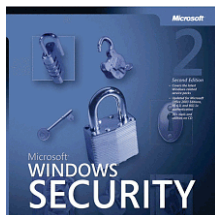


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By: Alex Muradin, Editor, Software Reviews



[Vista's Latest Two-Way Firewall!](#)

Security is definitely an intricate part in Windows Vista

It seems that [better security](#) is part of the overall theme for Windows [Vista](#). Vista's Two-Way firewall will be one of the hidden gems of the next Windows Operating System. Microsoft is making the Vista version firewall one that is highly configurable and designed to give administrators greater control over managing system applications. There's been over a month of CTP (Community Technology Preview) user testing and the firewall is on track to be in the final release of Vista schedules for the second half of this year. Austin Wilson, a director in Microsoft's Windows client group said that Microsoft is actually considering adding a similar feature for its consumer users. The new firewall's advantage is that it filters both incoming and outgoing network traffic, so it can block outside machines that are trying to connect to the Windows PC as well as applications on the PC that are trying to connect to other systems on the network. The new Windows Firewall in [Windows Vista](#) and Windows Server "Longhorn" has the following enhancements over the current Windows Firewall in Windows XP SP2 and Windows Server 2003 SP1: -Supports both incoming and outgoing traffic -New Microsoft Management Console (MMC) snap-in for graphical user interface (GUI) configuration -Firewall filtering and Internet Protocol security (IPsec) protection settings are integrated -Exceptions can be configured for Active Directory directory service accounts and groups, source and destination IP addresses, IP protocol number, source and destination Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) and User Datagram Protocol (UDP) ports, all or multiple TCP or UDP ports, specific types of interfaces, Internet Control Message Protocol (ICMP) and ICMP for IPv6 (ICMPv6) traffic by Type and Code The console has the ability to operate in two ways: the single-machine mode manages only the PC it has been installed in, but when configured using Active Directory, it can set up policies that apply to a large number of machines. Wilson added, "If I have 10,000 machines, I can set up a policy, one time, to block a given application. And that would propagate across all of my 10,000 machines." The latest firewall is bound to catch a few eyes as it makes its way to Vista later on this year.