

# 64-bit Computing needed on the Desktop

Robert L Gallick

March 27, 2009

To overcome the memory barrier of the current computing platforms, we need 64-bit computing on the desktop. But one of the biggest problems is all of my applications are 32-bit. It is reported that Microsoft Office 11 will ship in a 64-bit version in about a year. As a user, what I would like to see is a single offering with both a 32-bit version and a 64-bit version media in the same box. The same should apply to any new OS offerings. My analogy is it should be like buying a movie and having both letter-box and wide-format both on the same media.

Perhaps I try to do too many things at once. But as a user, I find that I have a need to have many applications and windows open at any one time. Some of this is a symptom of the applications that I am using don't individually offer enough functionality and it forces me to use a number of applications to accomplish a single task. When working on web sites, I often find I have numerous applications open including Adobe Dreamweaver, Adobe Photoshop, sometimes Adobe Fireworks or Adobe Illustrator, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Outlook, Microsoft Visio, Microsoft Office Picture Viewer and one of the biggest memory pigs of all - Microsoft OneNote. Along with those applications, I often have a dozen browser windows open including Internet Explorer, Safari, and Firefox – and yes sometimes Google Chrome. And of course I have iTunes running and sometimes an instance of a text editor will be open as well. To do screen captures, I use SnagIt running along with the SnagIt Editor - which is a great tool. And, it doesn't help the situation when I plug my DSLR camera in and import literally hundreds of 14 megapixel images to edit and preview. Well you can blame it on me – “the user”, blame it on the applications, or blame it on the OS, but at some point, things just stop working. My dual core Intel system with 4GB of RAM just comes to a crawl. The system apparently goes into a swap mode and it doesn't do it very effectively. I often find myself in applications such as Dreamweaver wanting to do a simple copy and paste operation. Well I try to do a paste but nothing happens. I then will do a right mouse click and nothing happens. Applications just stop working. And, I find that the only way to get things to start working again is to start closing down some of the applications and windows that are open. Once I do that, things magically start working again. Well, most of the time anyway. There are those pesky “application not responding” messages in the task manager and the resultant error messages asking to send information to Microsoft. That has become a daily experience for me. But beyond the frustrating user experience, I can't help to believe that if I had 16GB of RAM or even 64GB of RAM useable by the OS and the applications, a lot of the problems would disappear.

I hope we see a bigger push for 64-bit computing in the near future. And, I really like the idea of vendors offering both 32-bit and 64-bit versions of their products for one price.

Microsoft, Office, Outlook, Visio, and OneNote are trademarks of Microsoft Corporation, Adobe, Illustrator, Fireworks, and Dreamweaver are trademarks of Adobe Systems Inc., SnagIt is a trademark of TechSmith Corporation, Chrome is trademark of Google Inc. Intel is a trademark of Intel Corporation.