

Share the experiences: Microsoft Vista

1 THE QUESTION

Our members received the following request from BELTUG:

“Many companies are hesitant about migrating to Windows Vista.

One of our members, a large company with thousands of PCs, will be taking this step in the coming weeks. This member is interested in sharing information and experiences on this topic.

Users only (ICT Decision Makers) - Please let us know if this company can contact you to discuss issues like:

- Which desktop operating system do you use?
- Do you have a roadmap to update the operating system?
 - Yes:
 - Are you considering migrating to Windows Vista?
 - When?
 - What are the reasons you would do so?
 - No
 - Have you seriously considered doing so?
 - Why have you decided not to?”

2 SUMMARY OF THE REACTIONS

BELTUG received reactions from organisations in a variety of sectors: utilities, industry, education, chemical industry, food, services, insurance and public institutions.

The BELTUG member company that initiated the request now has several companies to contact to share information on a bilateral basis.

A summary of the reactions:

2.1 Do you have a roadmap to update the operating system? No - Why have you decided not to?

- No new business requirements.
- Our current situation is very stable. Why take risks to change an adequate solution?
- We considered it, but currently there is no business case. The investments will be done at the same time that we replace our clients (desktops, laptops). We will revisit the issue after 2009.
- If there is no urgent need, I recommend waiting until Windows 7 becomes available. For us, Vista is a step between XP and Windows 7.
- We planned to introduce Vista in 2009 but ultimately decided not to, because:
 - Microsoft announced Windows 7;
 - Our most important suppliers of clients (HP and Dell) still provide Vista with downgrade to XP.;
 - We see no added value in the OS for our end users;
 - Licensing costs are not an issue, because we have a subscription agreement with Microsoft.
- We see lots of additional costs (migration costs, user training, hardware replacement and/or upgrades and certain software incompatibilities that would need solving, extra calls to the helpdesk) but no real benefits to balance it out.
- TCO for Vista is supposed to be lower than for Windows XP, but I don't see it.
- We intend to skip Vista and wait for Windows 7. Windows 7 is based on the Vista Kernel, but will address most of Vista's problems. So, as both will fall into the same time frame, we will just skip Vista altogether. Implementation is a tough job, even with remote management automated tools.
- We considered putting Vista on the new machines until it became clear that the manufacturers and Microsoft will deliver and support Windows XP OEM licenses on the hardware for a longer period of time.
- Our company will only upgrade machines to a new OS when the hardware manufacturers require us to do so.
- The support and installation of Vista would also require upgrading some of our standard software packages. We would rather schedule this in the longer term.

- We will support Vista on PCs that need it because of specific applications, but we consider that need to be minimal.
- The general tendency in the company is to skip Vista and go directly to the next generation, which we will certainly need to start supporting.

2.2 Do you have a roadmap to update the operating system? Yes - What are the reasons you would do so?

Some companies are currently conducting technical and/or TCO studies. These include migrating from Windows XP to Vista (or Windows 7). The migration will depend on the results.

Generally, this question is part of a broader study, e.g. looking ahead at the “office” environment (file&print, e-mail, etc). This broader study thus covers both server and client migrations and aims to challenge the current (distributed) Microsoft solution with available (consolidated) commercial and open source alternatives.

What are the reasons you would do so?

- Enhanced connectivity & security
- The upcoming “end of support” (2009) and the “end of extended support” (2014) for Windows XP.