

Microsoft's Support for 32-bit Alpha-based Products

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On August 23, 1999 Compaq announced it would end systems-development for the 32-bit Windows NT® operating system on the Alpha platform, with the release of Windows NT 4.0 Service Pack 6, scheduled for late 1999. Compaq also announced that it does not plan to support the 32-bit Windows® 2000 operating system on Alpha systems.

Microsoft would like to reassure customers that we will continue to provide service pack and QFE (Quick Fix Engineering) support for Windows NT and BackOffice® 32-bit Alpha products. Microsoft will, however, reduce engineering support for future 32-bit Alpha products across its existing product line.

Continued support for existing 32-bit Windows NT Alpha customers

Microsoft is committed to continuing support for existing 32-bit Alpha customers. Our plan is to provide updates or QFEs, and service packs for our Windows NT Workstation 4.0 and Windows NT Server 4.0 products, as well as other existing 32-bit Alpha-based products such as SQL Server™ and Exchange Server. These service packs and QFEs will be developed and released with x86 releases as needed by our customers, beginning with Windows NT 4.0 Service Pack 6.

No future releases of Microsoft products on 32-bit Alpha platform


There will be no future releases of Microsoft products for the 32-bit Alpha platform. This means there will not be 32-bit Alpha versions of Windows 2000, beginning with Release Candidate 2, nor will there be new 32-bit Alpha releases of SQL Server, Exchange, or other 32-bit Alpha BackOffice products.

Future plans for 64-bit versions of Microsoft products

This announcement does not currently affect our plans to develop and support 64-bit versions of our products on the Alpha platform. Compaq, as well as our other OEM partners, will continue to work with us to deliver a 64-bit version of Windows for our enterprise customers.

Background

Microsoft and Compaq continue to have a strong partnership and are committed to addressing their mutual customer needs. For example, on August 17, 1999, Microsoft and Compaq highlighted the scalability and price/performance of Windows NT Server 4.0 Enterprise Edition on the newest Compaq x86 8-way Proliant systems. Because of strong customer demand and breakthroughs on the x86 systems, Compaq has decided to streamline its development efforts to provide the highest quality systems.

This reflects the progress Windows NT 4.0 has made on standard x86 Symmetric Multi-Processor (SMP) systems. With the incredible advancements with 8-way TPC results, Compaq's 8-way systems now offer performance benchmarks that were once only possible on Alpha systems. For example, according to the latest statistics at the [Transaction Processing Performance Council](#) , Windows NT 4.0 x86 2-way, 4-way, and 8-way systems all outperform and achieve significantly better price/performance than similar machines running Tru64 on Alpha.