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[XP SP3 to Be Offered Well After Windows 7, Until 2011](#)

Claims Sunbelt's Alex Eckelberry

Microsoft's official position on the predecessor of Windows Vista is that the operating system's end will begin with June 30, 2008. Although mainstream support will continue to be offered until April 2009, with extended support planned until 2014, the end date for XP's direct OEM and Retail license availability is June 30. However, [Alex Eckelberry](#), CEO of Sunbelt Software, citing a credible source claims that Windows XP SP3 will continue to be available well after the release of Windows 7, throughout 2011, via machines from Dell. "I have just been advised by my Dell representative that Dell will be offering XP on Optiplex and Latitude computers through 2011 at no extra cost. Vista media will be available for those who think they might want to install it later on. Vostro computer orders will have the same option at a \$50.00 premium. Note: this means that there will be an extended period of review available for Windows 7 before we have to commit to it," the source told Eckelberry. Talking about Windows 7, Microsoft only revealed that the development of the next Windows client is scoped for three years following the general availability of Windows Vista, pointing in this manner to 2010. The Redmond company plans to continue delivering all Windows XP editions through system builders until January 31, 2009, and XP Home Edition for OEMs Ultra Low-Cost PCs until June 30, 2010, or one year after the general availability of Windows 7. Last week, at the Microsoft 2008 Most Valuable Professional Global Summit, CEO Steve Ballmer touched briefly the subject of XP's availability, failing to say whether the company plans another reprieve for the platform. "I know we're going to continue to get feedback from people on how long XP should be available. We've got some opinions on that. We've expressed our views, but certainly with this crowd. I'm always interested in hearing from you on these and other issues," Ballmer stated. Microsoft did not offer official confirmation of an eventual prolonging of XP's availability beyond mid 2008 through the retail or OEM channels. But such a move would not be a first from the company, as it already changed its mind once about the initial XP cut-off date - January 31, 2008. But if the information presented by Eckelberry is true, this will mean that Dell will sell [Windows XP Service Pack 3](#) preloaded on Optiplex and Latitude PCs well after Windows 7 will hit the market. At the same time, the fact that Dell will also offer Vista media, could actually mean that the U.S. PC manufacturer would actually sell Windows Vista, and just downgrade rights to XP until 2011. "She told me that the reps are thrilled to be able to respond to the increasing expressions of concern from customers regarding the June 30 cut-off XP date publicized by Microsoft. She also told me that, of the more than 100 customers she has, only one is ordering Vista computers," the source added to Eckelberry.