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# Windows XP vs. Vista: An Explosion of Opinion



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**PC World**

Harry McCracken  
Thu Mar 20, 2:00 AM ET

When I [posted a little survey](#) concerning the news that [Microsoft](#) plans to discontinue most sales of [Windows XP](#) on June 30th, I expected lots of people to take it, and for the sentiment to be overwhelmingly pro-XP. They did, and it was. (More than 3500 people completed the survey, and 83 percent of them are unhappy with Microsoft's move.)

I was startled by how many people took the time to not only participate in the survey but share their thoughts at length--and by how diverse their opinions were. Some folks were raving fans of XP; others just grudgingly tolerated it. Some reported nightmares with [Windows Vista](#); others said they were happy Vista campers. More than a few said that the prospect of an XP-less world was prompting them to consider dumping Microsoft operating systems altogether in favor of [Linux](#) or [Mac OS X](#). Over the next few pages, you'll find a sampling of the 1000+ comments the survey prompted. If they inspire you to share your own thoughts, we're still listening--just leave a comment on this article.

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### XP PLAUDITS

"Windows XP has mature to where is the best OS in the market. It's better then Leopard or Tiger from [Apple](#). It's more convinient than Linux and it has gone to a point that I feel it is very secure. Of course nothing is 100% secure, but Windows XP comes very close. The performance is much better than Vista and right now there are more compatible programs to XP than Vista. What would had me jump into Vista, a new file system and a faster seach engine, it's not being deliver. So why switch? Vista is a XP with a fancy look, nothing more. XP has become as secure as Vista, without the slowdown."



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"Microsoft seems to want to force us to change to Vista and thus pay an exorbitant price for an OS that is only marginally more advanced (if at all) than XP. I like XP, it's stable, and it works with all of my hardware and software-- why should I switch?"

"XP to date is Microsoft's finest OS. They should have improved on it and called it Vista. I use both OS...and XP is still less tempermental. I can run any hardware on XP. Vista is still problematic. Granted...it's like Beauty and the Beast. Vista is all beauty...while XP works hard and keeps things in pretty good shape."

"XP is a great and efficient operating system- and extremely streamlined able to handle all the tasks I ever need to use such as multimedia, internet, document and administration. Even the performance of new PC's (quad core etc) being introduced on the market run poorly when using Vista operating system (most laptops even with a minimum of 2Gig memory run slow), and this is just unacceptable. In this day and age, a PC which is watch while you wait groaning under the strain of Vista is pathetic. On the other hand, 2Gig with XP results in a very fast and responsive operating system. Until 64bit PCs become mainstream, then perhaps it might be about time to think about a new operating system such as Vista. In the meantime, XP should definitely stay. Microsoft have miscalculated the views of many in the industry as well as end-users just for the sake of boosting their bottom line."

"Windows XP is, in my opinion, the best OS Microsoft has developed. It's fast (being able to run decent on 128MB of RAM, and runs wonderfully on 512MB), and it's very user friendly. Vista is a resource hog (anyone remember Windows 95? Yeah...), needing at least 1GB of RAM to run smoothly. 512MB runs fine, but does run as a slow XP would, and that's terrible. I myself, love XP, and hate Vista. I will continue to use XP as my primary OS as long as possible. I think Microsoft should continue the sales, and support of XP to give the people choice, which is what people really do want."

"I've downgraded numerous times ( from Vista to XP)... actually, let's call it Upgraded. XP has all the features most people need and is very reliable. Vista has been difficult and does not offer anything new I need."

"XP-- solid, reliable, customizeable, yet still retaining a lot of backward-compatibility with older hardware/software. Vista-- makes the simple tasks done in XP (i.e. copying data files directly to CD) difficult and cumbersome. UAC? An insult to everyone's intelligence (and not customizeable-- it's either full "on" or full "off"). Much like Apple's iTunes inability to sort playlists by track number AND year, Microsoft has adopted the approach that THEIR way is better, and we'll tell you how the programs will work, what they can do, what they won't do. I hope XP thrives for many years to come, until Microsoft gets it right (XP is pretty close)."

