 25 times more common than new viruses](#), we built Windows Vista and Internet Explorer 7 (IE7), to help protect you from phishing attacks as well as online threats and viruses. In fact, each week IE7 blocks nearly 1 million attempts to access phishing sites per week.

#### More about Windows Vista

- [Discover Windows Vista](#)
- [Learn more about Windows Vista SP1](#)
- [Top 10 things you can do with Windows Vista](#)
- [Ready to buy or upgrade?](#)

#### Related Links

- [Windows Vista for Small Business](#)
- [Windows Vista for Midsize Business](#)
- [Windows Vista for Enterprise](#)
- [Windows on Microsoft PressPass](#)
- [Windows Vista for Partners](#)

<sup>1</sup>Jeff Jones is a Strategy Director at the Microsoft Security Technology Unit, and is widely recognized as an expert in computer security. View the full report on the [Jeff Jones Security Blog](#).

### Windows XP End-of-sales

It's time to migrate to the next generation of Windows! Windows Vista is the successor to Windows XP, and is currently the fastest selling operating system in Microsoft's history with more than 140 million licenses sold. Windows Vista offers increased workforce productivity, reliability, and mobility in the safest and most secure operating system Microsoft has released. In addition, Windows Vista provides a common platform across a wide range of hardware and devices and increased application compatibility in a broad set of customer and partner environments.

#### Windows XP End-of-Sales Dates

After talking with partners and customers, Microsoft heard that some customers needed additional time to make the transition to Windows Vista. This is especially true for small business and emerging market customers who generally have more limited IT resources. To best meet customers' needs, Microsoft announced the following in September, 2007:

- Extending the availability of all Windows XP versions that are preinstalled on Direct OEM PCs and in packaged product from January 31, 2008 to June 30, 2008 worldwide.
- System Builder OEMs will still be able to purchase all Windows XP versions through January 31, 2009.
- Customers will still be able to receive support from Microsoft under the mainstream support policy until April 14, 2009, and under the extended support policy until April 8, 2014.

#### Downgrade Rights for Windows

New PCs purchased after June 30, 2008 from Direct OEMs and January 31, 2009 from System Builder OEMs may be downgraded to prior versions of Windows, depending on the license type owned.

- **Customers with Volume License** agreement coverage for their Windows Client licenses (including Enterprise Agreements) have the right to downgrade any properly enrolled PC to a prior version of Windows. These downgrade rights are an ongoing benefit of Microsoft's volume licensing program, so downgrade rights continue on covered PCs for the duration of each PC's service life with that organization.
- **Customers who do not have Volume License** agreements to their Windows Client licenses may be able to downgrade to Windows XP Professional on new PCs. In order to be eligible for these downgrade rights, customers must purchase new PCs with either Windows Vista Ultimate or Windows Vista Business operating systems. Specific availability, terms, and prices may vary by OEM partner. Note that existing OEM Windows licenses are not transferable to a new PC.
- Customers purchasing new PCs with **Windows Vista Home Basic** or **Windows Vista Home Premium** are not eligible for downgrade to Windows XP.

Get more information on [Microsoft's Windows Life Cycle Policy](#).

Get more information on [support options and dates](#) for Microsoft products.

### Frequently Asked Questions on Windows XP End-of-Sales

1. **My organization isn't ready to move to Windows Vista. What should we do?**  
Microsoft recommends that customers complete their testing and evaluation of Windows Vista, and determine the right time to migrate existing and new PCs to Windows Vista. For many organizations, the best migration plan is to move to Windows Vista as new PCs are ordered. If an organization still has a need to use Windows XP Professional on new PCs, the organization may be able to downgrade the Windows Vista installation. Please see the section titled, "Downgrade Rights for Windows" within this document.
2. **What is the Support Lifecycle policy?**  
The Microsoft Support Lifecycle (MSL) policy standardizes Microsoft product support policies for Business and Developer products, and for Consumer, Hardware, and Multimedia products. The current Support Lifecycle policy for Business and Developer products provides that Microsoft will offer a minimum of 10 years of support for Business and Developer products. Mainstream Support for Business and Developer products will be provided for five years or for two years after the successor product (N+1) is released, whichever is longer. Microsoft will also provide Extended Support for the five years following Mainstream support or for two years after the second successor product (N+2) is released, whichever is longer.
3. **What is the difference between Mainstream Support and Extended Support?**  
Microsoft will maintain Mainstream Support for Windows XP through April 14, 2009. After that date, and until April 8, 2014, Windows XP will move to its Extended Support phase. Extended Support still includes paid support, security update support, access to the Microsoft Knowledge Base, and the support site at Microsoft Help and Support. In the Extended Support phase, non-security hotfix support requires an Extended Hotfix Agreement, which must be purchased within 90 days of Mainstream Support ending.
4. **Who can receive support in the Extended Support phase?**  
Extended support will be available to all customers\*. Extended Support includes paid support (support that is charged on an hourly basis or per incident), security update support at no additional cost, and paid hotfix support. To receive hotfix support, an Extended Hotfix Support contract must be purchased within the first 90 days following the end of the Mainstream Support phase. Microsoft will not accept requests for warranty support, design changes, or new features during the Extended Support phase.
5. **How long can I legally use Microsoft software after I have licensed it? Is the term of my software license affected by the Support Lifecycle policy?**  
The Support Lifecycle policy has no effect on how long you can use a product. The Support Lifecycle policy outlines how long Microsoft will provide technical support for products.

