

More on Windows Vista – worst OS yet?

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Microsoft's rebuttal of the paper on Vista's DRM
(<http://www.geekzone.co.nz/juha/2069>)

The reply to Microsoft's rebuttal (<http://www.geekzone.co.nz/juha/2105>)

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Gutmann Reloaded and My Vista HD Fiasco

Windows, posted: 26-JAN-2007 15:35

Peter Gutmann isn't taking Microsoft's rebuttal of his paper on Vista's DRM lying down. Instead, he's put up an addendum to his original paper, unravelling the bits that he terms as "PR spin". Reading Gutmann's response, it looks like the debate is far from over and Microsoft has more explaining to do on the DRM.

Unfortunately for Microsoft's Dave Marsh, Gutmann's read the official documents carefully. There are several areas such as the Hardware Functionality Scan (HFS), echo cancellation features and graphics hardware being used for video decoding where Marsh originally said one thing – which Gutmann picked up on when he wrote the paper – and another in the rebuttal.

So which is right? It's hard to say, and it looks like testing the different assertions is the only way forward.

On the question of CPU usage with DRM, I can be of some assistance to Peter and others curious about it. Here's a screenshot of Task Manager showing the Media Foundation Protected Pipeline EXE (lovely name) module in Vista, as I'm loading protected HD content:

It's chewing up some memory, not that much, but it doesn't register for CPU usage. The module isn't loaded when playing unprotected content.

I will do some more testing here once I get some fresh HD content. As it happens, I've got some older HD content, namely Coral Reef Adventure which was given to me last year. It has two Microsoft Windows High Definition format WMV files on the second disc, one in 1,280 by 720 resolution and another in 1,440 by 1080. The discs seem to have been made in 2003 and I put

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the second one into my Sony DVD drive (no, it's not HD-DVD or BluRay capable) under Vista to see what the film would look like.

At the first attempt, I got a black screen as the disc tries to autorun a start.hta file that Vista doesn't like. I don't know why Vista doesn't run it but neither does XP so... straight onto the WMV files I go, and click on the 720 resolution one. Windows Media Player 11 starts up, and I get the Media Usage Rights Acquisition dialog:

Ahhh... but the disc is already in the drive? I click on the "I. licenseserver.com"