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[Two New Free Editions of Windows XP SP2 Available for Download](#)

Next week

Windows
Microsoft

That's right! Microsoft is currently cooking two free editions of Windows XP Service Pack 2 that will be up for grabs via the Download Center as early as the beginning of the upcoming week. This is certainly **not the first time** when the Redmond company has shown signs of generosity with its Windows client in an effort to give web-developers the tools necessary to tests-drive websites on the two main versions of Internet Explorer that are hugging the browser market worldwide. At this time, Microsoft confirmed that users will be able to download the new free editions of XP SP2 on Monday or Tuesday. "Just a quick note to say that the IE6 and IE7 VPC images are being updated as we speak, and I suspect the new versions should be online Monday or Tuesday," revealed [Pete LePage](#), Product Manager, Internet Explorer, Developer Division. There are a couple of caveats to the downloads. First off the Internet Explorer VPC images are essentially pre-configured and optimized virtual hard disk images designed to be integrated with [Virtual PC 2007](#). If you were expecting stand-alone downloads, then I am sorry to disappoint you. But the fact of the matter is that you will be able to benefit from two completely free copies of XP SP2 one running IE6 and the other IE7 along with the IE7 Readiness Toolkit. The operating systems will be pre-activated, so you don't have to deal with product keys and serials or go through the activation process. You will simply be able to start your testing immediately. Currently Microsoft is offering **the same two images**, but release toward the end of August. However, because they are free, both VPCs are also time-bombed. Which means that they come with an expiration date. For the August VHDs time will run out on December 7. LePage explained that Microsoft will never strip the VPCs of their time limitations, but will continue to update the products and prolong the expiration date for as long as there is demand. "Microsoft is giving you a copy of Windows XP to test with. We can't give away an un-timebombed image as we would be giving away a free copy of Windows XP. The option of building your own VPC image is certainly available to you. Doing it yourself will not require time bombs or updating things yourself," LePage added.