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Windows 7
Microsoft

[14 Things that Microsoft Needs to Do with Windows 7](#)

No more failed "Wows"

Microsoft made no secret out of having, for some time now, been cooking the next iteration of Windows, a translucent development process with very little transparent areas including details such as multi-touch, support for 32-bit and 64-bit architectures, and the evolution of the Windows Vista kernel, graphics and audio subsystems. Pieces of the Windows 7 puzzle are indeed starting to come together, and a more consistent perspective will be delivered at the company's 2008 Professional Developers Conference, that will take place between October 27 and 30 in Los Angeles. Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates and with Steven Sinofsky, Senior Vice President, Windows and Windows Live Engineering Group, have made it clear that Windows 7 will be the evolution of Windows Vista. With the current operating system acting as the foundation for the next, there have already been mentions of Windows Vista SP2 or even Windows Vista R2, but since actual details are gagged, all speculations about Windows 7 are fair game. In this context, Gates has also mentioned that Windows 7 will be a product of Microsoft's philosophy that states "do things better." The Redmond company's Co-Founder indicated that Vista has given ample opportunity for improvements with Windows 7. The intimate connection between Windows 7 and Windows Vista manages to raise questions as to just how much of the current Windows client is going to survive into the next version, and just what sins it will pass along. Hopefully, Microsoft has learned relevant lessons from Vista, and will not repeat the Wow mistakes. There are of course a few things that the Redmond company can do to ensure this. **1. Performance!**

Performance! Performance! Microsoft commissioned Principled Technologies to compare Windows Vista RTM and SP1 to Windows XP SP2. Here is what they found: Vista RTM vs. XP SP2 - "Windows Vista was noticeably more responsive after rebooting than Windows XP on several common business operations. Overall, Windows Vista and Windows XP were roughly equally responsive on most test operations. Windows Vista was more responsive on some operations, and on those operations on which it was more responsive, Windows XP typically responded only a half a second or so faster." Vista SP1 vs. Vista RTM vs. XP SP2 - "Overall, Windows Vista SP1 and Windows XP performed comparably on most test operations. Differences were typically less than a half second. Windows Vista SP1 was noticeably more responsive after rebooting than Windows XP on several common home operations. Overall, Windows Vista SP1 and Windows Vista performed comparably on most test operations, with differences typically less than a half second." No! This won't do with Windows 7! It simply won't! Let me make this clear, Windows 7 has to fly in comparison with Windows Vista and Windows XP. Fly! And the difference cannot be described with such qualifiers as "noticeably," "roughly equally responsive," and "differences typically less than a half second." In case that users have failed to be clear on this one, the performance they want with Windows 7 compared to Vista is that of a Ferrari compared to a bicycle. That's it! It's simple, now get it done! Just look at what Apple is doing with Snow Leopard to get a proper idea of what needs to be done. **2. Hardware Requirements – Less Is... Well... Less** Microsoft has already confirmed through the voice of Christopher Flores, Director Windows Communications that, at the end of 2009, Windows 7 will sport the same system requirements as Windows Vista does now, or did at the end of 2006 – beginning of 2007, when it was launched. This would be nothing short of excellent for Microsoft. They will need to make Windows 7 fly (see #1) and they will have to do it on the same systems that Vista is sluggish (to use an euphemism). The benefits of such a move would be tremendous for Windows 7, and related specifically to in-place-upgrades. Users are bound to think twice if they also have to upgrade their hardware in order to move to a new operating system. But

just taking the software and slapping it on any "old" system configuration and get more will do half the marketing campaign for Microsoft.

