

Windows 7 - Microsoft Wins With New Operating System



Ryan Seymour is a PC hardware specialist and the Tech Experts service manager.

Microsoft has had everybody from family and friends, to clients and colleagues talking about the newly released operating system Win-

dows 7. So what is the big deal, and what is all this hype about?

If you're one of the many that didn't make the upgrade from Windows XP to the Windows Vista, then Windows 7 is for you!

I've been running Windows 7 Enterprise for a couple months now, and hands down, this has been the best operating system I've used, making my entire computer experience more enjoyable. With that said, here are some of the key points and new features that have really got me on the Windows 7 bandwagon.

Overall System Performance

I saw a tremendous increase in overall processing time, running the same hardware as what I was before.

Less processes running in task manager, more available memory due to programs not requiring as much memory as in XP or Vista, and an increase in my laptops battery life due to less power consumption.

The Shake Down

This is a fun feature. If you have a few different windows open like email, web pages, some pictures, and maybe some music playing, by simply clicking and holding the click anywhere on the title bar, all other windows will minimize, leaving only the window you "shook" up.

Windows XP Mode

If you have a program that is picky, possibly old, or simply works only in Windows XP. You can run that type of program from a virtual machine right inside Windows 7. The only requirement: A free additional download from Microsoft.

Problem Recorder

This application simply records your screen as you perform various steps you take to complete a task. For example, if you need to know how to set up your Outlook for a Yahoo, Gmail, or other free email account you can simply have



the tech do it on his machine, with problem recording running, and then send you the file as an MHTML document. This type of document can be opened with any web browser, and will show you a break down with pictures, graphics, text, and even custom messages you can insert to demonstrate a common configuration or setup. This is great for training.

New Taskbar

This caught my eye right away, as I always have numerous applications running. The Aero theme really sets off the task bar, and you can now drag your minimized apps around, and pin your favorite programs to start up automatically. You can now minimize/maximize all your

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Could There A Tablet PC In Your Future?



Thomas Fox is president of Tech Experts, south-east Michigan's leading small business computer support company.

So far, 2010 has been the year of the tablet. The recent Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas featured tablet PCs from HP and Lenovo.

it offer that isn't already available?

After all, many devices on the market today - from the Amazon Kindle to the iPhone - offer portability and easy Internet access.



The word among Apple-watchers is that the latest must-have product from Steve Jobs will be a National Geographic-sized computer called the 'iSlate.'

By replacing the keyboard and trackpad of standard

laptops, the tablet is able to shed some bulk and weight - a nice feature for travelers and denizens of coffee shops.

I suspect that the tablet PC will find a niche in the consumer market while not quite breaking into the business world.

Tablets aren't new - Bill Gates introduced Microsoft's first attempt way back in 2000. But could 2010 be the year that this technology finally takes off?

But when it comes to actual typing - the basis of productive computer usage - most touch screens fall short. (Of course, I wouldn't bet against Apple's ability to once again revolutionize the touch screen and make entering text a breeze.)

The tablet's allure seems mostly limited to passive engagement - watching videos, scanning Facebook feeds reading e-books, etc. In other words, not exactly productive activities from a business standpoint.

I'm not so sure. With e-readers, smart phones and netbooks already popular, will the tablet find a way onto people's wish lists? What will

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applications with the click of a button located right next to the clock.

Windows Media Center

Again the Aero theme sets off the entire look and feel, but now you can finally play DVD and even Blu-Ray discs without any additional software or applications. You can even read/write with the appropriate hardware.

Personalization

The personalization center now offers over 20 different colors, several new dual screen compatible screen savers, rotating desktop backgrounds, and over a dozen new sound themes. You can even create your own personalized theme, making the system look and feel exactly like you want!

These are just a few of the user friendly additions that I have been found to be my favorite, but there is a laundry list of other features that just continue to amaze me. The manageability additions for IT professionals are quite impressive and extensive as well.

Overall, I would highly recommend Windows 7 to any user who is still running XP looking to finally make that leap, and even to the Vista users' who might be skeptical. It has totally changed and made my entire computer experience a better, faster, more efficient, and less stressful activity.

At the end of the day, we just want our computers to run smooth, and do what we want, and Microsoft really hit the nail on the head with this one.



Tips For Setting Up Your New Computer



Corey Bogedain is a network technician and web developer with Tech Experts.

