

Re: Which XP to use

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- *From:* "Rock" <Rock@xxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Mon, 23 Apr 2007 17:50:41 -0700
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"cnic" <fcnicolai@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote

Rock,

Thanks for the input. I agree that there is a lot of "extra" software that is unnecessary. The first thing I do is take off all junk software installed on a computer when I purchase it. All the internet services, games, and other stuff are just clutter. I go online and research the startup programs that are running and find out if they are necessary and disable anything that doesn't have to be there. This is my 5th HP computer (PC and laptop) and it just seems odd that it is the only one I have had any issues with. I guess since Vista is the only thing that is new, it gets the blame. However, I do know that it is having a lot of compatibility issues. I have read this other places than the Vista newsgroups as well. It isn't perfect nor is any other OS, but at least XP works for me.

It's a new OS that is fundamentally different than XP. Some features are the same but under the hood there are many differences. Vista compatible drivers are needed for all the hardware (though in some cases XP drivers have worked). As with any new OS some hardware manufacturers will not release Vista drivers for their legacy hardware. This was the case when XP was released. Some hardware cannot be brought over, which can be very frustrating. Examples of this certain printers, scanners, USB devices, etc.

For new hardware, again the manufacturer's are responsible for the drivers. They've had a long time to prepare for this, but unfortunately many have dropped the ball, including the PC manufacturers for the drivers they have created for their new hardware, like your laptop.

The same is true of software. You have to be very careful what software you run; make sure it is Vista compatible and stay away from certain apps, even if they claim Vista compatibility. There is a world of difference between one that is patched to work with Vista and one that is written from the ground up with Vista in mind. And some apps you should just stay away from. For example, I would never let McAfee or Norton products on a computer, but these security suites are commonly bundled with OEM computers. Never use a registry cleaner.

Yes Vista has it's bugs, but it can run well if the hardware, drivers and software are the right ones. As time goes on the hardware manufacturer's will catch up with their products and drivers, and software will be coded from the ground up to work with Vista.

Unfortunately with laptops you are particularly at the mercy of what the computer manufacturer does since this is proprietary hardware.

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I'm not saying Vista doesn't have it's share of problems, but I do think it gets unjustly blamed for many of these issues. If you get a new computer from a vendor with Vista installed on it, and it doesn't work solid out of the box, then the blame is clearly on the computer manufacturer because the fact is it can run well.

I would have taken the thing back to the store, but they changed their policy to 14 days instead of 30 days. I live 90 miles from the store in a very rural area and it was past the 14 days before I was able to get back. They told me to have HP give me an RA # and they would trade me out for a different computer but HP wouldn't do that. So, this is what I have to work with.

That's too bad. I'm surprised HP wouldn't help out more. Maybe you need to complain to someone higher up in the chain. Letters to bosses oft times are very effective.

I might think differently if when I got on the Vista newsgroup looking for answers I would have actually been helped instead of getting caught in a word war of name calling, sarcasm, and finger pointing all mixed with vulgarity. It is a mess over there. Not much real help.

I agree the atmosphere in there can be ugly. There are so many trolls trying to push their agenda which is pathetic, actually. Sometimes the folks who are trying to help get frustrated and fed up with that bull, and retaliate. It would be better if that didn't happen, but sometimes some things get said that is hard to ignore. And then there are those folks who like Vista but blame the user. That certainly doesn't help either.

Not many real answers to actual problems either, just a lot of defending and blaming going on.

The OS is new, with new issues and new resolutions needed. So yes there will be situations where there are no answers. And this is compounded with proprietary hardware like you have with the HP laptop. With XP being a mature OS, quite a few of the posters in the XP groups (non MVP and MVP alike) have had extensive experience from the tech stand point with laptops and other OEM equipment so they are familiar with the problems and possible resolutions. With Vista and the new hardware, the experience base isn't yet built.

On the other hand I see many situations in there where help is obtained due to someone's experience with a particular situation, program or motherboard, and with help from the vendor. If you put together your own system and buy a motherboard, for example, you are much more likely to find someone who has experience with that, and the board makers are generally more responsive. Sometimes not always with what you want to hear, sometimes you have to go to a different board, but you get some response, as opposed to the big OEMs like HP. You don't have much leverage with them, so it's harder to get answers.

Amongst all the nastiness in the Vista newsgroups there are success stories. The loud mouths tend to hang a shadow over this, but it does happen.

If a product is what it should be, no one would have to defend it, its quality would speak for itself. The pat answer is to blame the user. Not very good for PR.

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I agree with you there. Sometimes the user does deserve the blame, so to speak, or at least the responsibility for the choices they made, but that goes more towards those who upgrade without doing their research. In any event, the user should not be blamed, educated yes, blamed no. But then the OS and hardware shouldn't be blamed for what the user didn't do. Just get on with the process of resolving the issues.

I will wait and see if I have the same problems before I wipe Vista off and install XP. I will also wait to install anything else. Tech support already had me restore to original settings twice, which took off everything I had installed and I had to go through the same awful mess with the UAC and not recognizing updates, etc.....a nightmare.

Unfortunately restoring the system will put back all the garbage software installed by HP that you took off. This is what I would do. Remove all the extra software, remove Norton or McAfee, whatever security suite they provided, look carefully at the software that's there that you would want to keep to see if it's Vista compatible. Hopefully you can get it to a state that things run well. Then from that lean state use a drive imaging program such as Acronis True Image Home version 10 to image the drive to an external hard drive.

I don't know if you are familiar with imaging, but I wouldn't be without it. I use it as the main backup strategy. ATI works well in Vista. Right now newegg.com has a great price on it, \$29.99 plus \$4.99 shipping. You can get an EIDE WD Caviar 7200 rpm 320 GB hard drive (white box) for less than \$90. Stick that in an external drive enclosure (on the order of \$20) and connect that through USB, Firewire or eSata. Regularly image the drive for backups but keep an image of it in it's pristine, lean state.

After that start adding software, and if something causes a problem go back to a previous image. For AV I like Avast (free version). For paid I would recommend NOD32. Use the built in firewall, no need for a 3rd party product. For anti-spyware stick with Defender and add Adaware SE Personal, SpyBot S&D, and Spyware Blaster. Do manual scans on a regular basis with Ad-Aware and Spybot. Update Spyware Blaster regularly. It isn't a scanner.

I can't guarantee this will allow the laptop to run Vista well, since it depends heavily on the drivers that HP provides. There might also be a BIOS update from HP that will help. BIOS problems can greatly affect the system operation such as hibernate and standby, startup and shutdown, etc.

Acronis True Image can image on a drive or partition basis. It also does file backup, and disk cloning. Images can be full, incremental or differential, reducing the amount of space needed for subsequent images. Restores can be done on a file, partition or drive basis. I never make changes to a system without having a current image.

If I have the same problems, I will call them and make sure everything will work before I do it.

Thanks oodles!

You're welcome. Good luck.

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Rock [MS-MVP User/Shell]

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