3. Windows 7 vs. Vista vs. XP vs. Mac OS X vs. Linux vs. Lawn Mowers One of the things that killed Windows Vista was the constant comparison with Windows XP, and not with Mac OS X or Linux. What Microsoft needs to do is set up a comprehensive set of tests and guidelines for comparing operating systems, and to provide general access to online benchmarking tools that will give an accurate and realistic perspective on scenarios involving Windows 7 vs. Vista vs. XP vs. Mac OS X vs. Linux. And I don't care if users are able to access the benchmarking tests via browsers from embedded platforms installed on their lawn mowers, or from a high performance operating system running on a supercomputer, Windows 7 will have to outperform everything that's thrown against it. Everything! So, what if it's Microsoft's tests? So what?! The company just needs to give end users, OEMs, corporations, developers, IT professionals and even Mac OS X and Linux users a palpable proof that Windows 7 is better. Palpable!

4. The One True Love for the Applications Environment Windows 7 will be stretched between the need to evolve to 64-bit programs and the necessity to provide support for legacy applications. Virtualization is the best solution for the operating system to support Windows 7-specific software solutions, but also products designed to integrate with Windows Vista, Windows XP and even older Windows Platforms. By building virtualization into Windows 7, and ensuring that legacy applications will run in emulated environments replicating the OS they were tailored to, Microsoft will scrap one of the biggest worries that have plagued Windows Vista.

5. Put the Whip on the Evangelism Division Really now! The biggest failure of Windows Vista is not hardware and driver incompatibility, it's the work done by the Microsoft Evangelism division for the operating system. I don't care if it's NVIDIA, ATI, Intel, AMD, HP or some obscure manufacturer building lawn mowers (see #3) in Alaska or in Siberia... if it has to run Windows 7, a Microsoft evangelist should provide everything from support to Pina Coladas, walks on the beach and in the rain, and massages. Don't wait for the manufacturers to come to you, go to them, go early, and woo them with the trademark Microsoft geek charm...

6. No More Kill Switches, in Translation "Vista RFM No Más" All Windows users are created equal! Even those running pirated Windows. Microsoft needs to work this to its advantage and ensure that the jump from pirated Windows to genuine copies of the client is as easy and as cheap as it can be. One example is the 2007 gambit made on the Chinese market with the slashed Windows Vista prices. Sure enough, the company would still be losing money, but it will be losing a lot less than with the free pirated copies of Windows. But, at the same time, it is important to ensure that users of genuine Windows are not made to suffer from malfunctioning Reduced Functionality Mode kill switches, like they did with Vista. In SP1, Microsoft killed RFM, and it was the right thing to do by its users. The Redmond company, the only one who has access to the statistics with the false positives of the Windows Genuine Advantage antipiracy mechanism for Vista, and all the operating systems thrown into reduced functionality mode despite being genuine, knows this better than any of us.

7. Infinite Windows 7 Flavors for All Windows Vista came in six flavors... Starter, Home Basic, Home Premium, Business, Enterprise and Ultimate. If Windows 7 will come in 100, 24, 12, or also 6, Microsoft has learned nothing from Vista. Nothing! Yes, six editions do offer consumers the right choices, at the right price... but they also manage to create confusion. Microsoft needs to understand that it will not be able to satisfy all the needs of its customers by delivering infinite Windows 7 flavors, or by releasing a single one-size-fits-all edition as Apple does with Mac OS X. With Windows 7, Microsoft needs to simplify its SKU offerings. Melt Home Basic into Home Premium, or drop Home Basic altogether. Make a single SKU out of Business and Enterprise and figure out how to provide different activation architectures to small businesses and corporate customers. Ultimate is a good idea however you look at it, and it should survive. Starter does not! In fact, the entire concept of Windows Starter edition should be dropped altogether! I'll explain later on.

