Everyone is entitled to my Opinion

Some Technology Punditry

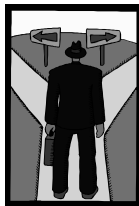with regards and apologies to David Brinkley

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I am a generalist

◆ The specialist is a man who fears the other subjects.
-- Marin H. Fisher

◆ There is much pleasure to be gained from useless knowledge.
-- Bertrand Russel

◆ The simplest questions are the hardest to answer.
-- Northrop Frye

Thoughts about Technology

Here are a few things to think about while planning your near-term future

Where will you be ?   What will you be doing   ?

What will your technology look like ?

Who will be paying you ?   What problems will you have to solve ?

Same Old – Changes ?

If the rate of change inside an organization
is less than the rate of change outside . . .
their end is in sight

– Jack Welch, former Chairman and CEO, General Electric

Thoughts about Technology

◆ Everyone takes familiar technologies for granted.
◆ Computing technology is now widespread and accessible enough to be taken for granted by people who don't understand it.
  ● I used to think that was BAD, but ...

◆ In confusion, there is profit !

Thoughts about Technology

2009 → A wounded economy:

◆ New social / political / business impacts
  --driven by economic change
  --delivered by/with computing technology
  --appearing at the same [too fast] rate.
◆ Next year we will see very different IT changes [but still too fast]

New Economy

◆ Major societal and economic changes will need careful and enlightened management, a challenge to which politicians may not rise

◆ New Rules & Regulations
◆ New Limits & Constraints

◆ Ever wonder how it works ?
◆ For details, see your new president

New Priorities

Gartner's 2009 Strategic List
◆ 1. Virtualization. [No. 5 last year.]
◆ 2. Cloud computing. [New to the list.]
◆ 3. Computing fabrics. [No. 8 last year.]
◆ 4. Web-oriented architecture. [~= Web platform #7 last year.]
◆ 5. Enterprise mashups. [No. 6 last year.]
◆ 6. Specialized systems. [New to the list.]
◆ 7. Social software and social networking. [No. 10 last year.]
◆ 8. Unified communications. [No. 2 last year.]
◆ 9. Business intelligence. [New.]
◆ 10. Green IT. [No. 1 last year.]

Old Problems Again

Tech most likely to be ignored in 2009 [eWeek]

◆ Security
  • Firewall, access control, patching, anti-virus
  • Cycle hasn't changed much in five years
◆ Computer Hardware
  • Same basic PC as 1998
  • Minor speed, interface, architecture changes
  • Cheap, not radical improvements
◆ Internet Infrastructure
  • New browsers & features --
  • Servers are the plumbing;
  • Plumbing not changing fast enough
  • Wait for the flush

2010 and Beyond

◆ Not all big players survive intact [or at all]
◆ IBM may well be one of the survivors
◆ The IT top company will probably be from India
◆ Major battle between the Open-Source movement and entrenched proprietary interests
◆ The result will be that the control freaks will lose
◆ Evolving effective object-oriented standards architecture [supercedes SOAs]

Imagine the Future . . .

. . . Coming toward you:

◆ Can you See It ?
◆ Does it have Teeth ?
◆ Is It Angry ?

◆ A Plan might help.

Technology Rants

Annoying New Stuff
with no apologies to David Miller

"Mobile Technology" -- I'm Confused !

John Dvorak's Crumpy Geek podcasts are sounding better to me every week.

When I had a Camera, a PDA and a Phone – –
    at least I knew what was going on at any instant.

"The" Mobile Device:
    Smaller is better ?
    Larger is better ?
    More features are better ?

Prettier but more fragile is better ?
More expensive is better ??

Mobiles: Complexity Not Vanquished

- "A mobile phone needs a manual in the way that a teacup doesn't" - Douglas Adams
- "We are drowning in information but starved for knowledge", - John Naisbitt
- Legacy systems are still with us
- Elegance is still driven by (short-term) economics

This is the negative inertia which may hold us back

Mobile Devices

"Overall Quality" rank*

- Scandinavia
- Japan
- Europe (EU)
- [? ?]
- United States
  (why are we down here ?)

- "Free" really means amortized over two years with a surcharge
- No useful Regulation
- No unlock rules
- Obstruction everywhere

* [Ranking from someone NOT a vendor]

Micropayments

The ubiquitous capability to pay for small things
    and services with a mobile device.

- I could do this in Japan in 2002.
- I could do this in CBR in 2003.
- ALMOST worked in France in 2006
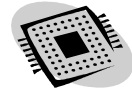- Still waiting . . . here in the home of technology

"Mainstream Technology" -- I'm Lost !

What's mainstream today ? tomorrow ?

Will the recession slow the technology churn ?

◆ Leopard
- Vista engineers should get their bonuses from the Leopard team and iMAC marketers.

◆ Ubuntu – ANOTHER one ?
  - ◆ Why can't you all just get along ?

◆ Vista – why ? Which one?   HOW MUCH $$??

The Megahertz Cores Race

◆ Real value measure is CAPACITY
  not Clock Cycle Time -- Processor speed misleads

◆ Now we're going to count CPU cores instead of processor clock speed ?

