



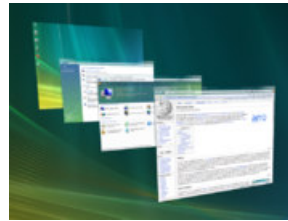
## Windows Vista, Buy or Beware?

Eric MacLeod

It's been more than five years since Microsoft dazzled us with its latest Windows operating system (XP Home and Professional), and now after much anticipation Vista has made its way to consumers. With so much time invested in its development, Vista has created the longest window between Windows OS releases. Expectations are high and people have both good and bad things to say. So is it a good time to change from the tried and tested XP platform, or should you wait and see what is to come?

First off, Vista boasts a number of improvements both cosmetic and functional. Getting the most press would be the stunningly visual new interface dubbed Windows Aero. If you remember the leap taken when most users retired their buggy Windows 98 systems for the newer and more graphic XP line, then Vista may bring up familiar old feelings. The desktop appearance has been revamped almost completely. Gone is the start menu with its list of applications that can take up a whole screen just to

find one program. Instead we find a small Windows logo button and inside is a collection of lists all organized and controlled with a scroll bar. Also inside is a search bar, and with just a few simple letters you can easily and quickly find any program, document, or folder you may need. Transparent windows let you see what is behind them, minimize a window and it slides quietly to the task bar, and if you move your mouse over the task bar a live preview of the program appears.



With all these great new improvements and many more that could easily and will fill a book, what is the catch. Well as with every leap in OS design, Windows Vista is an extremely power hungry system. Requiring a minimum of one GB of ram and a proces-

sor running at 1 Ghz or more, older systems just don't have the capacity to handle it. Other requirements such as a minimum of a 64 meg graphics card and 15 GB of free space on a 40 GB drive may have many offices deciding whether the cost of upgrading their machines is really worth it. Add the fact that the look and feel of Vista, while possibly better, is still vastly different.

So what does it all come down to? Windows Vista is a superior system boasting new technology... just like every other major release of Windows. However, as with any new system, one should be wary before changing what has been proven reliable. It has not been that long since the nightmare of the blaster worm that caused Microsoft not just to update XP, but to revamp it into an almost entirely new system. A good rule of thumb for any OS change is to give it at least a year, this gives people a real chance to put it through its paces and find any issues the programmers might have missed.

## Inside the Numbers

### Firefox Browser Gaining Ground

Microsoft's Internet Explorer (IE) continues to maintain market share with 85.85 percent of the Internet browser share worldwide. Across the globe, IE has an 85.85 percent market share; Mozilla's Firefox has 11.49 percent of the market. Apple's Safari browser serves 1.61 percent, and Opera and Netscape each supply browsers to less than 1 percent of the market worldwide.

#### Top Worldwide Browsers, October 2006

Rank	Browser	Usage Share (%)
1	Microsoft IE	85.85
2	Mozilla Firefox	11.49
3	Apple Safari	1.61
4	Opera	0.69
5	Netscape	0.12

Within the U.S. browser market, 80.77 percent of users surf the Web on IE and 14.88 percent on Firefox. That's up from 9.57 percent in December 2005. Safari gets 3.41 percent of the market, and Opera and Netscape each hold less than 1 percent.

#### Top U.S. Browsers, October 2006

Rank	Browser	Usage Share (%)
1	Microsoft IE	80.77
2	Mozilla Firefox	14.88
3	Apple Safari	3.41
4	Opera	0.61
5	Netscape	0.19

Firefox is most popular in Germany (33.42 percent); Australia (25.55 percent); and Italy (21.60 percent). IE penetration is lowest in Australia (64.10 percent) and Germany (60 percent).



# Laptop Coolers, Don't Get Burned

Jeff Slater

As many businesses have found out, laptops can be very unpredictable when it comes to overheating. As the core temperature in a laptop rises, various symptoms may be experienced. A couple of these symptoms are very slow hard drive and processor response times, or a recurring sudden shutdown. If the response time from an application is very slow, or if a laptop is having intermittent but not consistent hardware errors, it could be a sign that the laptop is overheating. Also, if the unit is hot to the touch or an acrid smell is coming from the laptop, it should immediately be turned off. This overheating can occur when an internal cooling fan slows down or stops working altogether. This causes components such as the processor or wires to greatly exceed their normal running temperatures. Diagnosis of damaged components due to overheating means having to replace parts and sometimes a loss of data.

With all the dangers involved in overheating components, laptop owners can feel confident that their unit is built to

cool itself as necessary. The internal fans and other cooling methods that come with a laptop are made to ensure the integrity of the system. In a high majority of cases, overheating is not a problem. So why even worry about the need for a laptop cooler?



cooler is a cheap way to make sure the temperature isn't rising. The coolers range in price from \$10.00 to \$50.00 and offer various options for speed control and quiet operation. The coolers are also often powered by the USB port, which eliminates the need for a separate power adaptor. If you have any questions about the possible need for a laptop cooler, please call our staff at 866-964-8324, and we can help you determine if a cooling fan is right for you.

The best way to fix a problem is by preventing it from happening in the first place. While laptops generally don't have problems with overheating, because of their compact size, they are more prone to it than a regular desktop PC. And because laptop hardware issues are generally more difficult to resolve, it is best to be cautious. The bottom line: there's no need to go out and buy a laptop cooler right now, but at the first possible signs of overheating, a laptop

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