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Windows 2000 brings compelling new capabilities to Middle East computer users

النسخة العربية

Tightly integrated support for Internet technologies, enterprise class reliability, scalability and manageability combine in new generation, multilingual operating system from Microsoft

17th February 2000

Dubai

Microsoft today announces the launch of Microsoft Windows 2000, the most advanced computer operating system the company has ever produced, with a global rollout of launch events. The Middle East launch of Windows 2000, taking place today at the Dubai World Trade Centre, is set to see over 1,000 computer professionals, business leaders, decision makers, students and IT industry leaders gathering at the largest and most widely supported information technology industry event ever in the region. "We are delighted at the response to the launch, and have hit a record for registrations to any Microsoft event in this region," said Etienne Jacques, sales director of Microsoft GEM. "I have to admit, this is going to be a hard act to follow!"

Nine major regional information technology leaders are supporting the launch event: ABS/BaaN, Acer, Cisco, Compaq, Hewlett Packard, IBM, Intel, New Horizons and Unisys. In total, over 50 local, regional and global IT companies will be present at the launch in Dubai. Thousands of visitors are expected to the 11-hour long event. "We've put a lot of effort into ensuring that the promotional campaign around this launch reaches the people who will benefit from Windows 2000. The launch will give them a great opportunity to see just how Windows 2000 will deliver that benefit," commented Haider Salloum, Microsoft GEM business systems division product manager.

The new operating system offers major advantages to users in terms of scalability, reliability, Internet-integration, security and multilingual capabilities. "It's the ideal e-commerce platform, it's the ideal business internet platform," said Salloum. "This is a piece of software which is set to produce revolutionary change in the way people are able to do business."

Windows 2000 has been met with rave reviews from many key pundits and publications, including respected IT industry-watching website ZDNet: reviewer Ed Bott reports that "If you upgrade to Windows 2000, you'll have plenty to smile about. The improvements are profound and immediately noticeable," and goes on to say that "For starters, Windows 2000 is practically crash-proof."

Microsoft, in conjunction with independent third parties, has conducted Rapid Economic Justification (REJ) and Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) analyses of the environments of five key enterprise customer who are working on Windows 2000 deployment. The studies, conducted by Microsoft partners and audited by Giga group and Gartner Group, conclude that Windows 2000 will have a significant impact on the business value customers receive with the forthcoming operating system. Specifically, of the five key customers, US media buying and

planning agency WfofR will experience a 280% return on investment over three years; multinational electronics company Panasonic expects a 22% decrease in desktop TCO with Windows 2000; defence contractor United Defense predicts a 52% reduction in downtime; and retailer Marks & Spencer anticipate saving millions of dollars in inventory efficiencies.

"These results clearly show that there are very major benefits to customers deploying the Windows 2000 platform, and there are now several key enterprise companies in this region who are already moving to the new operating environment," said Salloum. "One of the key things we will be sharing with people at the launch event will be the many benefits of this nature which they can expect to achieve."

At the time of launch, some 3,100 companies were producing software applications which were compatible with Windows 2000 and a total of over 8,000 applications are available to users today. A large number of peripheral devices were also confirmed as supported by Windows 2000 by launch day: over 2,000 different printers are supported by the platform. "We've aimed at compatibility and stability with Windows 2000, and we've set some tough benchmarks for stability. Before, with other versions of Windows, third party applications such as printer drivers could cause problems with the operating system, leading to crashes. Today we are certifying applications and device drivers for Windows 2000 so that customers know they can enjoy a totally stable computing environment," said Salloum.



Microsoft GEM managers - Rajesh Deepchandini, technical account manager, ISS; Derek Kerr, community development manager, John Fernandez, consumer group manager & Shivas Lambada, technical specialist



Microsoft GEM managers - Haider Saloum, business systems division product manager & Murad Lakhdir, product marketing manager

About Microsoft Corporation.

Founded in 1975, Microsoft (NASDAQ "MSFT") is the worldwide leader in software for personal computers. The company offers a wide range of products and services for business and personal use, each designed with the mission of making it easier and more enjoyable for people to take advantage of the full power of personal computing every day.

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Microsoft opened its Dubai-based Middle East headquarters office in 1991, since then subsidiaries have opened in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Microsoft GEM is responsible for the company's business in Pakistan, Oman, the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Lebanon, Jordan, Cyprus and Malta. In 1999, Microsoft opened offices in Lebanon and Kuwait and announced it would soon open new offices in Pakistan.

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