\* Extended Support is not offered for Consumer, Hardware, or Multimedia products.

[↑ Back to Top](#)

## Security Update

### Top Stories

#### Windows Server 2008 in an Organization's Defense-in-Depth Strategy

Get an overview of the different security features and enhancements in Windows Server 2008 and learn how you can use them in your organization's defense-in-depth strategy.

#### Application Lockdown with Software Restriction Policies

When you want to reduce the total cost of ownership of the workstations in your organization, application lockdown can be a great help, helping you to limit IT issues related to unsupported applications. See how you can use software restriction policies and Group Policy to control the applications that are run throughout your IT infrastructure.

#### Windows Vista Security Policy Settings

Security policy settings are among the settings that are contained in Group Policy objects (GPOs) in Windows Vista. Learn about the new security policy settings for Windows Vista and about those that have changed from Windows XP.

#### Why Physical Security Is Important

The physical security of your server computers is an important but often overlooked part of the entire security checklist. Read this article for reminders on how to help prevent unauthorized personnel from gaining access to the physical computers, as well as for tips and tricks.

#### Plan Security Hardening for Extranet Environments

Learn about the hardening requirements for an extranet environment in which a Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007 server farm is placed inside a perimeter network and content is available from the Internet or from the corporate network.

#### Network Access Protection in Configuration Manager 2007

The Microsoft System Center Configuration Manager 2007 Network Access Protection (NAP) feature provides a set of tools and resources that can enforce compliance of software updates on client computers to help protect the integrity of your enterprise network. Get detailed information about planning, configuring, managing, monitoring, and troubleshooting NAP.

#### Validating ASP.NET Query Strings

The query string is a potential vehicle for attack on pages that have security holes. The QueryString module presented in this article requires no coding in source pages and automatically checks the posted query string against a given schema that is saved in a separate XML file. This means there's one more built-in barrier against attackers but with zero impact on existing code.

#### Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard Compliance Planning Guide

Intended for merchants who accept payment cards, financial institutions that process payment card transactions, and service providers—third-party companies that provide payment card processing or data storage services—this guide is designed to help organizations meet Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) requirements.

### This Quarters Security Bulletins

#### Critical

- MS08-030: Vulnerability in Bluetooth Stack Could Allow Remote Code Execution ([951376](#))
- MS08-031: Cumulative Security Update for Internet Explorer ([950759](#))
- MS08-033: Vulnerabilities in DirectX Could Allow Remote Code Execution ([951698](#))

#### Important

- MS08-034: Vulnerability in WINS Could Allow Elevation of Privilege ([948745](#))
- MS08-035: Vulnerability in Active Directory Could Allow Denial of Service ([953235](#))
- MS08-036: Vulnerabilities in Pragmatic General Multicast (PGM) Could Allow Denial of Service ([950762](#))

#### Moderate

- MS08-032: Cumulative Security Update of ActiveX Kill Bits ([950760](#))

[↑ Back to Top](#)

## Microsoft Events

[Click here](#) for Microsoft Events.

[↑ Back to Top](#)

## Microsoft Promotions

[Click here](#) for Microsoft Promotions and Incentives.

[↑ Back to Top](#)

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[Click here](#) for featured products by Microsoft.

[↑ Back to Top](#)

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[Winter 2008](#)   [Fall 2007](#)   [Summer 2007](#)   [Spring 2007](#)

[↑ Back to Top](#)