

Re: Does Vista Home Premium Play Nice With 4GB Memory?

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- *From:* Ringmaster <bigtop@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Wed, 13 Aug 2008 16:11:12 -0500
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On Wed, 13 Aug 2008 12:40:01 -0700, Five By Five <5x5@xxxxxxx> wrote:

I am hearing some talk-----urban legends?-----and reading on the web that 32-bit Vista does not know how to manage 4 GB memory, which is odd, since 2[^]32 addressable spaces-----namely 4GB-----are all about that.

You hear lots of talk. Interested in facts? In addition to what others already set regarding how 32 bit Windows uses 4 GB of RAM you should be aware having 4 GB RAM is OVERKILL for 99% of users.

I spend most of my day working on video editing at a professional level using Sony's flagship Vegas. Rendering a video is one of the most demanding tasks you can ask of any personal computer since it really tasks the CPU. Being curious I tried various amounts of RAM to see if it would create any worthwhile MEASURABLE improvement.

Changing from 1 GB to 2 GB there was some improvement, not a huge amount but noticeable. Going from 2 GB to 4GB using a 32 bit version of Vista Business the further "imprisonment" was not significant enough to justify the expense.

I have a 1-year old notebook that came with 2GB memory standard with VHP, and I am thinking that the hard drive is working WAY TOO HARD as part of the Virtual Mem. Screen/application updates are SUPER slow, and I really don't have many tasks running (see OTHER BACKGROUND INFO below).

Am I wasting my money and time upgrading to 4 GB from 2 GB?

Screen updates should be nearly instant. A good test is to view a dozen or so moderately large graphic files in rapid order using Vista's own included Image Viewer. Then images should change and flash by as fast and you can click the Next Arrow. You should NOT see the

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images being drawn on screen nor should you see the new hour glass icon indicating Vista is struggling along. If you do, something is wrong and it likely isn't the amount of RAM you have. More likely your graphic card, your motherboard, your CPU's speed, the speed of your memory, not the amount of RAM, and how fast your FSB(FrontSideBus) is which determines how fast data moves between your CPU registers and memory.

I would download Autoruns (free Utility) and see how much junk gets loaded at startup. Your system may simply be underpowered to do multitasking and it is limping along trying. Getting rid of some or all of the clutter will likely show a improvement.

The best test if you need more RAM or not is let Vista tell you. Use Task Manager to see. Click Ctrl/Alt/Del, Task Manager, go to Performance Tab, then go about your business opening and running the applications you use most while observing the two graphs on the left of the Task Manager window which should float on top of other windows. For more details click on the Resource Monitor button.

There are many reasons for sluggish performance. While too little RAM is a possible cause it belongs near the bottom of the list of suspects, not the top.

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OTHER BACKGROUND INFO:

I don't have really a lot of startup programs and am careful to keep them to a minimum.

I rely on (reputedly memory hog) Firefox for the browser (TBird for the mail client), and may have as many as 11–15 tabs open at a time; I access Netflix on FF running an IE browser object inside (same with Hulu), and I have a radio station stream playing often when I don't have a movie/TV content running. I am careful to close browser pages running scripted ads which suck up processor time. Office 2007 products seem well-behaved (Word, PP) so I really don't worry about closing them when I have a few of them open.

I have a lot of PDFs open, but they have never been much trouble. Adobe Acrobat 8.x Pro was behaving badly in a super slow way, and with a system reboot, it was still behaving badly. I did an application repair and it seemed to sort itself out.

Actually you are running a lot of stuff. If you have multiple PDF's open, are streaming a video, multiple tabs in TBird and all the rest

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you said on top of multiple startup programs (you didn't say how many in you opinion isn't too many) that may be too much to handle.