"XP! IT WORKS! I DON'T LOVE IT- BUT IT WORKS! Please leave it alone. Note to Bill, if you must continue to develop, develop a perfect XP. Or a perfect ME or 2000 or 98 or 3.1! That would be quite a vista."

#### VISTA WOES

"I have already had problems with certain programs and hardware (our scanner) not working with Vista on our new computer as well as problems uninstalling things--they either won't uninstall completely or just not at all (click on remove and nothing happens) and I then have to go to the programs folder to remove them and even that was a pain because it would not let me delete everything without rebooting first and then deleting

rest of the files or it tells me I need admin priveleges to delete or uninstall when I am already logged in as administrator."

"I have used Vista for some time and still find WXP to be faster, way more compatible with hardware and software and less annoying. For example, I get the full functionality of my Creative X-Fi Fatal1ty sound card (including the remote control) with WXP- not so with Vista. I am not prompted (UAC) after everything I do (I know I can turn it off). I guess the bottom line is that I would be willing to trade off some security-related changes in Vista (and trust 3rd party security software) and have an operating system that is highly compatible with current/future hardware and software and does not require the fastest hardware to run efficiently. On a related note, I would love it if [Outlook 2007](#) gave you the option of using IE7 in addition to Word for HTML email viewing (so I can use my stationery/emoticons again and view newsletters in their proper format. I'm not resistant to change, but change should be positive and advance the technology- I don't see much of that with Vista. WXP should be supported until MS gets it right."

"[Windows XP](#) benchmarks (and feels faster) with everything I use. Vista is just-slow- and has a gigantic footprint. Mind you, as a developer, I know things grow with features, but exponential growth for lackluster "linear" features leads to something that can barely handle audio/video playback that XP has handled just fine. And that doesn't mention the lack of compatibility with everything I've had with Vista. XP's time is not over."

"My newest Vista computer crashes more often than my old XP computer although all the hardware and software are said to work with Vista and the computers are all well maintained. The system restore does not work at all on my Vista machine."

"I was using Vista on a [Lenovo](#) computer and the disk crashed. The tech support guys sent me XP as a replacement. It is simply much faster, smaller and reliable. (This is pre SP1, BTW...)"

"There is no excuse for Vista to have such lags and slowness. Why did [Microsoft](#) have to change small things like icons when it just increases the learning curve? Why does there have to be so many different versions of Vista, when a module-oriented approach would be much more effective? The only thing I've liked more about Vista is the way the networking utilities are conveniently grouped together. I immediately greeted a new Vista notebook with a dual-boot [Ubuntu](#) ([Linux](#)) install. I am being forced to work at getting choices. Given the option, I would have chosen XP and probably not bothered with Linux."

"XP has its faults, but it works like an operating system should- It allows the user to interact with their hardware. Vista assumes you are a cretin and constantly nags you with endless annoying prompts. Oh and did I mention in runs like a dead hamster? I want an OS that: doesn't take longer to calculate time to copy a file than it does to do the copy. I don't want to be told I'm not allowed to do something on my OWN pc. I don't want several dialogues asking permission to do what i just told it to. If vista had a switch off all the annoying crap and bloat off and do what it tell it to button, I'd be happy. Instead I'm an XP user."

"Vista is much slower than XP. Vista is useless on lower priced computers even in basic mode. I never see any of the fancy graphics as I haven't got time. My new Vista laptop continually crashes and things often don't work properly. My laptop has few applications on it. My older cheap XP desktop is much faster and rarely crashes despite being loaded with many applications."

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"I had to accept Vista with my latest machine. After 3 months of contemplating suicide, I reloaded my XP Pro SP2 and sanity returned. Long live XP!"

"I just dumped Vista on my laptop because it made everything I did such an ordeal! I can't believe how my laptop now responds to tasks and boots up and shuts down. Vista is such a resource hog and doesn't allow a use to perform any tasks w/o interruptions. In the week since I downgraded, I've accomplished far more than I did in 4 months of using Vista. Unless they can overhaul it to make it more use-resondent, I will avoid Vista as long as possible!"

