

Bowie Seniors Computer Club Minutes for Oct. 15, 2009

Carl Bulger presided.

Presentation:

Pros and Cons of Upgrading to Windows 7 by Norm Bohrer

About half of us have at least one computer with the Vista operating system. Vista had problems and many of us had problems adapting to the new operating system and its stringent security measures, for example, User Account Control's many interruptions. Many of our applications and hardware didn't initially work with Vista. One of the best new features of Windows 7 is Device Stage organizes pre-installed drivers. This should improve compatibility of older devices and software with Windows 7.

Windows 7 incorporates the best of Vista, tones down or eliminates the irritating features, and maintains compatibility for Vista applications. It offers improvements including faster start up and shut-down times, customization options, tweaks that Windows users have requested, and ensures that the most frequent and important things you do are also the easiest.

The home user will probably buy the Home Premium version for \$120. The Professional (\$200) and Ultimate versions (\$220) have several enhancements, among which is the optional Windows XP Mode, a virtual platform within Windows 7 where you can run XP. It gives you a virtual desktop within the Windows 7

desktop provided your computers processor supports either Intel VT or AMD-V technology and it is enabled in the motherboard's BIOS. A licensed copy of Windows XP SP3 and a copy of the Windows Virtual PC engines are also required and can be downloaded.

Five reasons some XP users should hold off on Windows 7:

- (1) Do you have your computer set up the way you like. XP users must do a "clean install" of Windows 7. This means the hard disk must be wiped clean, formatted, and re-partitioned. Before doing that you must export all of your data, email, address lists, photos, passwords, and anything else you want to save, then reinstall them after Windows 7 is installed and working properly.
- (2) Do you spend most of your computer time on the internet and use mostly data and applications which reside on web servers? If you are content with what you have now and available via the web, maybe you don't care what operating system is on your computer.
- (3) Windows latest security features (Windows Defender and the soon to be available Windows Security Essentials) will also be available to XP users.

(4) Even though Microsoft has "discontinued support of XP", it will continue to provide security patches and per-incident phone and web support until April 8, 2014.

(5) Your next computer will be delivered with Windows 7 or another modern operating system. Why pay extra to get Windows 7 now?

http://www.pcworld.com/businesscenter/article/171309/five_reasons

Windows 7 Demo Videos:

This is a series of short demos from Microsoft. They are difficult to navigate:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-7/features/videos.aspx>

While Mike Musgrave in this eight minute video is not as interesting as Bob Blum's presentation, he succinctly demonstrates the key new features offered by Win 7:

<http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2354552,00.asp>

Windows 7 Demo by Bob Blum

Windows 7's desktop has new background themes and can display slideshows rather than a static picture or pattern. Bob chose US scenes that changed every 10 seconds (default is every 30 sec.).

Windows 7's Taskbar displays large unlabeled icons or buttons

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for each open program and recently or frequently used programs. Mousing over a button opens a thumbnail preview of each open window for that application. Mousing over the thumbnail will temporarily open a window on the application. Moving off of the thumbnail will take you back to the task you were working on. Clicking on the thumbnail will bring the previewed task to the top so you can now work on it. Properties of the task bar can be customized by right-clicking on the taskbar, then clicking on Properties.

Application, file, and document windows are displayed in pseudo 3D one behind the other. Aero Snap allows you to maximize any of them simply by grabbing it with the mouse and moving it up against the title bar with the cursor to snap it into place at the top of the desktop. You can reduce its size by pulling it down. By moving it against the right or left border you can display it half-screen. If you want a window to go away, you can use the mouse to shake it horizontally (Aero Shake). Aero Peek will allow previews of windows and the desktop by temporarily rendering the open window transparent. Windows Flip (alt-tab) and Flip 3D (Windows-tab) impressively displays all open applications and make it easy to switch from one to another.

Windows Explorer has been enhanced with the use of **libraries** and **favorites**. Libraries are

folders that contain files and shortcuts to files in any other folder allowing you to put a file in multiple categories, or libraries.

System icons can be placed on the desktop the same as in Vista.

You can also place desktop gadgets like the clock, calendar, large notes, Weather Bug, Stock Board, or your choice of these and others anywhere on the desktop.

Jump Lists are lists of recently or frequently accessed files that are displayed temporarily as the cursor moves over the application's icon.

Items in the Start Menu, Task Bar, and Jump List can be pinned to them so they aren't pushed off the list by later entries.

You have more control of how menus are organized. Simply right-click on the menu and select Properties.

The power button on the Start Menu now defaults to shutdown.

It's easier to connect to a projector.

There are new, better versions of Windows Paint, Windows Media Center, and Calculator. The calculator can be morphed from a simple calculator to one with advanced math functions, statistics, or programming tools including hexadecimals.

Windows Media Center is more functional.

The Homegroup feature for configuring a home network permits full access to the files on other computers in the group. In Vista and XP, access to files on other computers is limited to those placed in a folder named "Shared."

To further improve usability of Windows 7, Bob suggests showing filename extensions in Windows Explorer.

Bob also suggests adding the following third-party applications:

Quick StartUp (www.glarysoft.com)

EasyBCD (Boot Configuration Data) (www.neosmart.net)

Firefox Web Browser (www.mozilla.com)

Install Thunderbird e-mail client (www.mozilla.com)

Install EZ Backup Thunderbird Basic (Rinjanisoft, \$9.95 - www.rinjanisoft.com)

Revo Uninstaller (www.revouninstaller.com)

Speedtest.net (www.speedtest.net)

Macrium Reflect Free (www.macriumreflect.com/reflectfree.asp)

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