

The KCS Enquirer

Information about the Computer Revolution

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New Server Drives

Best Road Warrior Laptop

End of the Line for XP

Windows Server 2008

KCS News

ES.2 Server Drives

We have been recommending SATA (Serial Advanced Technology Attachment) or SAS (Serial Attached Storage) drives for some time because they are reasonably priced, high capacity, fast and reliable. Seagate has now released an upgraded version dubbed ES.2 that is designed specifically for mission critical data applications such as servers. Drive capacities range up to 1TB (terabyte - 1,000GB) for the 7200RPM drives. These drives also have error detection and correction protection built-in to insure data integrity.

ES.2 drives are built for reliability with a MTBF (Mean Time Between Failures) of 1.2 million hours.

Primo Road Computer

The Equus model N1021 laptop computer is getting rave reviews. One of our largest and best clients called it "the finest laptop" he has ever owned. The N1021 is lightweight, just a touch over 3½ pounds, compact, 11.6"x 8.3"x 1.3" and loaded with everything you need in a mobile computer – DVD-RW drive, wireless and wired network capabilities, VGA Firewire

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and three USB ports, one express and one card reader slot. The 12.1" WXGA bright screen is very readable. The small size makes it a breeze to use anywhere but especially in a crowded airplane seat. It stows easily in your carry-on luggage and its light weight makes it easy to tote around. If you need one for the road this is the one you should consider.

How Old are Your Tapes

If you are using a tape backup system it is important that you keep your tapes fresh. Old tapes can cause backup problems and are more prone to data loss as they get older. In

general we recommend replacing tapes when they are one year old. If you have an older tape drive you may want to consider upgrading to a hard drive backup system. Hard drives have a much, much longer life span.

Two is Better than One

The smaller size and falling prices of flat panel LCD monitors have made dual monitor installations economically feasible. Dual monitors boost productivity. You can have two separate programs in full screen mode on two separate screens and interact with each of them separately. For example, if you are researching data on the Web

and using the information for a document you can have the Web page on one monitor and your document on the other. Then you don't have to keep switching windows on one monitor. You can have several windows open on each monitor. It really speeds up work. Let us know if you want more information.

Microsoft Open License Policy

Open licenses are a convenient way to order Microsoft software products. Not only are the prices a little better but it allows you to purchase items such a client access licenses (CAL) one at a time instead of in packages of

five. To activate the license you must purchase five open license items on one order. Then you can order any quantity of any open license product including licensees and application programs. If you do not make any additional purchases for two years your open license expires and you would have to make a five item open license purchase to renew it.

Virtualization

Virtualization is the newest buzzword in the IT community. As usual everybody talks about it; few understand it and even fewer actually use it. Virtualization simply means that you use programs to run two or more operating systems on one computer. In effect the computer is partitioned with each partition acting as a separate computer. So you could run two virtual server operating systems on one hardware box or two different operating systems on one computer i.e. Windows 2000 and XP. Since these would function as two separate machines you can configure them differently and run different applications in each partition. If you had an application that would only run on a Windows 98 operating system you could run a virtual 98 system on a XP computer and run the program while still having a XP based computer. Virtualization can also be used to make several separate devices appear as on. For example if you had multiple devices to store data you could make them appear as one device.

MS News

Windows XP Phase Out

Microsoft has announced plans to discontinue sales of the Windows XP operating system. Hang on, this gets a little complicated. Retail sales through CDW, Microcenter etc., and direct OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) sales will end on June 30 this year. However we will still be able to get DSP (Distributed Software Package) versions through January 31

2009 with or without a system. After that, for an undetermined time we will be able to downgrade a Vista OEM or DSP operating system to XP. To downgrade you will have to have an existing XP license key and Microsoft will have to be called to certify the system. Luckily one XP license key can be used for multiple downgrades.

Because we are not satisfied with Vista we are recommending staying with XP as of right now. We will be using any means possible to continue to supply XP until Vista has been fixed or a new acceptable Windows operating system is released.

Windows Server 2008

Windows 2008 Network Operating System (NOS) has been released and we are in the process of evaluating it now. It replaces the Windows 2003 server software. This version is being touted as more secure and faster than previous systems. It is designed to fully utilize the faster gigabyte networks. Remote access and server management are upgraded to be faster and easier to use. Remote users should really benefit. They will be able to access applications directly without having to deal with a remote desktop. This will speed up the process and put less of a burden on the remote user's computer. Better remote management features will mean easier remote upgrades, changes and problem solving.

The big feature added to this version is called Hyper-V. This is Microsoft's virtualization technology. With this technology one physical server computer can run multiple virtual software servers operating independently of each other. Virtualization will result in better utilization of hardware resources and the elimination of conflicts between applications by having them run on different virtual servers. If there was an application or configuration that required running on a previous version of server software, such as

Windows 2000 you could run a virtual 2000 version on a server running the Windows 2008 system.

Another important feature in this day of remote access and network guests is called NAP – Network Access Protection. NAP will prevent potentially damaging computers from connecting to the network. Remote and guest user's computers will have to be in compliance with the security standards established for the network in order to connect.

As we test Windows Server 2008 over the next few weeks we will be making recommendations on deployment. Surprisingly, pricing for this new version has remained about the same as the current version.

Windows SQL Server 2008

Along with Server 2008 Microsoft has released SQL (Structured Query Language) Server 2008. We will also be evaluating this software.

Updates

Microsoft has released Service Pack 1 (SP-1) for the Vista operating system. If you are running Vista you should install.

Surveillance News

Wireless Cameras

Wireless cameras are available for use where it would be difficult or not impossible to run a cable. Although battery operated models are available it is best to have an AC power source available. Wireless cameras are affected by weather and other interference but can fill in where a wired camera is not feasible.