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Windows Vista Editions
Microsoft

[Windows 7 Ultimate, Enterprise and Windows 7 for Small Businesses](#)

Flavors

In addition to performance, support, and compatibility, the luxuriant collection of SKUs, delivered by Microsoft, was one of the aspects of Windows Vista that faced a barrage of criticism. Windows Vista came in a variety of flavors, including Starter, Home Basic, Home Premium, Home Basic N, Business, Business N, Enterprise and Ultimate. And, up until now, Microsoft indicated no signs of adopting a new strategy with Windows 7. The company has so far confirmed the Ultimate and Enterprise editions of Windows 7, and is now referencing an entirely new SKU, Windows 7 for Small Businesses.

In the [Windows 7 Pre-release \(M3\) Privacy Supplement](#), Microsoft mentions details for BitLocker Drive Encryption: "BitLocker Drive Encryption (BitLocker) is available on computers running Windows 7 Enterprise Edition and Windows 7 Ultimate Edition. Should your computer be lost or stolen, BitLocker protects your data, by helping to prevent offline software attacks. Turning on BitLocker encrypts the hard drive where Windows is installed, including all information that is stored on that drive."

Confirmation of the Windows 7 Ultimate and Enterprise editions comes with a quasi-confirmation of additional flavors of the next iteration of the Windows client. This because the Windows Anytime Upgrade feature has survived past Vista.

Just as it was the case with its precursor, Windows Anytime Upgrade for Windows 7 will streamline the upgrade process between editions of the operating system. "Windows Anytime Upgrade allows you to easily upgrade your version of Windows 7, by directing you to a participating merchant website where you can purchase the upgrade," Microsoft revealed.

However, in addition to Ultimate and Enterprise, Microsoft has also revealed that it is cooking a Windows 7 for Small Businesses edition. In a [job posting](#) for Senior Marketing Manager of one of the company's Partners Business Marketing groups, the Redmond giant is looking to "increase the effectiveness of partner co-marketing direct to Small and Medium Business customers and through partners extensive indirect channel partners, including distribution and breadth reseller network."

Among the responsibilities of the new role, Microsoft mentions: "Communicate and generate Partner excitement for Windows Vista Business, Windows 7 for Small Business (future), Office Ready, Server channel programs, and new Server launches with Windows Small Business Server & Essential Business Server 2008." (emphasis added)

Until now, there has been no official word from Microsoft related to the way it plans to deliver Windows 7 SKUs. However, so far, moves from the company indicate that a drastic simplification of Windows 7 editions compared to Windows Vista might in fact not be a top priority, or even in the plans.