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Windows XP
Microsoft

Microsoft: XP SP3 Activations Will Continue

For the foreseeable future

The end of June 2008 brought with it the availability cut off date for [Windows XP](#), now with Service Pack 3, via the retail and OEM channels. Microsoft made it clear that discontinuing XP Direct OEM and Retail Licenses would have absolutely no impact on the support lifecycle of the operating system, and the same is valid for the activation process of the platform. Just because Windows XP is no longer sold by retail outlets or preloaded on new computers shipping from original equipment manufacturers, it does not mean that the Redmond company will not continue to activate new installations of [Windows Vista's precursor](#). Microsoft indicated that the retail and OEM availability end date "has no bearing on one's ability to activate XP installations," according to [PC World](#), and that end users will continue to be able to activate new installations of the operating system for the foreseeable future. In fact, Microsoft is prepared to keep Windows XP alive until April 8, 2014, the date at which Extended Support will be cut off, with Mainstream Support scheduled to run out by April 14, 2009. But at the same time it cannot be any other way. Windows XP is still very much available via machines from System Builders, and will continue to be so until January 31, 2009. On top of this, Microsoft has already announced that it was extending the availability of XP on ultra-low-cost desktops and laptops until at least June 30, 2010 or one year following the general availability of Windows 7, whichever comes first. And in the end, Windows XP continues to be available to business customers along Windows Vista. As long as the downgrade rights permit the installation of XP under a Vista license, Microsoft will have to keep XP activations alive. And even with Windows 7 Beta 1 on the horizon, Microsoft has failed to give any indication as to when it plans to discontinue sales of Windows Vista, which in mid-2008 has reached the 180 million sold licenses milestone.