

## the newsletter of Tarragon Solutions

### Tarragon Solutions

#### Head Office

First Floor  
Victor House  
Barnet Road  
London Colney  
AL2 1BJ

#### Accounts

Accounts Dept  
Tarragon Solutions Ltd  
PO Box 528  
Huntingdon  
PE29 9AQ

#### Phone:

0800 0199 925

#### Fax:

0845 1305 807

#### E-mail:

info@tarragon.co.uk

#### Web:

www.tarragon.co.uk

### Solutions!

#### Editor:

Steve Booth

#### Email:

solutions@  
tarragon.co.uk

## Firstly, Happy New Year to you all!

2009 promises to be an interesting year, with plenty of obstacles in the way of a smooth twelve months. Whether those in power, in Great Britain and elsewhere, have chosen the right 'solutions' to see us through remains to be seen but, with good business practice, and some luck, hopefully we'll all make it to the better times without too much pain.



## Windows 7 – first impressions...

### ...and they're not bad ones!

On January 9<sup>th</sup>, Microsoft released the first beta version of Windows 7, the replacement for the somewhat less than successful Windows Vista. I have installed a copy and, next month, I hope to give you some detailed comments on 7's enhancements, usability and performance.

Right now, my initial impression is that Windows 7 will be much more successful, in the business arena, than Vista ever managed to be. The reason is simple – it isn't the bloatware that Vista became.

In order to run Vista successfully, most companies needed to upgrade the memory on their PCs to at least 2 Gigabytes, probably upgrade the graphics processor and, possibly, the main processor as well. The advantages, over Windows XP, that Vista introduced were greatly outweighed by the hardware upgrade headache – so most companies have stayed with Windows XP.

I have a spare seven-year-old Dell workstation with a 1.8GHz processor and just 1GB of memory; it worked fine with XP but was totally unsuitable for Vista. I took a chance and installed the Windows 7 Beta on this PC and have been pleasantly surprised.

The install was straightforward, did not require much intervention and took only a few minutes. Improvements to the networking setup meant that it was connected up very quickly and easily and, even on my venerable Dell, the performance was snappy and quite un-Vista like! Windows 7 *did* comment on the poor performance of the ancient graphics card but, as I don't use the PC for gaming or fancy graphical work, I haven't yet seen any actual problems with it.

Windows Vista did introduce many good features and improvements but, as already stated, the hardware demands negated these advantages. With Windows 7, Microsoft appear to have set out to re-engineer the software, to leave the features but take away the swelling. Maybe this time they have got it right.

## Psssst!... wanna make it last longer?

Your laptop battery, of course. With more people using a laptop as they travel around, we're frequently asked why, when the advertising says "battery life up to 5 hours" they seem to last only about an hour or so before giving up. The answer is, of course, "5 hours under ideal conditions" and it's the manufacturer that defines "ideal". However, here are some tips to help you extend the life of your battery, both in terms of between charges and overall longevity.

- When you get a new laptop, fully charge the battery then use the laptop until the battery is completely empty. Repeat this at least one more time; "conditioning" the battery in this way will increase both its ability to hold a charge and its overall life.
- Always recharge the battery (and preferably use the laptop) at room temperature as extremes of temperature can have a detrimental effect on the battery's capacity.
- Reduce the brightness of the screen if possible.
- If you're not using a wireless network then switch off the WiFi card and software otherwise it continues to drain the battery unnecessarily.
- Similarly, switch off other devices (e.g. DVD player) and programs if you can.
- Use your laptop's power optimization software (ask us if you need help)
- If mains power is available, use it!

### Could Government anti-crime software endanger your PC?

As part of its ongoing drive to use technology to combat crime and terrorism, the Government intends to allow the Police to remotely and secretly install key-logging software on the PCs of suspects. The software would collect information about a suspect's computer activity and, at some point, transmit the information back to the Intelligence Officers for analysis. Deployment of the software would not require a warrant, nor would it be under the control of the Courts; the intention is that a senior Police Officer would have the power to approve installation.

Of course, anti-virus software will endeavour to protect PCs, even those of arch-criminals, from such intrusion so the Government wishes providers of anti-virus software to permit state sponsored key-loggers to be installed without let or hindrance.

However, several of the major players have already stated their intention not to comply and for a very good reason. Quite apart from the privacy aspect, they argue that it would take only one criminal to detect and isolate the software on his PC and he then has a perfect tool, guaranteed to bypass all anti-virus protection, that can be used for fraud and identity theft.

It is expected that a major Parliamentary battle will ensue over these plans, even greater than with previous "anti-terrorism" legislation.

### Tip of the Month - Finding a Line Break in Excel

Ever wondered how to search for Line Break in a set of Excel cells?

It is a little-known fact that, in the Find box of Excel's Find and Replace, you can enter the ASCII code of any character by holding down the Alt key and entering the code using the numeric keypad.

The ASCII code for a Line Break is 10 so, to search...

Open up the Find and Replace box by using **Ctrl+F**

Press the **Num Lock** key until the NumLock light is on!

In the *Find What* box, type **0010** using the numeric keypad\* whilst pressing the **Alt** key

Click on **Find Next**

You can, of course, use Replace in a similar manner.

\* for reasons I won't go into here, you need to prefix the 10 with 00. However, if you really want to know why, drop an email to [solutions@tarragon.co.uk](mailto:solutions@tarragon.co.uk)!

Please let us know what you think of [Solutions!](#) - email [solutions@tarragon.co.uk](mailto:solutions@tarragon.co.uk)