

Computer Bits by Mark Eggert of Raad One Network Solutions, Inc.

Welcome to Computer Bits, a series of articles on computers and network information. With the release of Microsoft Windows Vista last month we are now in a new era of computing. I now have a notebook with Windows Vista and Office System 2007 on it that I would be happy show anyone interested, just let me know. This month's question pertains to Vista. Do I have to completely change over to Vista, or can I upgrade to Vista one computer at a time.

This is a good question and the answer is that you can upgrade one computer at a time as Vista is compatible with the other versions of Windows and with the current Windows networks. In fact, I would advice you to do the upgrades one at a time making sure to test the applications that will be used on the computer. Now if you have a set of computers that all run the same programs with pretty much the same hardware, these can all be upgraded together.

Another aspect of upgrading to look at is whether your current computers can properly run Windows Vista. While the spec's for Vista are pretty the same as for Windows XP, there is a need for a better video card if you want to use the new User Interface. Most computers sold in the last year or so probably have a proper video card and those don't could probably just need to have the video card upgraded. You should also make sure there are device drivers for all of the hardware that the computer contains or connects to. Microsoft does provide a free tool called the Windows Vista Upgrade Advisor which you can download and install on a computer and by running it see if the computer can be upgraded and also what might be problems. I highly recommend using this tool before upgrading.

If you have a computer or network question you'd like answered and you think others would like to know the answer too, please forward them to me. My email address is meggert@wi.rr.com, my phone number is 262-679-7704 and my fax number is 262-679-7664.