

Is Vista still relevant?

Half the people I know have remained reluctant to upgrade to Vista. The best reason is XP is (pretty much) trouble free and it works every day, there simply is no motivation to purchase a new system or pay to upgrade the software. The second most popular reason is the known issue of software compatibility with Vista.

Given the fact that Microsoft is poised to roll out Windows 7 in under a year you can't help but wonder why you need to invest any effort or expense into Vista?

The initial basic concerns are:

- Microsoft will discontinue support (security and critical updates) for XP in 2014
- Very few manufacturers still offer it as an OS option
- Software/hardware suppliers are focusing on Vista and Windows 7 compatibility not an operating system that is due to be phased out

If you are considering a Vista upgrade to your current hardware you can evaluate individual system hardware compatibility with the Vista Upgrade Advisor found at:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-vista/get/upgrade-advisor.aspx>

At this point in time you should feel more comfortable with the software compatibility of Vista. It does offer increased security as compared to XP which, given the level of today's spyware threats, is a definite positive.

If you haven't already I would suggest migrating one workstation to Vista so you have the ability to test specific applications and train employees. Increased productivity is a goal of the Vista OS and beginning to integrate it now will create an easy transfer to W7 down the road.

Three to Five Year Plan

Using a three to five year vision for IT evaluation/migration it makes sense NOT to overlook Vista. Vista technology is the heart of a bigger strategy and its improvements in security, power consumption, and user efficiency will pay dividends now and remain part of Windows 7. It is also prudent to believe there will be a software lag, as we have seen with Vista, of approximately 18 months after the retail release of W7, meaning you may need Vista compatibility before Windows 7 has attained its own level of acceptability.