

DB/C Newsletter

February 2006

News and Comment

This month's article is a very preliminary report about Windows Vista, the next release of Microsoft Windows. I encourage any readers of this newsletter who have had experience with Windows Vista to share it with other DB/C software users via the dbctalk email list.

I will be attending the EclipseCon (www.eclipsecon.org) conference in Santa Clara, California March 21-23. Be sure to make contact with me if you are also attending. I'll be reporting about the conference in next month's newsletter.

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A Preliminary Overview of Windows Vista

Microsoft recently announced that Windows Vista will be released in five or six different versions, depending on which press release you read. The five versions named on the Microsoft web site are

- Windows Vista Home Basic
- Windows Vista Home Premium
- Windows Vista Ultimate
- Windows Vista Business
- Windows Vista Enterprise

One interesting thing to note is that the way versions were organized for Windows XP is going away. There will no longer be versions specifically for 64 bit processors, for the Tablet PC or for home multimedia. Windows Vista Ultimate will contain all of the home and business features of the other versions of Windows Vista.

No official release dates have been announced for the different versions of Windows Vista, but it seems to be general knowledge that the home versions will be released before the end of 2006 and the business versions will follow in the first half of 2007. No pricing has been announced.

Windows Vista will include a new user interface named 'Aero'. However, it will not be included in the Home Basic version. In addition, the 'Glass' mode of Aero will only work on

computers with newer, high-end graphics cards. We're not sure what effect any of this will have on GUI screen metrics, but we at DB/C Software Company will be finding out about such things over the next few months.

WinFX is an important new feature of Windows Vista. It is the application program interface (API) for all managed (e.g. C#) programs. It includes the Windows Presentation Foundation, the Windows Communications Foundation as well as the rest of the .NET 2.0 API. WinFX appears to be a replacement for much of the Win32 API. Interestingly, early in the development process it was reported that WinFX would only be available for Longhorn (the development code name for Vista). However, Microsoft now says the WinFX will be available for Windows XP and for Windows 2003 Server.

WinFS is another new feature of Windows Vista. Originally, it was described as a replacement for the NTFS file system. It was to be based on a new disk format and a relational engine not unlike SQL Server. That plan was abandoned. WinFS is now the name of an advanced file system API. The search and metadata capabilities required to implement WinFS have been tacked onto NTFS in the form of hidden index and metadata files that are automatically created and maintained behind the scene of normal processing. Again, we at DB/C Software Company will be finding if this has any impact on DB/C DX or DB/C FS.

It appears that Windows Vista will not contain the anti-virus features that are found in the new Windows OneCare Live product. OneCare Live competes directly with anti-virus software products from Norton, Symantec and others. Anti-virus software exists because of deficiencies in operating systems. But instead of fixing such operating system deficiencies in Vista, Microsoft has decided that anti-virus software is a market opportunity. Enough said.

All in all, Windows Vista appears not to be all that revolutionary. Rather, it is more evolutionary which hopefully means fewer compatibility issues. We'll report our findings as we learn more about Windows Vista in the coming months.

DB/C DX Class Schedule

Class: DB/C DX Fundamentals
Date: June, 2006
Location: Woodridge, Illinois

For information, send email to admin@dbcsoftware.com.