"I made the mistake of coming into some extra money and blowing it on a brand new HP Pavilion with everything from a Cable TV receiver to windshield wipers and power seats. I, of course, had to have the latest and greatest of everything. Especially software. I'm certainly no computer geek, but I thought that if I got Vista I wouldn't have to be. I could let [Microsoft](#) take care of all my problems. Unfortunately, I didn't realize that I would have so many problems. Vista is a power hungry HOG! It's not as smart as XP because it has so much fat in it's big bloated body that it's little underdeveloped brain can't keep up with all the features it has. Most of which I don't use. I have been on the phone to HP support so many times that I'm on a first name basis with most of the support techs in [India](#), all of whom are named "Steve". One even told me to disable my Microsoft Update program. Another one took control of my computer over the internet and did a "System Restore" back to factory settings. He told me that it would be just like when it left the factory. Brand new. "Trust me", he says. He didn't tell me that it would get rid of everything that I had downloaded up to that point. I can't call Microsoft Support, because their job is to sell you the software, and then sell you their time to tell you how to use it. You don't get ANYTHING free from Microsoft. And I admire [Bill Gates](#) so much... That boy sure does know how to make money. I miss my XP!"

"Vista still has some problems. None of the headset earphone/microphone works on my Vista and none of the numerous manufacturer's techs could solve the problem. My good old applications may not work well in Vista. Microsoft should let XP live for another two years."

#### VOTES FOR VISTA

"Personally, I prefer Vista at home. I realize it's somewhat bloated, but I like the look and feel of it for my home system. Given the hardware I have, it runs exceptionally well and multi-tasks better than XP. For work however, there is not reason to have Vista. Most machines we run are 3-4 years old and cannot keep up with Vista. To discontinue offering/support XP is ridiculous and a slap int he face to enterprises everywhere."

"Operating Systems are like Merry-go-rounds. Over the years they change shapes and colors. Do we stop riding them, or stop taking our children to them? No! We buy another ticket and enjoy the ride. So stop complaining, enjoy the new pretty colors and start riding again. If things did not change, we would all be driving Edsels."

"I believe it's good to discontinue XP. This same argument was going on back in 2001-2002 with XP and how Win 2000 was better. I believe people should get with the times and go with Vista because its fast and reliable on up-to-date computers (at least it is on mine). Those that stay with XP will be good for another 2 years but after that, they are gonna start complaining how nothing new works with it. It's going to be another circle when Windows 7 is released."

"In my opinion, Vista kills XP and [Mac OS X](#) People use it for a week and say it's terrible because it's different."

"Out with the old in with the new, Time to move on."&#160;

"I got a new computer with Vista installed. I had really wanted XP. But once I got used to the new Vista format i found that the same features from XP and earlier Windows were still there. So Vista is no problem- the learning curve took about 3 days and I'm just moderately computer savvy."

"The old blanket that we drug around as a kid finally had to be replaced... the same is with XP... it was comfortable but it was starting to get holes. New advancements in code now gives better security and overall function... sure there are some glitches, but they will be fixed and the whole system will be better."

"I don't see what people have against Vista, it's a great OS."

"All the idiots that want to "keep" XP sound just like all the idiots that wanted to "keep" MS-DOS (ugh!) back when Windows 3.0 changed the PC. If anybody listened to these idiots, we would never have any technological progress."

"Vista has many flaws, but it is still much better than XP. It's UAC is annoying, but it can also be a life saver, mainly through the allowance of Protected Mode with Internet Explorer. I just wish there was a native way on Home Premium and Basic to suppress it. But I've been using tweakUAC and I've had no problems. Sure, Vista is a resource hog, but computers have much more resourses than they did even a few months ago. It is unreasonable to expect [Microsoft](#) to keep the same small footprint when everything else in the computer world is getting more and more powerful."

"Too bad Vista got a bad rap. It's probably the best Windows version Microsoft has produced."

