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Leopard Logo
Apple

[Exclusively 64-bit Windows Client after Windows Vista?](#)

Apple has already made the switch

Apple is managing to keep the pace with the evolution of the processor a lot better than Microsoft. The next operating system from the Cupertino-based company will be exclusively 64-bit. Apple's rhythm is in this context superior to that of Microsoft, while enjoying a limited installed base for the Mac OS. Apple currently accounts for just 6.46% of the worldwide operating system market. In turn Microsoft's Windows platform makes up for over 90% of the world's operating systems. According to recent remarks from Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates, Windows Vista sold approximately 40 million licenses in its first 100 days on availability making the operating system more prolific than any of its rivals including the various distributions of Linux or Apple's platform. However, having complete control over both the hardware and the software is synonymous with being able to dictate the trend in technology and being in tune with innovations. This is why Apple can afford to move exclusively to 64-bit, leaving Microsoft behind to deal with the 32-bit relics. The Redmond Company has already announced its last 32-bit operating system. Still, Microsoft will only move to 64-bit as far as its server operating systems are concerned. Windows Server 2008, scheduled for RTM by the end of 2007 will mark the end of the 32-bit Microsoft server platforms. Windows Vista comes in both 32-bit and 64-bit flavors, and the word is still out on Windows Seven, Vista's successor. Unlike Apple Microsoft has an immense baggage of 32-bit machines that require an operating system. This is why, Windows senior product manager Alex Heaton addressed the issue of 64-bit Windows clients, in an attempt to send out the message that Microsoft is still weighing in its possibilities, but that the transition to exclusively 64-bit versions of future desktop operating systems has not been decided. It is hard to believe that in just two years, as Windows Seven is planned for 2009, the market for processors will shift so conclusively to 64-bit that Microsoft won't see any reason to keep supporting 32-bit architectures. Microsoft does not have Apple's luxury of a codependent hardware and operating system bundle, and is much more than the Cupertino-based company impacted by the existing 32-bit legacy systems. "Leopard also includes three new technologies that take full advantage of the latest developments in processor hardware: full native 64-bit support to enable applications to take complete advantage of 64-bit processing while still running side by side with existing 32-bit Mac OS X applications and drivers; easy multi-core optimization and scheduling to take advantage of the latest Intel hardware," Apple revealed in a press release for Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard.