

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

Welcome to Computer Bits, a series of articles on computers and network information. For this month I'll be looking at some myths about Microsoft's Vista.

I found a series of six myths for Microsoft's Vista that I thought you'd like to know about. I think they could ease your mind about upgrading to Vista when it's released.

Myth #1: You'll need to spend a small fortune on hardware upgrades to run Windows Vista.

Reality: Most mid-range and high-end computers sold in the past three years will run Windows Vista just fine.

Myth #2: Some versions of Windows Vista won't support dual-core CPUs or 64-bit processors.

Reality: Every Vista version supports dual-core processors, and every version is available in a 64-bit native version as well.

Myth #3: Microsoft plans to drop support for Windows XP shortly after the release of Windows Vista, forcing Windows users to upgrade or else.

Reality: Under Microsoft's published guidelines, consumers will have more than four years to safely say no to Windows Vista, and business users will be able to hold out until at least 2014.

Myth #4: Yes, Microsoft really is price-gouging.

Reality: It all depends on how you look at it. By most measures, Windows Vista prices will indeed be virtually identical to prices for Windows XP. But one price in particular stands out, and unless Microsoft has a real surprise in store, Windows customers who buy Vista Ultimate are being gouged.

Myth #5: You'll need heavyweight hardware and a premium Vista version to use the new Aero interface, and without Aero there's no reason to upgrade.

Reality: The Windows Vista interface is essentially identical with all Vista versions. Aero describes a set of visual enhancements that will run on relatively modest hardware and are hardly a make-or-break feature.

Myth #6: Microsoft touts Windows Vista as the most secure Windows ever, but the changes are mostly cosmetic. In addition, the new User Account Control feature is so annoying that most Vista users will simply turn them off.

Reality: There's a lot more to security in Windows Vista than just a few dialog boxes, and anyone who takes advantage of all the new features will certainly be more secure. But no one can say for sure how effective the new tools will be for the broad community of Windows users until Vista is widely available.

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.