

Re: How workable is Vista?

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David Brown wrote:

Vladimir Vassilevsky wrote:

Paul Keinanen wrote:

The first question, why on earth does the computer have to be booted?

It doesn't have to. There are hibernation and standby modes.

The computer should be on when you need it. Why on earth do you need the computer to be on when you are not using it?

Do you keep the water taps in your bathroom open at all time?

Why not just let the computer run through the night?

Fire hazard, noisy fans, energy waste, hardware wear?

A computer is not more of a fire hazard at night than during the day – less so if it is not doing much work.

At night, the computers are unattended. Long while ago I had to extinguish a burning TV set with water. Since

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then, the technology was improved etc. etc. but nevertheless.

The fan noise is not a problem unless it is in your bedroom,

And the fan speed is adaptive also, but fans still suck the dust :)

and the hardware wear is not a big issue

Mainly because of the high rate of the moral depreciation. However the progress seems to slow down despite of the evil efforts of M\$ and Intel :)

(hard disk wear is much more significant when they are in use), though it is not negligible.

I heard the opinion that the hard disk wear is the most significant at startup and shutdown. Don't know how much truth is in it.

Good quality hardware is designed to work at 100% uptime.

I forgot what good quality means. You can buy a cheap part or an expensive part, and there is about the equal likelihood of failure. Only the things which were produced for many years and in the big quantities can be polished to perfection. This is the opposite to the current demands of the market.

The only serious issue is energy usage. Modern systems are quite good at running at lower power when there is not much demand for processing power. It's still a waste, unless you use electric heating anyway. How relevant that waste is depends on your circumstances.

Wasting is wrong in the philosophical sense :)

The Microsoft 9x family was quite useless for any serious applications,

Like what?

A typical bashing of M\$ without any reason :)
As if it could help any :)

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Most of the problems attributed to Microsoft are actually caused by the lousy application programmers and unskilled operators.

Most of the problems people encounter are application problems, or driver problems. But MS is not blameless – both applications and drivers can cause far more problems than should be possible if the OS had proper separation of programs.

BTW, this is the valid argument for change to Vista.

The main reason NT 3.51 was more reliable and stable than any windows version before or since is that the gui and drivers were in user space, not kernel space.

But there are the performance and the compatibility tradeoffs associated with that.

The problem with any Microsoft version is that it needs daily
(or at
least weekly) security updates,

There is no practical need to do updates to the original versions. Well, with the exception for the few special cases when you really need never components. It is Microsoft who wants you to be addicted on the unnecessary clutter.

I agree entirely. The only people that really need regular updates and service packs are those with unsafe web habits.

The unsafe habits can't be helped. The non-technical problems can't be solved by technical means.

Use a proper browser (anything but i.e.),

We can like it or not, but IE is the standard. If you don't want to have strange problems with some of the web pages, you have to keep IE.

a decent email client (anything but o.e. or o.),

proper virus scanning on email (on the email server, not the PC), and a real firewall (not software "firewall" on the windows machine). And apply a touch of common sense.

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The common sense is the main component. With common sense, the IE and OE are OK. Without common sense, nothing will help.

These basic rules are far more relevant than windows upgrades or fixes.

Exactly.

which strangely also require a reboot.

This is not strange. It is quite difficult to uninstall the loaded component correctly, with all associations and dependencies. They ask for reboot to make sure everything is done all right. In the most of cases you can continue safely without reboot even if they required it.

It's difficult, but far from impossible. On *nix, it is perfectly possible to replace and update the executables and libraries for programs that are in use. The new version will not be used until it is restarted, but that alone avoids a lot of reboots for equivalent updates.

This is what Windows does, too.

For a more advanced solution, there is work under way to allow live patching of the Linux kernel without rebooting, as long as the change does not require changes to existing data structures. It's already perfectly possible to unload, update, and reload kernel modules without a reboot.

On windows, many of the "required reboots" are not required at all – it's just developers don't spend the time and effort required to figure out how to avoid it. A reboot is simple to request, and avoids many potential complications.

Yes. It is difficult to blame the developers for attempting to make their lives easier. BTW, what is so wrong with rebooting? It only takes a minite or two, if the PC is not cluttered.

For this reason, I do not recommend to my customers to use any Windows based operating systems, unless a double/triple redundant system is used (in which case you can boot one PC at a time for security updates).

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If someone is a lamer, he will have problems regardless of OS.

If you need close to 100% uptime, you need redundant systems. With windows, you need more to achieve high uptime figures than with *nix. I can't remember where I read it, but I saw a report for getting five nines uptime for a cluster running a web server. With Red Hat, you needed two machines (obviously with appropriately spec'ed hardware – redundant power supplies, fans, and RAID). With Windows (probably W2K or W2K3 server), you needed five machines.

I'd say it depends mainly on the qualification of the personnel and the way they take on the things. There are the numerous examples of the system crashes at the internet providers and web hosters; regardless of what software and hardware they were using.

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