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By: Marius Oiaga, Technology News Editor



Starting Windows 7
Microsoft

[Windows 7 M1 Build 6519 vs. Windows 7 M3 Pre-Beta Build 6801](#)

The evolution of the installation process

Moving from Windows XP onward to Windows Vista, Microsoft completely overhauled the installation process of the Windows client. The blue background of the XP install was scrapped altogether, and replaced with a much friendlier Aero-inspired wallpaper. But the changes in terms of visual style only came to accompany the underlining evolution of the user experience. Vista delivered a new level of interaction, allowing the end users to utilize the mouse even from the earliest stages of deployment. Now, with [Windows 7](#), the Redmond company is stepping up its game, and users are in for a new "installation" treat, a fresh redesign of the process.

Windows 7 Milestone 1 Build 6519

You surely remember good, and now old, Windows 7 Milestone 1 Build 6519. It was the very first taste of Windows 7 to come out of Redmond and, without a doubt, the proof that Microsoft would deliver a Windows Vista R2, much in the same manner as Windows 7 Server is Windows Server 2008 R2. Truth be told, I intended to start the comparison between Windows installation experiences as early as Vista, but the striking similarities between the deployment of Windows 7 M1 Build 6519 and Windows Vista made such an approach unnecessary.

For users already familiar with the installation of Windows Vista, Windows 7 M1 brings little changes to the table. In fact, the entire process is nearly identical to Vista's, to the point where only a few disparate mentions of Windows 7 manage to stand out and make a true difference. Senior Vice President, Windows and Windows Live Engineering Group, Steven Sinofsky, indicated from the get-go that Windows 7 would be nothing more than the evolution of Windows Vista, and the installation process of M1 Build 6519 makes this obvious.

Windows 7 Milestone 3 pre-Beta Build 6801

With the latest development milestone of [Windows 7](#) made public, the installation process is no longer focused on Windows Vista. Users will actually feel that that they are deploying a brand new Windows operating system, a thing that did not happen with M1. This is because Windows 7 pre-Beta Build 6801 has now stepped into the limelight, even with Microsoft still referring to the bits as an early, testing version of Windows 7.

Deploying the Windows 7 pre-Beta Build is nothing short of a familiar experience for Vista users. Microsoft has simply adapted the process to the next iteration of the Windows client, and changes are more cosmetic than anything else, with very few exceptions. Be that as it may, the changes are welcomed, especially in comparison with what Vista and Windows 7 M1 brought to the table.

Which type of installation do you want?

The first thing that users are bound to notice is that the background has been adapted to reflect [Windows 7](#). It's still Aero by any measure, but it also has a new touch that no longer screams Vista. Contributing to this is also the fact that all Vista references have been

replaced by Windows 7 between M1 and M3.

Another difference is the fact that, while, just as Vista, Windows 7 M1 asks users to enter a product key immediately after the Please Wait stage, Windows 7 pre-beta moves directly to the End User License Agreement. In Build 6801, Microsoft no longer permits end users to choose the Windows edition, while in M1 the choices were the same as in Windows Vista, namely Home Basic, Home Premium, Business and Ultimate, together with the N versions.

Windows 7 pre-beta build 6801 installs the Ultimate flavor of Windows, and end users have nothing to say in this aspect. Whether the M3 installation process signals a simplification of the Windows 7 edition compared with Windows Vista is hard to say at this point. Customers have, of course, demanded that Microsoft resolve the confusion created by the many SKUs of Vista, and the company has indicated that it is receptive to feedback.

The "Which type of installation do you want" dialog box in Windows 7 M1 is limited to Custom deployments, especially when deploying the operating system on an empty partition. Not the same is valid for Windows 7 pre-Beta, which also seems to offer the Upgrade option, even if there is no other operating system to upgrade from.

Here is Windows 7 M1 Build 6519:

Here is Windows 7 M3 Pre-Beta Build 6801:

Starting Windows

After Windows is done copying and expanding files, installing features and updates, it will move to complete the installation. This is where Windows 7 pre-Beta Build 6801 will deliver the message "Starting Windows," which was not present with M1. Both M1 and M3 will set up the machine, deal with the configuration, the registry, devices, video, and so on and so forth.

The dialog box that allowed customers to enter their username and password is simpler in the pre-Beta release, in that it no longer offers the option to choose an image for the account, or the wallpaper of [Windows 7](#). It is only after the account and PC information has been dealt with that Windows 7 will require the end user to enter the product key for the operating system. In Windows 7 M1, this is done much earlier in the installation process.

Here is Windows 7 M1 Build 6519:

Here is Windows 7 M3 Pre-Beta Build 6801:

Windows 7 M1 Build 6519 vs. Windows 7 M3 Pre-Beta Build 6801

Between Windows 7 M1 Build 6519 and Windows 7 M3 Pre-Beta Build 6801, made available to participants at the Professional Developers Conference 2008 and the Windows Hardware Engineering Conference 2008, Microsoft has certainly refined the installation process of the operating system. Users will discover that it actually looks and feels more like "Windows 7" than like Windows Vista, and this detail is necessary in order to deliver the evolution that Microsoft has promised.

According to the Redmond company, Windows 7 will move out of pre-Beta stage in early 2009. Following the launch of Beta 1, which is slated to be a private release, although much broader than even M3, the company will produce the first Release Candidate of the operating system. At this particular point in time, indications have it that Windows 7 RC could be delivered as a public release. After RC, Microsoft will take [Windows 7 straight to RTM](#), a move reported to happen as early as mid-2009, in order for the operating system to be launched to the general public in time for the 2009 holiday season.