4 August 2008

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Surface
Microsoft

Touch Computing Beyond Vista and Windows 7

The evolution of Microsoft Surface

Microsoft's first and only public **demonstration of Windows 7**, the next iteration of the Windows client, delivered at the end of May 2008, offers the first consistent peek at the touch computing feature of the operating system. The Redmond company is heavily committed to investing in the evolution of natural user interfaces, and having debuted a new interaction model on top of Windows Vista, the software giant continues its focus on surface computing beyond Windows 7. Sure enough, Vista's successor will include by default application programming interfaces designed to support multi-touch and gesture natural interaction not only with the components across the operating system, but also with third-party software solutions. At the same time, Microsoft is hammering away at Surface, going forward with its promise to advance the existing human-technology interaction models. "Surface computing breaks down the traditional barriers between people and technology, providing effortless interaction with digital content," the Redmond giant stated. "(...) Microsoft is creating an entirely new class of touch-based surface computers that consumers engage with through natural hand-gestures, touch, and everyday physical objects. Our first partners planning to roll-out Surface are major leisure, entertainment and retail brands. Surface computing will be a multi-billion dollar addressable market by 2010 with applications in enterprise, consumer and education."Since it emerged in May 2007, and with its introduction on the market a year later, in April 2008 in AT&T retail stores, Microsoft Surface (based on Windows Vista) indicated a great deal of potential to move past the corporate environment and into households around the world. Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates revealed in the past that the company aimed to make surface computing as ubiquitous in the home as "traditional" computers are today. Microsoft is in fact focusing on tailoring the Surface architecture on both the needs of end users and developers. And in this regard, delivering Surface as a platform, and not only as a product, is the true path to bringing Surface-based products to the general public. A Development Manager is just what the company needs in order to help Surface grow. "The primary responsibilities include managing the input system, SDK, Shell, connectivity, and application development teams; working with PM and Test to bring consistent process to the team; and providing direction and insight on architectural decisions including how to best integrate with other Microsoft technologies. You will be partnering with our UX and hardware teams on future product designs. As the development manager, you will need to have strong technical and managerial skills, great customer focus, and the ability to participate in defining the team’s long term vision. You should have a passion for solving hard technical and business problems that translate to durable design and implementations," reads an excerpt from the company's job **posting**.Positioning Surface as a platform and building an environment of hardware and software products around it will take touch computing from a niche product and make it mainstream. Still, Microsoft has a long way to go. However, as Windows 7 will feature touch and gesture support by default, it is clear that future versions of Microsoft Surface will be less experimental than the existing ones based on Vista. But while Vista and Windows 7 will be stuck in offering only S+S, Surface will be a complete solution involving Hardware, Software and Services, all bundled into the same product. "The Surface Development Kit team is responsible for delivering an innovative platform of rich APIs and controls that enables developers and designers to use familiar programming models, languages and tools to efficiently build unique experiences for this new platform. As a member of our team, you will be responsible for delivering many key features of the SDK, like new APIs that empower the vision of this new platform, new WPF based controls that

use these APIs to provide a stock experience for new user interactions," another job **listing** reveals.