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Grand Haven Store *Coopersville Store*
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Sat 10:00 am to 3:00 pm Sat 9:30 am to 12:00 pm

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Windows 7 Operating System, Part 1 by Steve Skodack

► The release of Windows 7 has brought about a dilemma to business professionals who operate within the Microsoft oriented technical community. No one wants to get caught in the Vista trap with Windows 7. I understand that one may get a little nervous to make the switch to Windows 7 from Windows XP, which is still an excellent operating system. Windows XP is still known as being the best OS in a business environment. The problem is that XP is a dying OS in today's ever changing technical world. Soon support for XP will cease to exist and will join its predecessors in the Microsoft OS grave yard.

Not to worry though, with the release of Windows 7, new life will be injected into the professional and home environment. Windows 7 has been referred to as a hybrid between XP and Vista. Windows 7 is graphic intensive like Vista, but also seems to run lighter, much like XP. Windows 7 also boast faster wake up times (or commonly referred to as boot up times), than Vista and XP. Keep in mind that the tests were performed on newer PC's (only a year or two old). The articles that were based on researched tests showed that the beta of Windows 7 was faster than both XP and Vista when booting up.



Just because an operating system can boot up faster than its predecessor doesn't always mean that it is a better product. That is why after further research we find that Windows 7 has surpassed Windows XP and Vista in a basic file transfer test. Windows 7 also proved to be the best choice when opening up basic office applications such as Word and Excel.

One glaring downfall that Vista had is that a lot of older legacy software (mainly found in businesses) would not work with Vista. This dilemma means that a business owner would have to make a considerable investment in upgrading their infrastructure. The steps for doing this would involve getting the latest drivers from the internet

or manufacturer for their equipment (such as printers, fax machines, etc.), update the hardware on the individual systems (such as RAM, hard drive, graphics card) and hope that everything works. Unless the software required Vista, we at CCS were not recommending that anyone upgrade to Vista and we downgraded the new PC's to XP. Most of these issues have gone away with Windows 7.

Microsoft has learned from the mistake made with Vista. When you buy the Windows 7 Professional version and above it comes with a feature called Windows XP compatibility mode. Windows XP compatibility mode is a virtual machine (with XP as the OS) that runs on your system and in its own virtual environment. The best part is that the software installed on the virtual machine will show up on the start menu of your PC (not in the virtual machine) in the "All Programs" tab. When the program is being executed it will not open in the virtual machine, but instead in its own window as every other program does. The only time you would need to run the virtual PC is when you would want to install or uninstall programs.

The Windows 7 operating system has been working well in many business environments. We at CCS now are recommending to our clients that when a computer needs to be replaced you put Windows 7 on it, unless there is legacy software or hardware that does not work with the new operating system. If you are looking to upgrade one of your current computers to Windows 7 from XP or Vista we would recommend looking at all costs including hardware, software and technical time before doing so. It may be more cost effective to buy a new system. Let us know if you need help in determining if Windows 7 makes sense for you.



"Relax...we're on IT"

Microsoft Ends Support for Windows XP SP2 by Steve Skodack

► Microsoft has announced an end of life date for the support of Windows XP SP2 and SP3. The end of life date for SP2 is July 13, 2010, and the end of life for SP3 is slated sometime around April 2014. What this means is that Microsoft will no longer issue automatic updates (I.E. security updates and patches) for systems running these versions of the operating systems. CCS recommends you make sure all your computers running Windows XP are utilizing SP3 so you are not surprised when you stop receiving updates from Microsoft. This is very important to maintain complete operation for your computers. If you have any questions we at CCS Technologies can offer assistance and advice.

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lenovo



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