◆ Crunch versus Punch
- Fast vs Reliable or Fast vs Low power ?
- Number of Cores usable is limited by app capability

◆ Once again, software lags hardware and marketing

Netbooks

◆ Real cool or a Real Tool ?

◆ High travel – Low app load target audience

◆ Good Eyesight plus Tiny Fingers required.

◆ Experiments going in all size businesses.

◆ Is it a giant smartphone or a tiny PC ?

◆ Is it useful enough ? cheap enough ?

◆ Where's my desktop ?
- If it's still there, is it a machine, or a Big docking station ?

Ubiquitous Wireless   [802.xxx]

◆ The Stalled Standard [802.11 n]

◆ The dead Standard [WiMax]

◆ Digital Television Impacts:
- Frequency Auctions & Broadband use
- Public Use spectra additions & changes
- White space use

Spectrum White Space Use

◆ Proposals made by a number of the major computer companies seeking the right to operate **low power wireless devices** in the spectrum used by television stations – in the so-called "**white spaces**" between channels.

◆ Because of the potential for interference, tv stations obviously don't operate on every channel in every city. The proposal by the tech companies would allow **unlicensed wireless devices** to operate at low power within this spectrum, provided that such devices were "smart" enough to detect television signals and to avoid the use of channels that would interfere with these signals.

◆ Auction vs. Open debate still rages for the white space.

Linux and the Alchemists

◆ Linux is 15 this year [One distro for every year?]
  ● Are Egos still more important than ubiquity or interoperability ?

◆ Vista is helping Linux more than Microsoft.

◆ Can a netbook / browser platform win ?
  ● When Apps run in the cloud, Linux can win !
  ● Cheaper, faster, safer, smaller . . . a s o . . .

Linux and the Alchemists

◆ Not Everyone can live on a Laptop

◆ Where's my desktop ?
  ● Is it KDE, or Gnome ?
  ● If it's still there, is it a machine,
    . . . or a docking station ?

Vista

HARD LUCK AREA

◆ It won't go away

◆ It won't get faster

◆ Biggest hit to MS – ever !
  ● Image, tech rep, bottom line, marketing

◆ Consumers easier to quiet than Businesses

◆ At least the Ad wars are funny.
  ● Get a Big Mac for lunch and watch some.

Vista Evidence

DETOUR
FIND ANOTHER
WAY THERE

◆ Microsoft is moving beyond Vista to Windows 7. Windows Vista no longer matters. If it did:
- Enterprises would be buying it
- Consumers would be demanding it
- Microsoft wouldn't freak out about Apple's "Get a Mac" ads
- The hottest new computer category, netbooks, would ship with Vista
- Microsoft would be aggressively advertising Vista, instead of trying to bury the brand

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Vista Evidence

◆ Continued OEM sales of XP downgrade licenses
◆ The reported 10 percent enterprise adoption
◆ Apple's Mac market share gains
  [35 percent in U.S. retail revenue]

◆ Developers would be creating hunky Vista apps; instead, projects like Yahoo Messenger for Windows Vista are being abandoned

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Vista Evidence   {Joe Wilcox blog}

◆ **The vanishing license count.**
- Every quarterly earnings since Vista's release, Microsoft executives counted up the number of licenses shipped. There was near silence during last week's 2009 fiscal first-quarter earnings announcement. The number was 180 million three months earlier. It's now "What?" Microsoft's failure to toot "the number of Vista licenses" horn *means something*. Maybe the increase wasn't that great, or maybe Microsoft is moving beyond Vista. I say yes to both.

◆ **Windows client income down**.
- During the fiscal first quarter, the division's revenue grew a paltry 2 percent year over year, but income decreased by 4 percent. Microsoft has no tough year-ago comparison to account for the weak results. By comparison, Business division revenue and income were up 20 percent and 23 percent, respectively. Microsoft attributed year-over-year Windows client income declines to sales of lower-cost versions in emerging markets and on netbooks in mature markets. Considering that PC shipment growth was still strong during the quarter, Windows results forebodes Vista weakness.

◆ **Increasing netbook sales.**
- The product category is pure trouble for Microsoft because Windows Vista demands too much to adequately run on the hardware. So netbooks typically either ship with Linux or Windows XP Home. That netbook buyers would be satisfied with 7-year-old consumer XP is just about the only commentary necessary to understand Vista's market plight. According to Microsoft, netbooks added 8 percent growth to otherwise flat U.S. PC sales during the third calendar quarter. The category is hot, but Vista is not and couldn't be. Seven had better run well on netbooks and soon.

◆ **"Windows. Life Without Walls."**
- The marketing campaign should be called "Windows. Life Without Vista." If Vista is so successful, as Steve claims, then why isn't Microsoft advertising the software? Rather, Microsoft is trying to get away from Vista, abandoning a brand that it already invested tens of millions of dollars promoting. Its absent role at PDC says it all.