8. Aero Next Microsoft will have to do with Windows 7 what it did with the graphical user interface of Office 2007, in comparison to Office 2003. Windows 7 needs its own

Ribbon/Fluent UI, with plenty of eye candy and with multi-touch, gesture, object recognition, advanced tablet PC support, and so on and so forth. But what it doesn't need is that Aero Next to be the resource hog that it is in Windows Vista. This should keep Microsoft from advising customers with inferior hardware configurations to turn Aero off altogether because it makes their systems virtually unusable. Let me make this clear: if just the user interface of a platform makes it unusable, Microsoft might as well go back to the command line...**9.**

Security but No SecurityIn case the negative response to the User Account Control in Windows Vista failed to reach Microsoft, let me spell this out... Users want security but they don't want security. Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer admitted that the company had sacrificed functionality for security. Please stop! First off, users should be and feel secure without having to compromise on any other aspect, and certainly not on flexibility or functionality. Microsoft needs to get UAC right in Windows 7 from the get-go, because the feature doesn't look like it's going away. But it should be made to run in the background, and to be as non-intrusive and as less chatty as possible. But, most importantly, security should be a given, not the focus of the marketing campaign. Microsoft doesn't need to sell Windows 7 because it's secure, or even to stress security. It should be a default association and nothing more. But certainly not the top selling pitch! **10. Think Ultra!**This is where scraping Windows Starter comes in. One of the largest opportunities of growth for Windows is on the market of Ultra-Low-Cost mobile and desktop computers. This means that Windows 7 will need to run on the same hardware that Windows XP does in order to become tailored for ULC machines. If Microsoft makes Windows play well with low system configurations, the trademark of all Ultra-Low-Cost computers, than Starter will be redundant. And there goes one extra and useless Windows SKU. For the time being, the Redmond company cannot offer the resource-hog that is Vista for ULC machines and is still delivering Windows XP. This situation cannot perpetuate itself with Vista's successor. Microsoft has to make Windows 7 available for all machines, and not praise the much needed evolution of the Windows operating system while still shamelessly providing users with the "blast from the past" that is XP, eight years after it was launched. **11. DirectX Next – 10 + 1 – Make It for Vista Too**Microsoft needs to start acting like Windows is their number one gaming platform, and fast. One of the mistakes made with Windows Vista was to not to backport DirectX 10 to Windows XP. This has to change with Windows 7. Namely, the Redmond company needs to offer DirectX 11 not only with Windows 7, but also for Windows Vista. No more excuses this time!**12. Windows 7 Ultimate Extras**I don't have to tell Windows Vista Ultimate users what a disappointment (yes, I managed do dodge the term "monumental failure") the Ultimate Extras were and still are. Still, the Ultimate Extras is just the last aspect where Windows Vista disappointed its users next to application and hardware incompatibilities, poor performance, the UAC, RFM... But, as far as Vista users go, Ultimate Extras really failed because of Microsoft's evident mismanagement and defiant lack of interest. The Ultimate Extras in Windows 7 have to wash away the shame of what has not been delivered in Windows Vista.**13. Start Your Marketing Engines, but Please No More Wows!**Microsoft doesn't have to wait until Windows 7 hits the shelves in order to start marketing the operating system, as it did with Windows Vista. This time around, however, the company does need to ensure that no more Wows will accompany the Windows operating system on the market. If Windows 7 is only evolutionary compared to Vista, then Microsoft at least has to make sure that the Windows 7 marketing campaign is revolutionary. **14. It's an OS X Eat Win, Linux Eat Win, Win Eat Win World**Microsoft has to play dirty! It needs to jump at the jugular of Mac OS X, Linux, Windows XP and Windows Vista. It needs to sacrifice all Windows operating systems on the altar of Windows 7, and it needs to bury its competitors. No more extended support, no more feature-rich Service Packs, no more availability, no more lifecycle extensions... just Windows 7!And, as for Mac OS X and Linux, Microsoft needs to bury them both. I don't care if half of the Windows 7 team starts building malicious code for OS X and Linux and then release it in the wild, and shuts down very Mac computer and all the machines powered by Linux that are connected

to a network (except lawn mowers, of course; see #3). With Windows 7, Microsoft has to be at least as cutthroat as Apple or the open source community.