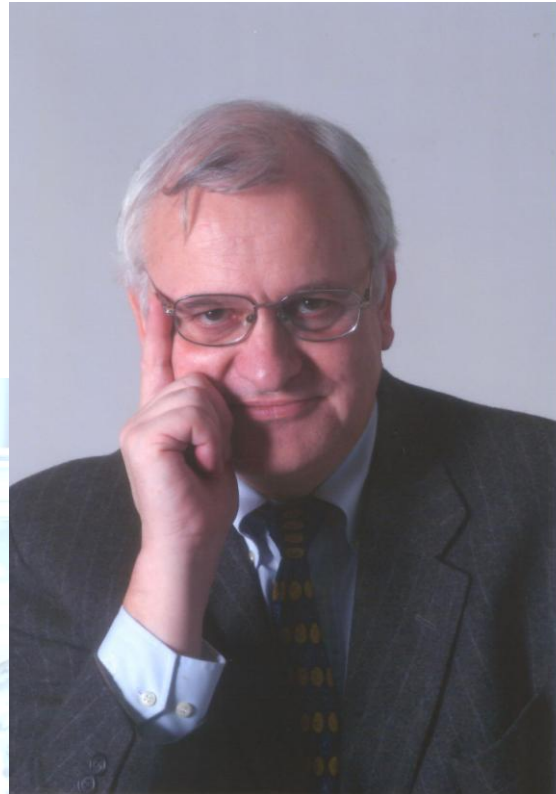


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ITMatters

In this regular column Charles Zealey of ITSolve covers all aspects of business and personal computing. If you have a question about IT matters, email it to Charles on itmatters@itsolve.co.uk



Windows 7

Regular readers will recall that I was never a great fan of Windows Vista. Soon after the release of Vista, in this column, I advised waiting before upgrading. I've repeated that advice on many occasions since, and for my own part I am pleased to say that my computers have never used Vista. Windows XP is a fine operating system.

So what do I think of the recently released Windows 7? So far experiences seem almost universally positive. Like a Lotus Seven it is light-weight and powerful, enabling the machine to perform at far higher speeds. Microsoft have paid particular attention to the speed at which the system becomes usable after switching on, and have made a vast improvement.

The Interface

Vista did have some good points – particularly in the area of the user interface. By and large, the Vista features have been retained and in some cases improved upon. It's worth spending some time getting to know the interface. If you read last month's column you will realize that a small investment in time now will yield a large improvement in productivity over the coming years.

To upgrade or not?

So should you upgrade? If you are happy with Windows XP there is no pressing need to, but if you are using Vista you will probably find a noticeable improvement in speed and stability. As with any upgrade or system replacement it is important to check that your key needs are met. Make sure that the application that is critical to your ability to work effectively is available and works properly. Make sure that all your printers and scanners are supported.

If you decide to upgrade then you have the choice of a fresh install or an in-place upgrade (at least if you are currently running Vista; XP users have to re-install. For myself I would choose to re-install on a new clean disk, keeping the old one in case of accidents, but then I'm probably better equipped than most to deal with the unexpected problems that may crop up.

What do I think of Windows 7? You could do a lot worse.

Charles Zealey is a consultant working with business professionals helping them to improve their organisation's productivity and effectiveness with the use of Information Technology. Typically a return on investment can be achieved with 6-12 months. To access help sheets go to www.itsolve.co.uk/HelpSheets/. For a free half-hour consultation on business IT issues phone 01635 869863 or email lisa@itsolve.co.uk.

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