Notes:
from an IT Service Shop

By Geoff Griswold

Windows 7: **Microsoft Got It Right**

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Special Online Nugget:
URLs to Windows 7 resources– Go to www.hospitalityupgrade. com/Windows7resources

Windows 7 has been out for several months now and the reviews have been good. This version has carried the good things from Vista (and there were many good things) forward while leaving the bad things behind. There are still warnings when performing system tasks, but they are more subtle and much less annoying.

The most noticeable difference in Windows 7 vs. either Windows Vista or XP, is speed. It boots up and performs much faster than either of its predecessors. The interface is Vista-like, which may take some getting used to by XP users, but the retraining is worth it and not that difficult.

Upgrading to Windows 7 has proven straightforward. A clean install is necessary for moving from Windows XP. Be sure to have a proper backup before installing.

Global Hospitality & Travel/Tourism CTO for Microsoft Bill Frizzell has provided these insights into Windows 7 for the industry.

What is the Microsoft's mission in the hospitality industry?

Microsoft offers tremendous value to the hospitality industry with Windows 7 – increasing staff productivity, enhancing guest experiences and streamlining PC management. Microsoft and our Connected Experience partners are dedicated to delivering solutions that help organizations in the hospitality industry better connect information, systems and people. Through our global partner ecosystem, we help hospitality organizations drive innovation and build stronger relationships with vendors and guests.

How does Microsoft work with third-party developers to migrate their hospitality products onto Windows 7?

Microsoft offers several resources to developers. One of these is the Windows Developer Center on MSDN, which includes:

• Application-compatibility cookbook – step-by-step guidance on app readiness
• Application-compatibility forums for the community
• Readiness workshops for hands-on assistance and guidance
• Readiness labs (every week in Redmond and also scheduled at Microsoft Technology Centers WW based on demand)

Microsoft also offers the "Compatible with Windows 7" Logo program to hardware and software developers. This program includes Microsoft designed tests for partners to confirm their products' compatibility and reliability with Windows 7.

For a great list of current hospitality products that work with Windows 7, Microsoft offers the Windows Compatibility Center where you can check to see if your application or device will run on Windows 7. As Microsoft is always adding to the list of compatible hardware and software, this list is ever evolving to include the most up to date list of hospitality products.

Microsoft also offers www.developforwindows.com, which is a newly launched resource for developers to leverage tools and resources for building applications to meet the specific needs of the hospitality industry.

What has been the response of hardware vendors, such as HP (among others) to provide up-to-date drivers and application software for Windows 7.

We can measure the response by looking at the broad universe of products that support Windows 7, which range from PCs and peripheral hardware to consumer, commercial and custom-built software. Specifically, more than a quarter million devices work with Windows 7 and more than one million applications run on Windows 7 PCs around the world (according to Microsoft telemetry data).

Some technical writers have stated that upgrading from Vista to Windows 7 does not remove all of Vista, so a clean install is necessary. Does the upgrade work well?

Upgrading from Windows Vista is the most convenient way to get Windows 7 on your computer, because it keeps your files, settings and programs from your current version of Windows in place. To upgrade an earlier operating system than Windows XP (for example, Windows 95 or Windows 2000), you'll need to purchase a full version of Windows 7 and perform a custom installation. Before doing a version upgrade, we recommend running the Windows Upgrade Advisor to see which version of Windows 7 is optimized for your PC.

IT professionals insist that licensing agreements with software providers be followed, but, there are some that continue to pirate copies of Windows.

Does Microsoft have a method to monitor Windows 7 online and either invalid or warn users of unauthorized copies?

Yes, this method is called validation–it confirms that Windows 7 installed on a PC was properly activated. For more information on Genuine Windows and validation, check out these resources at www.hospitalityupgrade.com/Windows7resources.