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Windows Vista
Microsoft

Mac OS X and Linux Fail to Compare to Vista

In terms of growth

While the verdict is still out on Windows Vista, Microsoft's latest operating system, in combination with its predecessor, Windows XP, managed to keep Windows users off limits for both Mac OS X and Linux. It is becoming somewhat of a generalized perception that Vista is not all the Redmond company promised, and far from the \$500 million Wow advertised across the world in early 2007. Hardware and software incompatibility issues, lack of driver support and of dedicated software products and devices, poor performance and reliability are among the problems that plagued Vista since the operating system hit the market in November 2006 and in January 2008. And while it sounds like Windows Vista delivered an unexpected window of opportunity for the increase in adoption of Mac OS X and Linux, the fact of the matter is that the two rival platforms have almost flatlined in terms of uptake in 2007. According to statistics provided by Market Share by Net Applications, starting in December 2006 and through September 2007, Linux doubled its market share. This detail would sound nothing short of promising, except for the fact that the doubling in market share is equivalent to a jump from 0.37% to 0.81%. In the past month, the open source operating system only increased its footprint on the market by 0.4%, from 0.77% to 0.81%. The growth of Mac OS X is more consistent compared to that of Linux. But then again, Apple's operating system is the beneficiary of an excellently marketed platform, from the small, and not at all anodyne design details, to the pluses inherent with a closed business environment. In this context, Apple's biggest advantage is also Mac OS X's Achille's heel, as proprietary hardware is regarded as less accessible than personal computers. The combined market shares of Mac OS and Mac Intel, as published by Market Share by Net Applications, reveal a jump from 5.67% in December of last year to 6.61% in September 2007. In the past two months, Mac OS X grew from 6.15% to 6.61%. Windows Vista, with all its overcriticized faults, evolved from 0.16% in December 2006 to 7.38% at the end of the last month. During the same period, Windows XP dropped from 85.30% to 79.32%, a percentage slips which makes it obvious that XP users upgraded/migrated to Vista and not to Mac OS X and Linux. While of course there is also a small segment that did in fact made the jump to the two alternative platforms, it is clear that the vast majority of XP users remain loyal to the Windows brand.