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## Harris Poll: Users balk at Vista upgrade

Gregg Keizer

**April 05, 2007** () Microsoft Corp. did a great job getting out the word about Windows Vista, a Harris Poll published yesterday said. But the marketing blitz hasn't generated big sales.

According to an online survey conducted by Harris Interactive, 87% of the 2,200 American adults polled said they were aware of Vista. The overwhelming majority of those people admitted to knowing "a little" about the new OS.

But apparently knowing does not mean buying. In December 2006, 20% of respondents said they were planning to upgrade to Vista; by mid-March, six weeks after Vista's retail rollout, 12% said they would migrate in the next 12 months.

More of those planning to move to Vista in the coming year will upgrade their existing computer than buy a new PC with the operating system pre-installed, said the survey. March's results differed slightly from December, in that more -- 48% compared with 39% -- said they would upgrade what they have, while fewer -- 31% versus 35% -- planned to buy new hardware to get Vista.

As of March 6-14, when Harris conducted the poll, Vista accounted for just 3% of the operating systems installed on the respondents' primary home computers, the same percentage as the often-reviled Windows Me. Leading the pack by a huge margin was Windows XP, with 79%; Apple Inc.'s Mac OS X, meanwhile, accounted for 5%, the same as Microsoft's Windows 98.

The one bright spot for Microsoft and its OEM partners is that 1 in 5 of those polled said that Vista has persuaded them to buy their next computer earlier than they had originally planned.

In other words, Microsoft has its work cut out for it. "Microsoft will have to put forth a value proposition that will move the majority to the upgrade category in the years ahead," said Milton Ellis, vice president of Harris' technology group. "Microsoft has faced this challenge before with operating system upgrades. Consumers tend to wait until a few service packs have been released to fix real or perceived problems."

Although Microsoft has touted sales of [20 million copies of Vista](#), analysts have pointed out that the company counts those that have been shipped to retailers but not sold, or sold to OEMs but not installed on PCs or installed on PCs still in inventory.

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