"I'm running [Windows Vista Ultimate x64](#) and think it's great. I don't feel it's Microsoft's fault that hardware and software vendors have left some of their customers lacking drivers for Vista."

"Discontinuing XP is a good idea because it is time for technology to move forward. Discontinuing XP will allow Microsoft to focus more on improving Vista and developing Windows 7."

"The progression of operating systems is a necessary item. [Windows Vista](#) allows us to incorporate newer platforms and advanced technology. Essentially I am happy that [Windows XP](#) will be discontinued and that a feeling of progression in computers is what a new OS is all about. I dread the day when we regret that had we not ridden ourselves of XP earlier we may be at a far greater evolution in computer technology. I for one will move forward into a new era of computing with the new OS."

"Vista is a far superior operating system in so many ways it would be hard to list. As history has shown, whenever there is a new release people (especially older people) resist change. Sometimes you need to move outside your comfort zone to learn new things and you might be pleasantly surprised. I have come across a number of people who have said Vista is bad, and when questioned as to why the typical response is "Well, that's what I've heard." Unfortunately the amount of time between releases has lulled people into a state of being so accustomed to an operating system that they are

willing to sacrifice advances in technology in exchange for comfort and familiarity. That or they switch to an extremely overpriced, far inferior Apple operating system, which is bizarre considering that it is a much more radical change than switching from XP to Vista."

""Well, I personally like Windows Vista. I've seen it run relatively quick on a Core Duo laptop with only 1 GB of RAM, and integrated graphics. Mind you, it was only Vista Home Basic, however. Honestly, though, I think that Microsoft needs to continue to support XP, for at least the rest of 2008, drop Vista Home Basic, and make the other versions cheaper. In terms of performance, XP doesn't require much at all, where as Vista does. But then again, Vista seems like it was made for the emerging market first, and the upgrading market second. However, Microsoft seems to have overstepped it some; they looked at some factors more then others. For example, the majority of computers sold now are dual-core, and there are plenty of older Pentium D, or even Pentium 4 HT computers. If Microsoft were to simply implement multi-threading on things like, the Windows registry, Windows explorer, and other things, I think it would help to boost performance, by, for those instances, starting up faster, even if you have a lot of startup apps, and compressing/decompressing faster. Doing things like that, on top of adding an integrated memory optimizer (so that all those unused system files that can't be made smaller can be put onto Page File and your system won't lag as much), as well as lowering down the graphics requirements, and fixing the mass amount of space needed for installation, and it would perform and appeal to a lot more people (IE: The 15 GBs of space needed for installation, unless I'm mistaken on my information, is because when upgrading, Vista installs all of the new files onto free space, then overwrites the older system files at the end. After installation, it will supposedly only use about 6 GBs of space.) Basically, to get back to the point at hand, I think Vista is a great operating system. However, I also think that Microsoft is ruining it right now. And until Microsoft can revive [Windows Vista](#), and make it as great as it can be, I do not think that they should drop support for [Windows XP](#). I mean, if you look at how many new PCs are bought with XP, it's decreasing bit by bit every day. However, if Microsoft decides to ignore the users who want to wait for Vista to show its worth before switching, they'll lose some faithful customers, and will only shoot themselves in the foot.""

#### LURED BY LINUX

"I have hardware that is only 3-4 years old that either won't work entirely with Vista or won't work at all with Vista. No thanks, Microsoft. Maybe it's time for a switch to [Linux](#)."

"If XP ends, then the move, for me and many, many people I know, will be to Linux. Microsoft can no longer call the shots. Don't need their 'big brotherism' to tell me what is good for me (especially when it is really good only for them). Amen."

"Discontinuing XP will be the final straw that pushes me into [Ubuntu](#)."

"If MS discontinues support of XP, I will switch to Linux (Ubuntu) rather than use Vista. My next computer WILL be Linux. I have helped some friends with their Vista setup and hate the product."

"Many, like myself, will switch to Linux once XP is discontinued."

