

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

Welcome to Computer Bits, a series of articles on computers and network information. This month I'd like to share my views and experiences with using Windows XP.

It has now been about 14 months since Microsoft released Windows XP. And along with numerous hotfixes and one service pack, I must say my experience has been very good. Yes, there is a new user interface which took sometime to get use to but you are able to have the Windows 98 interface if you choose. I have been impressed by the number of older applications that either work as installed or can be made to work with the Compatibility Tools that are built in to Windows XP. I must say that the same isn't true for older hardware. Microsoft has set the minimum hardware requirement rather low but I find running Windows XP on hardware using them to be very painful! I would recommend having at least a Pentium III CPU, 256MBs of RAM, and a 16MB video adapter.

As you know, Windows XP comes in four version; Home, Professional, Media Center, and Tablet PC. The last two were only released a month ago and I don't have any experience with them. As for the Home and Professional versions, the definite choice for businesses is the Professional version. The major difference between the two versions is the type of networking that can be done. The Home version allows only for Peer-to-Peer networks as would be setup in a home environment. The Professional version adds Client-Server networks such as Microsoft Networks and Novell Netware Networks. This is a major difference for businesses with a Client-Server network as the Home version simply will not work in this environment.

For a business computer I would recommend upgrading to or purchasing it with Windows XP Professional. The stability, performance, and networking ability of the Professional version make it a great choice for the business environment.

If you have a computer or network question you'd like answered and you think others would like to know the answer to, 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.