

FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome to the latest issue of TechNet magazine. Before I introduce you to the articles in this edition, I would like to take this opportunity to say goodbye as I will shortly be leaving the magazine to take up a new role. I have been involved in the creation and delivery of both FYI and the TechNet magazines for nearly three years and I have enjoyed every moment of it so I will be sad to leave, however, I am very excited about my new challenge as Product Manager for TechNet Plus subscriptions. I leave the magazine in the very safe hands of Georgina Mitcham who many of you may recognise from the TechNet newsletter.

Windows Vista is going to be high on the agenda for many IT departments over the coming months. About 90 million new machines worldwide will come with Windows Vista installed this year, and by next year 80 percent of new machines being shipped to businesses will have Windows Vista preinstalled. For most IT Professionals, the big decision is whether it's time to deploy Windows Vista in your organisation. To help you in that decision, we're beginning a series taking an in-depth look at what makes Windows Vista tick – the kernel. The surface "Wow" factors of Windows Vista are great, but for IT Professionals, what's under the covers is more important. To cover the Windows Vista kernel, we welcome Mark Russinovich. Mark is probably best known for his book Windows Internals, which he co-authored with David Solomon.

While it's important to get to grips with the advantages of Windows Vista, you still need to keep all the other plates spinning. Our articles this month give lots of information on Windows® administration, with articles on Active Directory, Group Policy and Microsoft Operations Manager (MOM). We've also included a host of information about SharePoint and what's special about the latest release.

If you've ever wondered whether technologies such as wikis, blogs and instant messaging have a place in the corporate environment, don't miss Eileen Brown's article telling us how these technologies save her time in her role as Technical Evangelist here at Microsoft UK. Eileen will be known to many of you who have enjoyed her talks at the TechNet Roadshow, and she makes a convincing case.

As a parting note, I would just like to remind you that if you're looking to evaluate Windows Vista, the 2007 Microsoft Office system, Exchange Server 2007 and Windows Server 'Longhorn', they're available to download when you buy a TechNet Plus subscription. The price is £234 excl. VAT and if you sign up today, you'll receive 15 months for the price of 12. For more visit: www.microsoft.com/uk/technetplus

As always, your feedback is very welcome so please send it to me, csmyth@microsoft.com or Georgina, gmitcham@microsoft.com

Kind regards,

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TechNet

M A G A Z I N E

UK EDITION issue 4 April 2007

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PUBLISHED BY
Story Worldwide



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TechNet Magazine UK
Edition is
published for Microsoft Ltd
by Story Worldwide,
15b St George's Mews,
London NW1 8XE.
Telephone: 020 7449 1500
Editorial enquiries:
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Printed by Cooper Clegg

TECHNET Magazine UK
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Imagine Cup Innovation

NEWS

Student teams from six countries have been participating in an intensive technical and business training workshop to help them transform their software applications and ideas for solving a real-world problem into business reality.

The teams from Brazil, China, Croatia, Germany, Italy and Norway were the finalists in the 2006 Imagine Cup Software Design Competition

who had come up with technological solutions that “enable us to live healthier lives”. Now in its second year, the Imagine Cup Innovation Accelerator is a joint project from Microsoft and BT to foster student innovation and help the next generation of software developers transform their ideas for solving a real-world problem into solid business reality.

The students received in-depth training at the Microsoft Innovation Centre on the Microsoft and BT platforms and network assets, as well as coaching on running a startup business, developing a business plan and attracting venture capital.

Details of the 2007 Imagine Cup can be found at: <http://imaginecup.com>



Learning Gateway promotes language learning

A virtual learning platform to improve language learning has been pioneered by Microsoft in collaboration with the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), and European Governments. The interactive technology allows children and teachers across Europe to link up their classrooms. There are now 12 schools which have implemented the virtual learning platform allowing them to collaborate and share resources.

