



WHERE IS THE NEXT WINDOWS?

To continue the theme of areas to improve your business I will focus on Backup which in some form applies to every business regardless of size. However firstly I will cover some thing many people ask and that is when is the next version of Windows due.

Windows XP is the most recent PC operating system that is on the market and that came out in 2001. Windows 2000 and ME came out in late 1999, and prior to that there was Windows 98 and 95 in the space of 4 years. The next version, codenamed Longhorn, is due out in 2006 and was initially promised to revolutionise not only computing but the modern home, as Windows 95 was a revolution a decade earlier.

Some experts believe that even the 2006 launch date is still optimistic and it is thought that many of the promised interactive elements and other features have had to be scaled back to meet an impending release date. Windows and MS Office make up a lion's share of Microsoft's profits so it is important for Microsoft to release these products to the market. Though with Windows XP only being taken up by about 35% of Windows users, Microsoft realise the importance of making this next version both attractive in terms of its features and benefits but also not beyond the reach of the average user in terms of cost and ability of their standard PC to handle it.

A lot in the I.T. and finance industry believe the glory days of Microsoft are over with the increasing take up of Linux and otherwise use of free open source software. Although in the past when Microsoft were challenged heavily, they seem to fight back and appear more strong and dominant than before.

BACKUP

I think everyone is aware of the need and importance of backup these days but due to the time consuming nature of the process along with general apathy, it is a process that many businesses neglect or do not do often enough. The statistics are staggering for businesses that lose their data, in the very high majority causing total business failure. However there are backup solutions which don't require you to do a thing. For as little as about \$50 per month, you can have your business data fully backed up daily and kept at an offsite location for you to retrieve at anytime should the need arise. It is small price to pay to ensure the future of your business because, while buildings and items can be replaced, data can't! It is imperative that you have a sound backup plan in place and your IT service people are your best resource to help.

Product of the Month

Multi Function Units – These devices are becoming ever more popular in the home and office due to their overall functionality, quality, simplicity, compactness and value for money. The newer devices can combine the roles of a colour printer, fax machine, scanner, photocopier as well as being able to read most digital camera memory cards. Some even have a preview LCD screen and wireless functionality. HP, Brother, Canon, Epson and Lexmark are the leading brands for these units and retailing from \$400 onwards they can make a wise investment.

Gripe of the Month

File Sharing Programs - Many of us use programs like Kazaa, iMesh, LimeWire, etc. and during installation there are generally a set of licence conditions you have to tick off on for both the products itself and other bundled products. Due to length of the document I doubt if 0.5% of people would read them. These are some of the terms you may have agreed to; 1.To pay all legal costs of product owner if something you do results in a lawsuit. 2.To allow a company to sell your CPU power and hard drive space. 3.To allow spying and reporting of visited websites and software of your PC. 4.Not to remove or tell others how to remove bundled products. Scary isn't it!

(If you are unsure whether you may have problems, click on the Toorak Metro News link on the media page at www.ctsbayside.com.au and download, then run Adaware & Spybot)

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