"Vista, what a disappointment! So much so that after using Windows products since DOS 4.0, I'm seriously considering a (free) distribution of Linux. Not for the price, not for the apps, just because I have the choice of what is right for me and my hardware."

"While I think that Vista is a decent operating system, I think that Microsoft is playing the convicted monopolist that it is by charging way too much for the new OS. Thus, I think that XP should remain available because it's also a good, mature OS that you can get at a much cheaper price. As for me personally, while I do still have Vista installed, I'm now using Ubuntu for much of my work."

"For what Vista costs (I have home premium on one of my boxes) in terms of hardware and forced software upgrades, particularly now in a down economy, it doesn't make much sense to force it on us. I've recently gone back to trying out different distributions of Linux; should MS try to force Vista down our throats, I may just stick with Ubuntu, Xandros or Mepis and get it over with. While certain features of Vista are intriguing, there's nothing there that I can't or don't already have in XP with the notable exception of DirectX 10. Do the right thing MS- continue to make XP available to us all."

#### MAC MANIA

"Mac OSX is my favorite operating system. However, in my work I have to use both Windows and Mac environments. At home I have a new iMac with Parallels Desktop seamlessly running [Windows XP](#) along with Mac OS. The set up allows me to run not only great Mac software, but to get on web sites that only work with Windows IE7 because of ActiveX controls. On my new Mac I can even run old MS-DOS programs that I still use from my office computers. There is only one flavor of the Mac OS at one affordable price, whichever is current; there is no need to choose from different flavors at different price points, home basic, not so basic business or overloaded, to get all the capabilities of the OS. Windows XP Professional SP2 that I use on all my PCs has been the most stable OS ever released by [Microsoft](#). I never see the blue screen of death as often happened with previous versions. I hope to buy a new Mac laptop later this year and I hope that XP will still be available so I can install it on that machine and have the best of both worlds. I know I can run Vista with Parallels Desktop, but why bother when XP does the job I need so well. Keep XP in the stream!"

"The latest version of Microsoft's Operating System: Vista has led me to buying a MAC. This MAC will be the first of 5 other machine buys to migrate from Microsoft. You would have thought that after all these years our [Seattle](#) friends would have figured it out."

"If I must 'learn' a new OS to use my new computer, I will buy an [Apple computer](#)."&#160;

"After years of work and all the WOW Microsoft promised, this is what we got. A operating that is more about eye candy than simply just working or working better than XP. I may choose a mac as my next computer."

"I've already switched to MAC because of Microsofts' BS. It's hard to make a complete change after using PC's for 25 yrs., so I have a spare laptop with XP and will use it at times until it dies."

"If XP goes away..my next home computer will be a MAC..5 of my friends and relatives have gone MAC in the last 3 months rather than take a Vista machine..and...my employer has said NO TO VISTA and will not allow Vista machines into the corporate server for employees using personal machines to access work related materials."

"I used vista on a machine for about 10 days, then reverted the machine to XP for my wife's use. I have moved away from MS and personally use [OS X](#) and would never

return to XP or Vista or any other MS operating system as I have found the Mac software more stable and very user friendly. I have even removed my boot camp version and my parallels software as I have found alternative software applications."

"XP ain't perfect, but at least I don't spend large chunks of time waiting for it to do something, like I did with Vista. I bought a laptop with Vista in the summer for work related purposes and was so fed up with its slowness that a few weeks ago I sold it and installed XP on my [MacBook](#). I am now much more productive."

"I've been a PC user all my life. Now that I've had to deal with Vista, I'm now looking into a Mac. Who would of thought that an operating system would give so much grief? I can't find drivers that actually work!"

"I plan to become a Mac person."

#### THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE

"Big companies like [Microsoft](#) should not force computer companies like [Dell](#), IBM, [Gateway](#), etc., to sell only Vista. Consumers should be given the choice of what system they want in a PC."