The Learning Gateway solution, developed by Microsoft and Enterprise MPC, equips schools with a ‘classroom Toolkit’ which allow schools to share files and educational applications. By enabling teachers and pupils to talk to each other online, it adds a new dimension to the teaching and learning of languages: www.enterprise-mpc.com/default.shtml

New Set of Tools for the education community at BETT

A set of educational tools that transform static educational content into engaging multimedia learning experiences was unveiled at BETT, the British Education and Training Technology Conference in January. The tools, codenamed “Grava”, have been developed by Microsoft’s Education Products Group, and are scheduled to be released in Autumn 2007. In addition to simple authoring tools and rich playback, the

product will include the ability to do assessments, log results and create intelligent learning solutions. Grava will give educators the means to create content specific to their curriculum, making it more relevant to the needs of individual learners and helps students to learn more effectively. Find out more about Grava at: <http://connect.microsoft.com/Grava>. For more about BETT visit: www.bettshow.com/

Microsoft extends Branch Office

In response to customer feedback, the branch office sales promotion has been extended to customers with a large number of remote branch sites. The Microsoft Branch Infrastructure Enterprise Solution promotion is a new promotional SKU for customers needing an enterprise-class solution for branch offices. A discount of up to 43 percent on a package that combines Microsoft’s

Windows-based server, security and management technologies is available until 31 January 2008. As an additional benefit to customers purchasing this, Packeteer is offering a 30 percent discount on its iShared FlexInstall wide area file services (WAFS) software product.

For more information on the Microsoft Branch Office solution: www.microsoft.com/uk/branchoffice

BETA Central

Microsoft TechNet Beta Central, the new testing and information platform for IT professionals, gives you:

- notification when beta software is available
- an opportunity to download and order beta software
- Beta updates via the TechNet Flash
- exclusive resources to help you evaluate

To find out more visit: www.microsoft.com/uk/betacentral/

Vanishing Point

To celebrate the consumer release of Windows Vista, Microsoft and AMD organised “Vanishing Point,” the largest puzzle game in the world. While many clues were shown online, parts of the puzzle were revealed in cryptic sky-writing messages and at live events with projections appearing on the Palace of Fine Arts Theatre in San Francisco, the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, the National Gallery in London, the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto and the Victoria Theatre in Singapore. Players worldwide competed for nearly a half-million dol-

lars in prizes with the top prize being a trip into space courtesy of Rocketplane. For the runners-up there were AMD-powered Dell Inspiron 1501 laptops loaded with Windows Vista Ultimate, devices including the Xbox 360™, copies of Windows Vista or Office Ultimate 2007 and games. For the duration, representatives were available to discuss the game and the role Microsoft, Windows Vista and AMD played in it.

For details of the winners and solutions visit: <http://vanishingpointgame.com/>

Business Intelligence Conference

Around 2,000 attendees are expected to attend Microsoft's first Business Intelligence (BI) Conference in Seattle on May 9–11, 2007. Combined with evening receptions and other networking opportunities, attendees will learn about customer and partner BI implementations, best practices and successes.

Executive keynote addresses for the conference include Jeff Raikes, president of the Microsoft Business Division, Ted Kummert, corporate vice president, Data and Storage Platforms Division, and Steve Ballmer. Two techni-

cal tracks are planned covering the BI platform, tools and performance management applications. A track for business decision-makers will explore the business and end-user value of BI, a partner-specific one will focus on selling, demonstrating, marketing and training and a customer track will be based on case studies.

An exhibit hall will showcase Microsoft partners and as part of the conference, Microsoft will present top BI customers with its first-ever Microsoft Business Intelligence awards.

For more information: www.microsoftbicconference.com

Windows Live OneCare

Windows Live OneCare™ is a service, launched alongside Windows Vista, that can be used to protect and maintain PCs with antivirus, firewall, anti-spyware, anti-phishing, PC performance tune-ups, and file backup and

restore functionality. The service provides subscribers with protection and maintenance for £37.99 (MSRP) per year for up to three computers.

<http://onecare.live.com/standard/en-gb/purchase/default.htm>

Creating a “Wow” at the British Library



Bill Gates at the launch of Windows Vista in the UK.

The British Library was the venue at which Bill Gates, founder and chairman of Microsoft, launched Windows Vista and the 2007 Microsoft Office system in the UK in an event designed to show how these two new products can be used in creative ways to bring literature and music, TV and movies, games and photography, and personal or work documents to life.

