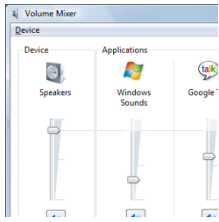


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By: Marius Oiaga, Technology News Editor

[The Windows Vista Volume Mixer](#)

Sound control at its maximum



Windows Vista puts sound at your fingertips. Literally. The amount of control introduced with Vista feels like a breath of fresh air compared with the limitations of Windows XP. The adjacent images feature the overhauled audio stack in Vista, driving up both the performance and quality of the audio and sounds compared with XP. The old Windows XP Volume Control is out. The new Vista Mixer control is in. In Vista, clicking the speaker icon in the right side of the tray, and selecting "Mixer" will enable access to volume control for the output devices and for applications. While in Windows XP sound was treated more generally, in Vista it is all about nuances and advanced control. We have all "enjoyed" the Windows system error alert when the music volume was at the maximum level. Well, Vista fixes that. The Volume Mixer not only delivers sound settings for the output devices, but additionally centralizes the volume settings for the applications installed on the operating system. This singular menu contains the mixer levels for each output device and for each application. Because each installed application is treated as its own input, Vista users will be able to modify sound settings individually according to their preferences. And as each mixer level is tied to a specific application, volume changes will impact only the corresponding application without altering the general sound settings. "On Windows XP, there wasn't really much you could do about it since there was a single volume control for all sounds generated on the PC -- whether they came from Microsoft Word or Windows Media Player. This is just not a problem on Windows Vista because we have replaced the old Volume Control with the new Volume Mixer," said Jim Allchin, Microsoft Co-President, Platform and Services Division.