

By: ~~Windows 2008~~ [Windows 2008](#), Technology News Editor

[Free Windows for Supercomputers from Microsoft](#)

Windows HPC Server 2008 CTP

The Windows operating system is by no means limited to the desktop. In fact, Microsoft has ensured that the platform is also tailored on server architectures, mobile and embedded devices, and even supercomputers. At this point in time, Microsoft offers two products for the high performance computing market, namely Windows Compute Cluster Server 2003 and [Windows HPC Server 2008](#). With the latter, a variation of the Windows Server 2008 server operating system, still in beta phase. And because Windows HPC Server 2008 is still in beta, Microsoft is offering free downloads to customers. Now, before you get too excited, you might want to know that Windows HPC Server 2008 is designed to integrate with high performance computers. It comes with support exclusively for 64-bit architectures, neither 32-bit nor ia64 hardware is supported, and is set up to provide cluster-based supercomputing. Microsoft's Windows for supercomputers is of course aimed at running massively parallel programs and embarrassingly parallel programs. But otherwise it is a far stretch to what end users get on their desktops. The latest Community Technology Preview build of HPC Server 2008 Beta is available for download through the [HPC Server 2008 Beta program](#) on Microsoft Connect. "The product group has released the HPC Server 2008 Community Technology Preview (CTP). This is the next major milestone on our way to RTM. As always, the software is available via Microsoft Connect. If you are interested in the CTP build, please visit [this page](#) on Microsoft Connect. You'll have to provide a bit of information about yourself and any intended use. As always, the team provides newsgroup support via Microsoft Connect," stated [Volker Will](#), Microsoft technology evangelist. Until last week, Will also handed out free copies of Windows Compute Cluster Server 2003 SP1. However, that offer was limited and is no longer valid. Still, as customers did indicate a strong interest in Windows Compute Cluster Server 2003, Will [indicated](#) that more freebies might be underway.