Bill Gates and Lynne Brindley, Chief Executive of the British Library, also announced the digital reunification of Leonardo da Vinci's two notebooks. Codex Arundel and Codex Leicester – owned by the British Library and by Bill Gates respectively – have been brought together for the first time since da Vinci's death in 1519, using the British Library's 'Turning The Pages 2.0' technology which runs on Windows Vista.

Also to celebrate the launch, Microsoft ran a “Wow” competition, prizes included a trip to the Hollywood premiere of Transformers, and a VIP concert with a top UK band.

You can try the Turning the Pages technology and view the books online at: www.bl.uk/ttp2/ttp2.html

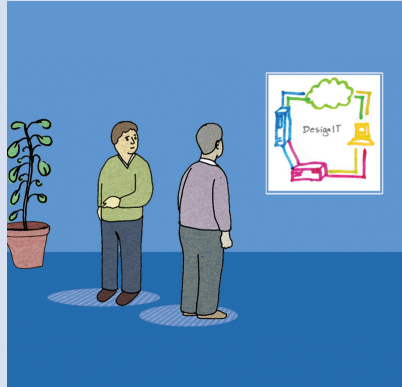
Update on DesignIT

DesignIT offers IT professionals the chance to design a system that will improve the IT infrastructure of a charity of their choice.

All entries for the 2007 competition are now in, and are being judged. Entrants were asked to work to a budget of £15,000 to include all software and hardware. A shortlist of ten finalists will have their system designs turned into artwork to be exhibited in a top London art gallery. The top five entries will then be put to the public vote to choose the overall winner.

The competition highlights 'problems looking for a solution' from three main charities – Leonard Cheshire, Global Action Plan and the NSPCC. Entrants could also work on a solution for a charity of their choice, so there are entries for charitable organisations ranging from the Scouting movement to Battersea Dogs Home.

The eventual winner will work with Microsoft Technical Evangelists to plan,



manage and deploy their winning system design. A maximum budget of £15,000 will be assigned to the implementation. In addition, the winner will receive a free ticket to IT Forum 2007 in Barcelona.

From 30 April to 11 May 2007 you can take part in the public vote on the DesignIT website at:

www.microsoft.com/uk/designit

An IT challenge for small businesses

Small business owners in the UK have made fundamental shifts in the way they use computers, yet many are still missing out on the full potential of IT, according to a YouGov survey commissioned by the British Chambers of Commerce and Microsoft. The results of the survey were unveiled at the UK launch of Windows Vista and the 2007 Microsoft Office system, held at the British Library.

IT is now a major element of business management, with 85 percent of respondents using IT for communication with customers and suppliers, and 82 percent having a Web presence. However, too much time still has to be spent looking for files and records, dealing with government red tape and fixing IT

problems associated with IT security and data storage, according to the survey respondents.

Scott Dodds, head of small and medium business, for Microsoft UK, commented: "With 74 percent of small businesses managing their IT without specialist help, they need computer systems that are easy to use and manage. It is encouraging to see that small businesses increasingly understand the value that IT can deliver. Now, we hope they will go one step further and explore how it can better support their business. We believe that Windows Vista and the 2007 Microsoft Office system will help small businesses focus on the issues that are most important to them." For more visit: <http://bcentral.co.uk>

Events

■ Olympia, London, April 24-26, 2007

InfoSecurity Europe 2007

Visit us at InfoSecurity Europe 2007 (Stand G120) to experience Microsoft Forefront™ security products for business, to discuss your security challenges with our experts and to learn more in our education sessions in the Pillar Room Forefront Security Academy
www.microsoft.com/uk/security/infosec2007/default.aspx

■ Manchester, 24 April

Introduction to SQL Server 2005 Reporting Services

■ Reading, 25 April

Planning and Deploying Sharepoint Server

■ Leeds, 01 May

An introduction and overview of Microsoft Licensing

■ Reading, 16 May

Overview of Exchange 2007

■ Manchester, 29 May

Windows Vista System Integrity Technologies

■ Reading, 25 May

Windows Vista UK TAP-RD Update Meeting for Customers and Partners

■ Reading, 31 May

Advanced SQL Server 2005 Reporting Services

For further details on all upcoming events over the next few months visit:

www.microsoft.com/uk/technet/training/default.aspx