Vista Versions

Home Basic   Home Premium   Business   Ultimate

◆ Too many overpriced versions
◆ Base release discredited in many places
◆ Too much finger pointing - not enough fixing
◆ SP1 more stable [but]
◆ ALREADY an SP2 in build
◆ Best thing ever for XP and MACs
◆ XP Downgrade licensing extended thru 07 01 09

Vista problems

◆ REALLY SLOW

◆ Operation Hassles

◆ Missing drivers -- Broken drivers

◆ REALLY SLOW

◆ Learning Curve and "Difference" annoyances

◆ Trialware & Crapware

◆ REALLY SLOW

◆ And a few REAL bugs and vulnerabilities

Tweak Tools

My favorite XP tweak tools were

- XP-Anti Spy
- XTEQ X-Setup
- StartEd
- TWEAKUI

◆ These are the "standard" that vista tools must meet to get into my permanent toolkit.

Tweak Tools

◆ TweakUAC
  - this utility allows folks running under an Administrator-level profile to easily turn off UAC [User Account Control], turn it back on, or keep it running, but suppress the UAC elevation prompt requests.
◆ TweakVista
  - Stardock TweakVista is a utility that enables users to optimize the performance and behavior of Microsoft Windows Vista. Allows both casual, non-technical use as well as a host of advanced features for power users.

Tweak Tools

◆ Tweak VI
  - [freeware/$] - The basic version is free and additional feature "plugins" can be purchased. It's a nice business model. The Basic version allows you to tweak desktop items, Start menu items, IE, Firefox, hardware settings, system info, virtual desktops, subsystem folders, mousing, and shutdown options.
◆ Vispa
  - This tweak-tool uses a non-install executable and is a bare-bones Vista utility. Run it and you get a long list of check boxes organized by subjects. To apply a setting, activate the checkbox. Pro: simple interface. Con: simple interface. So unless you already know and understand the consequence of your choice, this might not be a utility for Vista noobies.

Tweak Tools

◆ VistaBootPRO.
- It provides a graphical front-end to Vista's command-line bcdedit.exe tool, which in turn accesses Vista's Boot Configuration Data store - the EFI-friendly replacement for XP's Boot.ini loader.

◆ VistaTweaker
- Straight-forward application with minimal eye-candy. Seven tabs filled with tweaking options to cover modifications to the System, Windows UI, Internet Explorer, Software, Network, Performance, and Miscellaneous settings. What makes this really nice is that the developer has taken the time to display "tweak-tip" descriptions for every tweak available. This can help you decide if this is what you really want to do or not.

Tweak Tools

◆ Windows Sidebar Styler [Freeware]
- Allows some easy fine-tuning of the Windows Sidebar and provides extensions to the Windows Sidebar in Vista. Supports custom styles for resizing and customizing how it integrates with other elements.

◆ Vista Manager 1.5.8
- All-in-One utility to optimize, tweak, clean up Windows Vista. It bundles more than 30 different utilities in one! Get access to hundreds of hidden options, clean registry and junk files, tune up Vista boot menu and many other utilities.

Vista tip sites

◆ WindowsSecrets.com
◆ theeldergeekvista.com
◆ Blackviper.com
◆ Speedyvista.com
◆ Techrepublic.com

◆ Tweakhound.com
◆ MajorGeeks.com
◆ Neowin.com
◆ Tweakvista.com
◆ PCMAC.Com
◆ MS Tech Net / VISTA

Vista Tweaks [BlackViper]

Number One: User Account Control
Number Two: System Restore and Indexing Features
Number Three: Windows Sidebar
Number Four: Remote Assistance and Remote Desktop
Number Five: Vista Aero [Themes]
Number Six: Updated Drivers
Number Seven: Lighten System Tray
Number Eight: Add/Remove Programs
Number Nine: Services

Vista tips & tweaks   TWEAKHOUND

◆ Tweaking Windows Vista - Article Menu
- Pre-SP1 Hotfixes
- Desktop, Start Menu, Taskbar, and Notification Area
- Visual Tweaks
- Drive & File System Tweaks
- Security Center & Other Security Related Tweaks
- The Page File, SuperFetch, and ReadyBoost
- Windows Vista Services Guide
- Vista Services Recommendations
- Internet & Networking Tweaks
- Clean, Defrag, & Optimize

Vista Tweaks (speedyvista)

◆ Performance
- Clean out unneeded Services quickly
- Find out what is Accessing your Drive
- Speed up Aero with No Transparency
- Speed up Aero by Disabling Animations
- Improve SATA Performance
- Tweak Indexing for Better Performance
- Allow file extensions included in search
- Aero Performance Settings Indexing Service

◆ Drivers
- See/remove drivers for unused devices
- Driver Verifier

◆ Security
- Turn off security center
- Turn off defender
- Password Backup

◆ General
- run cmd always as administrator
- smaller icons as they are huge
- Speed up Shutdown speed
- 'Open with notepad' as menu item
- Turn off Thumbnails
- Use ReadyBoost to Boost Performance

◆ Boot settings
- Boot Configuration
- Activation
- Extend activation time
- Non-Activated Accounts

◆ Automatic Backups
- System file checker
- Turn off Automatic backups
- Change Backup Size

THIS STUFF NEVER ENDS

But We'll stop now