Introduction

The purpose of this book is to provide you with information, tips, and tricks about using and transitioning to Windows Vista.

Although there are many other books published that discuss Windows Vista, most cover basic tasks (such as printing and opening documents) and are tailored toward those less experienced in computers. If you have experience with computers and Microsoft Windows, you'll find that this book offers better value. Basic tasks and information that you will probably figure out on your own are skipped in this book, and items that you typically wouldn't discover using your computing common sense and previous Windows experience are emphasized.

This book will help you analyze your PC and computer peripherals for their Vista readiness, and discuss upgrading components to achieve better performance. Also covered is how to back up or transfer your files and settings when upgrading a PC or when purchasing a new system. You'll also learn about the different editions of Windows Vista to find which will provide the best fit for your personal, family, or business needs.

After the preparations, you'll be stepped through the Windows installation, and then introduced to the redesigned and enhanced Vista interface and functionality. You'll also learn about the new Windows applications and features. Furthermore, you'll see how to change Vista back to the classic look and feel, find relocated items, and discover many tips and tricks, using simple step-by-step procedures and bullets.

Overall, this book will improve your entire Windows Vista experience!

What's in This Book

This book contains information and steps useful when transitioning to Windows Vista, whether you're upgrading a PC or purchasing a new system loaded with Vista.

Here's a chapter-by-chapter summary:

- **Chapter 1: Upgrading to Windows Vista** shows you how to check if your computer and peripherals are compatible with Windows Vista, and gives tips on common hardware upgrades you might perform and on transferring and backing up your data for the transition to Vista.

- **Chapter 2: Choosing and Installing a Windows Vista Version** helps you understand what each Vista edition provides and steps you through the installation and initial setup of Windows Vista.

- **Chapter 3: Introducing Windows Vista** shows you the new interface of Windows Vista and discusses the main features and applications.

- **Chapter 4: Changing the Look and Feel of Vista** shows step-by-step how to convert the new (and sometimes annoying) Vista desktop and interface to one you'll easily recognize.

- **Chapter 5: Finding Your Way Around in Vista** serves as a reference for finding settings, applications, and features in Vista that have been relocated, or moved from where they resided in Windows XP.

- **Chapter 6: Tips and Tricks** covers customization tasks and neat things to do in Windows Vista.

Who Can Use This Book

This book is intended for PC users, at homes and businesses, who are transitioning to Windows Vista.

This book is tailored toward those with moderate (or at least some) PC and Windows XP experience, such as being able to easily navigate to desired applications and files, perform various settings and preference changes, create shortcuts on the desktop, and uninstall software.

Although experience with Windows XP is suggested, others coming straight from Windows 98 can learn things from this book as well.

How to Use This Book

I hope that this book is easy enough to read that you don't need instructions. That said, there are a few elements that bear explaining.

First, there are several special elements in this book, presented in what we in the publishing business call "margin notes." There are different types of margin notes for different types of information, as you see here.

> **NOTE**
>
> This is a note that presents information of interest, even if it isn't wholly relevant to the discussion in the main text.

> **TIP**
>
> This is a tip that might prove useful for whatever it is you're in the process of doing.

> **CAUTION**
>
> This is a caution, warning you that something you might accidentally do could have undesirable results.

In the book, I give websites to visit (for example, www.microsoft.com) for more information on particular topics or to download something. When you see one of these addresses (also known as a URL), you can go to that web page by entering the URL into the Address bar in your web browser, such as Microsoft Internet Explorer. I've made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the web addresses presented here, but given the ever-changing nature of the web, don't be surprised if you run across an address or two that's changed. I apologize in advance.

Get Ready to Vista!

With all these preliminaries out of the way, it's now time to get started. Although I recommend reading the book in consecutive order, it isn't completely necessary. For example, you might want to skip the first two

chapters if you already have Windows Vista installed; or, you might decide that you like Vista's new look, and, therefore, pass by Chapter 4.

So, get ready to turn the page and learn more about Windows Vista. I know you'll discover some neat features and take away loads of information that will improve your Vista experience!