

Computer Observer

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Windows Vista, Enough Already

by Adam J. Richter M.S.

If you are not tired of hearing about Windows Vista already then you probably haven't heard about it yet.

Windows Vista is Microsoft's new operating system. It is an updated, prettier, higher security replacement for Windows XP.

There have been a lot of complaints in the past two months since Windows Vista was released, but they are the same complaints that Windows XP received when it first came out.

Sure, some printers don't work yet, and even a few other small issues. But otherwise, Windows Vista is a great new operating system.

If I've got you excited and a little more confident to start using Windows Vista don't jump on the bandwagon just yet. If you have Windows XP or if you use your computer for business, don't upgrade yet. You'd be better off waiting till all of the bugs get worked out.

Don't upgrade, get a computer that comes with Windows Vista and you'll enjoy it a lot more.

Fantastic Flat Panels

by Adam J. Richter M.S.

Flat panel monitors are now the standard. 19 inch flat panel monitors are available for under \$200 and are becoming more affordable every day.

The old boxy CRT's are on there way to becoming obsolete and are not being sold new.

If you need more desk space, flat panel monitors are a great option.

You do not need to upgrade anything on your computer to use a flat panel monitor. They use the exact same connection that regular CRT monitors use.

The best features of a flat panel of monitor are that the picture is clearer, easier on the eyes, and the monitor takes less electricity. Just be careful, flat panel monitors are more fragile than CRT's. The screen is made of liquid crystals and not glass.

If you are going to get a flat panel monitor be sure to check the specials and Sunday paper. Different stores in the area are constantly providing great deals. Specifically check Office Depot, Staples, Circuit City, and Best Buy.

Screamin' Hot Laptop

By Adam J. Richter M.S.

Laptops are everywhere and more performance is being crammed into them all the time. The higher the performance, the greater the heat, and the faster the battery drains.

If you have a laptop or know someone that has a laptop that is slowing down or running really hot, I've got a tip that will save laptops. If you don't know it, your laptop has at least one built in fan. This fans job is to cool the system and exhaust all heat from the computer. The problem is that while exhausting heat, the laptop also intakes outside air to cool itself.

While intaking cool air, the laptop also intakes dust and other clogging agents. Over time the dust and dander can clog the cooling fans inside the laptop and the laptop can overheat. To fix this just get a can of compressed air (Air Duster), or even a compressor and spray out the fans while the laptop is off.

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Get Rid of Toolbars

If your Internet Explorer keeps shrinking while the toolbars stack up at the top, you'll need to remove them. There are two ways to remove toolbars.

1. Uninstall them. Go to your Control Panel and look for the 'Add/Remove Programs' icon. Click it and a list of all of the programs installed on your computer will be displayed. Look for things that have 'Toolbar' in the name and click them to uninstall.

2. Disable them. With Internet Explorer open, click Tools then click Toolbars, uncheck any Toolbars you want to disable.

Do you have Norton or McAfee? By Adam J. Richter M.S.

The new versions of Norton and McAfee are causing a lot of trouble. Here are some of the problems that people are having.

- * Missing viruses
- * Not Updating
- * Causing the computer to run slow
- * Popping up a lot and causing interruptions
- * Internet problems, cannot get to certain websites, programs blocked from the internet

Here are the facts. If you have Windows XP, then you do not need a firewall. Windows XP, with Service Pack 2, has a built-in firewall. If you buy one, you are just wasting extra money that you do not need to spend.

So what should you use? There are a lot of free antivirus programs out there that work better. They update more frequently, they use less resources so your computer will run faster, they find more viruses.

Here are two free Antivirus programs you can use:

- * AVG Free Edition <http://free.grisoft.com>
- * Avast Home Edition http://www.avast.com/eng/avast_4_home.html

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