"Look, I like MS, however why can't they let 'us' the consumer, decide which OS we want to use? Seems as though they want to push something on many of us that we dont want, or believe is better. So if they had us, the consumer in they're best interest, they'd continue selling XP (which has become a very good and reliable system) and while they 'imporve' Vista, then more of us will come around... (if we havent gone to MAC) in time. I like MS and I'll continue using windows 'HOWEVER' if I'm 'forced' to move to something I don't want to, then thats enough for me to put my loyalty toward another product. I dont like to be bullied and simply... I won't."

"With XP, I not only have the choice between the OS's, I also have a choice between IE versions, Media Player versions, etc. With Vista, I am pretty much stuck with what MS wants to integrate into their 'new' OS. I do not like anything higher than Media Player 9 and IE 6, with patches. I hate having to go three layers deep into Vista to find the stuff that used to be 'right there'. If Vista is so great, why have 'classic views'? If Vista is so great, why did I change all my settings back to look like 95/98/ME/XP? If Vista is so great, why aren't all those annoying 'permission to continue' prompts REAL security, rather than just a polite way of saying, "Hey, Stupid, do you really want to try to USE your computer?" If Vista is so great, why does it look so much like a Mac OS? If Vista is so great, why is there already a service pack to fix shyte that five hundred teams of 'whiz (ahem!) programmers left vulnerable to attacks and crashes?"

"I object to being dictated to as to what I buy, when I own the computer. I wouldn't mind so much if expensive upgrades were not necessary, ( if new operating systems could be run on comps. with existing power and RAM.) I think [Microsoft](#) likes to kick us all around!!"

"What possible rationale can they have for this, other than selfish ones (such as profit and maintaining image)? Limiting this choice and forcing the adoption of Vista is by no means good for consumers."

"People should always be given a choice. The strategic needs of large corporations must take second precedence to the wishes of the purchasing public. Large corporations run our lives-- and they shouldn't have that much control."

**IF IT AIN'T BROKE...**

"I wish once, just once, Microsoft would adhere to the old saying of 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it.'"

"Don't fix what ain't broke. With XP, Microsoft finally got it right."

"Vista is good but XP is better(faster) once you tweak the settings. XP has more experience and has the bugs ironed out unlike Vista. Why mess with success? If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

"I realize, of course, that the nature of technology is more, more, more, but whatever happened to the old adage 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it?'"

"Many people dont have the resources to replace printers and other hardware that is working just fine in Xp just because no drivers are being written for vista. It goes with the old adage 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it.'"

"I am of the old school. 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it.' I use XP Pro, and it works very smoothly."

"My old Granddad said 'If it ain't broke don't fix it', I think that goes to say what I feel about XP."

"Why fix something if it isnt broken?"

**MY SISTER, MY GUINEA PIG**

"My sister has vista for a business operation.... She reports a continuing list of problems. Tech support is nonexistent&#8230; Anything for a buck?"

"My younger sister bought a new HP preloaded with Vista and within 6 months she had to format the hard drive at least three times. It also took me almost an hour to configure the wireless for my daughters new laptop that I bought her as an early graduation present."

"I have used Vista on my sister's PC. She does not like it and I definitely do not like it. I can see very little, if any, improvement over XP. It seems to me that the most change is that Microsoft has given new names to essential files, folders, etc. and changed the way you access them. It also seems to me to just be a ploy to make more money."

"The computer company that installed XP on my sister's computer at work told her that Vista wasn't any good, and they were going to install XP instead."

"I've used Vista on my sister's machine and I wouldn't give a dime for it, thank you!"&#160;

**UNIQUE VIEWS**

"Vista has too many bells and not enough whistles."

"They should have just made vista an optional feature upgrade to XP, like a service pack but for a fee. So all pc would ship with XP, but you could choose which Vista upgrade you want and be able to uninstall it if you choose to stick with regular XP."

"I am convinced that the reason [Bill Gates](#) 'reduced his involvement with Microsoft' is that someone loaded Vista on his work computer. He was smart enough to realize that he was going to have to take the blame for the mistake."

"If you were all girls, we'd marry you."

"I have a life. That gives me more to worry about the OS on my computer. I suggest you get one, too. It's really much more rewarding than a little electronic box."

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