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[Why Does Google Hug Windows Vista SP1 So Tight?](#)

You want the truth?

Google is hugging the first service pack for Windows Vista so tight that there is barely anything else left for the rest of us. But why all this unnatural love for a rival's flagship product? Why not Windows XP SP3? Why Windows Vista SP1? Google has filed a brief with the U.S. federal court in order to determine the prolonging of Microsoft's oversight past November 2007, when the consent decree against the Redmond company as a result of the antitrust ruling over the pond, is scheduled to expire. Having lost the antitrust battle in Europe as a direct result of the decision of the Court of First Instance in Luxembourg, Microsoft has to wait for the deliberations in the U.S. over the extension of the consent past its current expiration date. Google has failed not to act on the opportunity, and went gunning for Microsoft. In balance is nothing more than the building of Windows Vista Service Pack 1. Well, not the entire operating system, but just the default Desktop Search Mechanism. Microsoft has already informed that it will alter the infrastructure of the operating system in such a manner as to welcome third-party desktop search applications. The company even outlined all of the changes introduced to the desktop search in Vista SP1. And the first beta of the refresh - delivered almost two months prior to the expiration of the initial date of the U.S. antitrust consent decree - already contains the changes. Yet Google indicates that it cannot be pleased. For the Mountain View search giant, Vista SP1 will undoubtedly mean a more intimate connection between Google Desktop and the operating system. Google Desktop will be featured in the search box under the Start Menu and in the Instant Search areas in Windows Explorer. The Mountain View's desktop application will also enjoy superior indexing flexibility on Vista SP1, and will dig its roots deep inside the default search mechanism of the operating system. Currently, Microsoft plans to deliver Vista SP1 in the first quarter of 2008, but the company will also offer Windows XP SP3 in the first half of next year. So why Vista SP1? Because it's not about desktop search. Not even in the least. Google couldn't care less about the Windows desktop search. If it were about desktop search, the Mountain View company would have gone after Windows XP for quite a while. But Google is ignoring XP even though the operating system accounts for no less than 80% of the market, and SP3 would offer fertile soil to introduce changes. Now the fact of the matter is that the built-in desktop search architecture of XP is nowhere near as advanced as Vista's. But as I have already said, this is not about desktop search. All you have to do is think back. What did Microsoft introduce between Windows XP SP2 in 2004 and Windows Vista, that could hurt Google's dominance over Internet search? That's right! Windows Live. But don't take Windows Live as a simple suite of online programs and services, it is actually a Internet-based platform than can easily rival with the best Google has to offer. In addition, Windows Live fits perfectly into Microsoft's business strategy of Software plus Services. Users will buy future versions of Windows client and get free access to the company's Windows Live operating system in the cloud. Microsoft already said that it aims to connect each component in the Windows operating system with a service or program in the Windows Live platform. Thus, Vista Desktop Search will be integrated with Live Search. Windows Vista might have only 6% of the operating system market now, but Windows XP is expired. And Vista will take Microsoft to an over 1 billion install base for Windows. Imagine 1 billion people having immediate and streamlined access from their operating system to Live Search... Of course this scenario won't happen over night. It might not even happen with Vista, but with Windows 7 (Seven). Still, Google wants to make sure that it will be there, and that it will have a fair chance at a healthy piece of the pie. Even if it comes with Windows flavor.