

## ASK THE COMPUTER SURGEON

### Speeding up your new Vista computer

This is going to be a very big year for technologies. Hang on to your seat!

One of the questions I am asked over and over is, "How do I speed up my new Vista computer?" I hear that some technical guru's are advising users to revert back to Windows XP and others are recommending a move to a MAC. What should you do?

Windows XP is now a tried and true desktop operating system. We are now used to its glitches and Microsoft has refined it to a very acceptable performance level.

There is nothing wrong with a MAC. They are often preferred by graphic artists and have many benefits associated with the migration of the Operating System toward Linux. However, I would not give a recommendation to someone who has already made the investment in Vista to throw it away! There are many tweaks that can be made in Vista to improve performance. We will discuss a few of them this week and hit more in the weeks to come.

The first and most prevalent performance problem we encounter is related to Viruses and Spyware. Be certain that your computer is clean.

The second problem we encounter is with pre-installed applications including some poor performing Anti-Virus solutions. In fact Norton AntiVirus can hog as much as 50% of a workstations processing power. Uninstall all applications that you do not plan to use. If in doubt, uninstall. You can always reinstall applications later if you accidentally uninstall one that you need.

Now some changes to Vista that will help.

- Uninstall all programs that you installed to try them out but do not use. Many applications run components on startup that slow the booting process and use RAM and Processor during operation.
- Change your audio and visual effects. Many of the new effects take a lot of horse power. Uncheck all options that you can do without. Play around and see what works for you. You can remove all of the resource draining features.
- Remove the Google Desktop Toolbar. It is constantly indexing everything on your computer which takes resources.
- Disable the Vista Indexing Service. Do this in the Adjusting Indexing Option.
- Remove or limit the use of Vista Gadgets. They are really neat but take power to run.
- Run MSCONFIG and stop all services that are not needed by Vista or applications that you want to run. Visit the services and startup tabs.
- Be sure to use good performing AntiVirus and AntiSpyware applications. Beware of the bloated products which bundle lots of supposed features like firewall, etc.
- Defragment your hard disk regularly. Beware cautious how you respond to error messages. Get help if you are unsure.

Are there tuning tricks that you have discovered? Please send us your list and we will publish them.

It is possible to get Vista running faster than XP ever ran.

Comments? Suggestions? Questions? Please e-mail them to [questions@compusurgeon.com](mailto:questions@compusurgeon.com).