We know that when a new computer arrives everyone acts like a kid in a candy store. Usually the typical person is in such a

hurry to open it and set it up they forgot about the importance of taking care of some important tasks that will help save you tons of time later on.

Plan to set aside about three or four hours to properly set the new computer up.

First you need to figure out where the computer will go. Does the room have enough space to allow you to work comfortably and not have to move things around?

Most people will decide to just use the smallest room in the house and convert it in to a computer room and then others choose to just place the computer in to an existing room like a kitchen or den. The next thing to do is save all paperwork when unboxing your computer. This includes any receipts.

This helps later on when you are in trouble and need to find out if you have a warranty or not. When you have all the paperwork together I would recommend, if you have a scanner, scanning these in to the computer so you have copies.

Also I would recommend to keep the box through the duration of the return policy, since most retailers require the original packaging to return or exchange the computer.

Next, all the disks you get with the computer need to be kept in a CD case or stored away in a file cabinet.

These disks are vital for your computer. Most disks will need to used at least once in the computers lifetime.

Technicians needs these disks if you ever have a problem with your operating system, and have to do a system restore.

Now you need to actually set up the computer and connect all of the cables. Take your time and make sure you hide all cables and make everything is neat.

This will save your time in the long run when you try to add hardware. No need to turn the computer on yet

just get everything plugged in to a surge protector or a backup power supply(UPS).

Now is the big moment where you get to turn on the computer.

This part is very vital to setting up the computer. Make sure you complete the setup wizard for the computer so that no issues arise later on.

Normal setups will ask for registration information. Make sure you fill this out to protect your warranty. These are usually just a few questions about you, where the computer was purchased, and how you use the computer.

Next you will be asked to create a username and password. The username will be required, but the password is going to be optional. If you use a password I would suggest using a password hint to help you, in case you forget the password in the future.

After this, the computer is properly setup based on a typical computer setup. From here, you'll just need to set up the Internet, and run any Windows updates that are needed. Be sure you install an anti-virus program before connecting to the Internet.

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Upgrade Your Computer For The New Year!



Robert Saylor is senior network technician and a hardware specialist with Tech Experts.

The question arises every time there is an issue with the typical system. "Should I upgrade the system, or by a new one?"

This question is most easily answered with a little more information.

How old is the system? Typically a system 6 plus years old or so is probably not going to worth the expense of upgrading. You would probably get a better bang for your buck replacing the system.

However, if your system is not really that old you can achieve remarkable performance improvements by upgrading your system.

For instance, upgrading you hard drive increases your "physical memory." Physical memory is the amount of hard drive space you have for the storage of data.

Many newer systems come with an average of 100-300 Gigabytes of on-board physical memory. While this may sound like a lot, you might find that your physical memory can fill up fast.

With more and more people storing photos and home-made movies on their PC, without adequate storage space, you could find that you've run out of space and you may need to delete old memories for new ones. And no one wants to lose those memories.

Luckily, the cost of physical memory is getting cheaper every day, without sacrificing any of the storage quality. And now, solid state hard drives are quite expense, and the performance is even better. Best of all, there are no moving parts to fail. Adding RAM or "in use memory" is one way to increase performance rather inexpensively. RAM determines how much data you can work with at any one time.

If your RAM is low, you may be able to run a limited number of programs simultaneously. The higher amount

of RAM your computer uses, the more applications and data you can access at the same time and the more quickly your CPU can work. The CPU and RAM work nearly hand-in-hand to increase the speed and functionality of your computer.

By increasing your CPU and RAM, you will be able to work with more than one program at one time and switch between the applications quickly with less lag time.

The CPU is where all the processing of data takes place. The more powerful your computer's brain (CPU), the faster your computer can process tasks. For example, if you get a little frustrated waiting for your web browser to load, upgrading your processing speed could help your computer start up faster, and help applications launch more quickly .

We have upgraded my workstation here at the office by adding more RAM, and I cannot believe the difference this has made in the ability of the system to process data quickly. If there is one upgrade I would recommend over any other, it would be to upgrade your computer's memory.

Even the biggest and best upgrades can't help a computer that is slowed down because it is thoroughly infected. You have to take care when you are on the Internet and watch for malware that can attack your freshly upgraded computer.

And remember to let the techs at Tech Experts assist you in all your computing needs.



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