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DISABLING VISTA WINDOWS MEDIA PLAYER COSTS

Do not remove or disable the Windows Media Player in Vista or you will remove the ability to block USB thumb/flash drives from accessing your system.

Andrew Garcia, "Vista Leaves Some out in Cold," *eWeek*, April 23, 2007, p. 33, says, "The ability to block read/write access to removable storage devices [USB devices] via Group Policy depends on the presence of the Portable Device Enumerator Service.

"Unfortunately, the Portable Device Enumerator Service comes with Windows Media Player rather than with the base Vista operating system, so the (European) N versions of Vista won't get the feature without installing the Windows Media Player.

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WAIT TO BUY NOTEBOOK PC

Walter S. Mossberg, who writes for the *Wall Street Journal*, recommends waiting until later this year or early in 2008 to buy a laptop

< <http://walt.allthingsd.com/guide> >. New hardware features coming include:

- ✪ “Solidstate drive,” or SSD, which replaces the traditional hard disk with a faster drive made of memory chips like those used in digital cameras.
- ✪ “Hybrid hard drive,” or HHD, which combines memory chips with a standard hard disk, for faster start-ups.
- ✪ Lightemitting diodes, or LEDs, to light up laptop screens, both brighter and less power-hungry.
- ✪ The new N Wi-Fi wireless networking which promises to be faster and to have longer range.
- ✪ For Windows Vista users, a new laptop feature coming soon is a small screen on the lid called a SideShow, which displays calendar appointments and new emails.
- ✪ Battery life, weight and size remain crucial on laptops. Look for laptops that get three hours on a single charge and 13.3" screens which offer advantages worth the cost.

VERIZON BILL INCREASING

Parker Monroe, GTBPCUG, May 8, 2007

If you haven't read some of the fine print in your latest Verizon telephone bill recently, you may be surprised to see a “Notice of Price Increase” in connection with long distance charges.

As you may recall, a while ago Verizon started charging a minimum fee of \$2-per-month-per-phone-line, for long distance calling. If one spent more than that, then the minimum was thereby covered. But if one didn't make at least \$2 worth of long distance calls that month on each phone line, then the difference would be charged to your bill, plus applicable taxes.

Since many of us also have cell phones, and some may prefer to make long distance calls using cell phones, it is entirely possible to be paying Verizon \$2-per-month-per-phone-line for a service one is not using.

Now, in my latest Verizon phone bill, I just happened to notice that effective June 1, that minimum is going to be doubled to \$4-per-month-per-phone-line.

TOP 10 VISTA HACKS

PC World magazine offers 10 ways to “let you do everything from speed up Windows Aero to unlock a super-secret administrator’s account and juice up the right-click context menu — and yes, even hack the dreaded User Account Control.” [Click here](#).

WHEN HDTV IS NOT HDTV

Darry D Eggleston

[Wikipedia](#) says, “High-definition television (HDTV) is a digital television broadcasting system with a significantly higher resolution than traditional formats (NTSC, SECAM, PAL)...”

“Current HDTV standards are defined by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU-R BT. 709) as 1080 active interlace or progressive scan lines, or 720 progressive scan lines, using a 16:9 aspect ratio. All current HDTV broadcasting standards are encompassed within the DVB specification.

“HDTV is also capable of “theater-quality” audio because it uses the Dolby Digital (AC-3) format to support “5.1” surround sound.”

[Alex Scoble](#) points out, “Samsung wishes to play fast and loose with what is HD TV by calling a 4:3 format (non-widescreen) set HD TV, simply because it has better than 720 lines of resolution and can display HD signals. Sorry Samsung, but you are missing the critical part of HD, which is the 16:9 or widescreen bit. Without being widescreen, it isn’t HD and you are falsely advertising your TV, that is patently NOT High Definition, based on the industry’s definition!”

My caution to all of you is: Do the research. Do not listen to some smart-mouthed sales clerk or even the published propaganda of the manufacturer. Use [Google](#), visit the library, ask your friends.

Just because the jargon is flung before you, do not believe the words until the definitions support what they are saying.

MICROSOFT COUNTERS “ONE LAPTOP PER CHILD”

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In an article in *Information Week* <“A Calculated Move,” [Information Week](#), April 23, 2007, p. 25 >, it was revealed that Microsoft is offering governments in developing countries will pay only \$3 for Windows and Office if they buy the software to put on computers they give to children.

“Microsoft said it wants to see the number of PCs in the world double to 2 billion by 2015. Of course, Microsoft wants them all to run Windows. So it’s a shrewd move to get its software to the world’s poor at a young age. These are people who’d otherwise not have a computer or, if they did, would be more likely to use pirated software.

“The program stands alongside the One Laptop Per Child project and Intel’s \$1 billion, five-year World Ahead Program.”

VISTA SERVICE PACK COMING

According to *Information Week* (April 23, 2007, p. 26), Microsoft says that the first Windows Vista service pack is scheduled for October or November.