

Well, It's a "Pretty" Version of Windows

I've learned a lot in the past couple of weeks about Windows Vista. (Regular readers will remember that I've just recently purchased a new computer with Vista Business Edition installed.)

The Windows Aero feature rocks! You'd think that something as silly as having "cool flippy windows" is just not enough reason to get excited but... I love it. When you press Win+Tab the windows look 3D, showing a thumbnail of each window in real-time, even if it's a video. Also when you hover the mouse at the bottom of the screen on the taskbar, it again shows real-time thumbnails of the running programs. If you press Win+Ctrl+Tab, it brings up all running programs in 3D, then you can easily scroll through them using tab or arrow keys. This is a great improvement over the old familiar Alt+Tab that just shows you the program name and maybe a filename.

I had read that Microsoft spent a lot of time on the "look and feel" of this version of Windows, and I expected to be disappointed with just another prettified version of Windows XP. Honestly, the first time I tried to use Windows Vista I was frustrated because they changed My Documents to just Documents, and they moved the familiar My Pictures folder, or maybe they just named it Pictures, and where was My Downloads? Oh, there it is - called Downloads. My Music folder is now called Music? ...Hey, I think I'm seeing a pattern here. But still I longed for the familiar ground of Windows XP where I had a My Documents folder and everything was inside there. With the new Windows Vista we have Documents, Pictures, Videos, Music and Downloads, Contacts, Favorites, all as "peer folders" beside each other and NOT inside a My Documents folder. OK, I admit this way makes more sense to me now.

Now that I've been using Windows Vista for a couple of weeks and I have to use a different computer I find the old Windows XP kind of clunky in the use and feel of it. The semi-transparent windows, the softer more soothing colours, and of course the cool flippy windows thingy (Windows Aero) are just too irresistible to me now.

Next column I am anxious to tell you of all the improvements in the picture and video features of Windows Vista. Or maybe I'll write about the WAY improved search feature of Vista.