



## Vista: a supermodel?

I have lived with new Vista for two months now: she is shiny, glossy and high maintenance. Unlike a supermodel she is greedy and has eaten up all my RAM and got sluggish. And money, whatever you do, don't mention MONEY.



Specifically Microsoft Money 2003. Vista stole my Money and made off with it in a frivolous and time consuming fashion. Time, as Bill Gates will most likely tell you, is money.

Unlike Vista, I am not a supermodel. I have a fledgling Ltd company that needs energy, love and dedication to build up. Although I am a company director (which looks good on the cards), I am also my PA, coffee maker, accounts clerk and cleaner. I would also be the fork lift truck driver, if my company needed a fork lift truck. I am quite often not glamorous and, at the moment, low maintenance. Budget cup of tea anyone?

So call me picky, but when I spend all morning doing my accounts with Microsoft Money it is a: SCARY and b: INFURIATING to find that Visa destroyed every bit of data inputting that I entered during a long morning going through my accounts. Feverishly I re open an account list and re enter one or two details. I close Money, I open Money, the new details have disappeared and my accounts are ruined. Not only that, the details I put in a month earlier are also lost. An invisible taxman looms over my shoulder. My accounts are not up to scratch and a long stretch in prison looks likely. Dear Lord. I swig some of the own brand tea and consider what to do. I know Vista is behind this somehow. But at the moment she is lounging around on the desktop looking quite pretty and somehow innocent, although a little slow. Dumb blonde really - *I'm not a bad girl, I'm just programmed this way.*

I enter the internet and type in **problem with Vista and Microsoft Money**. Oh yes, clearly other people are suffering. *I fail to understand*, said one bloggette somewhat plaintively *why Microsoft programs don't work with Vista. Surely, they could get that right?*

*Listen, sweetie, an unseen Philip Marlow, typed laconically in return across (what I believe) is the smoke laden room that is the internet, Microsoft is Microsoft, expect nothing and you won't be disappointed. You are in Windows territory now...'*

Next, PM turned avuncular: *try turning UAC off* and then disappeared.

**Hmmm...** I mused. The bloggette had reported a problem quite dissimilar to my disappearing data and yet my dear Watson...it would make sense wouldn't it if the UAC had prevented Microsoft Money writing my changes to its database?

But my poor Watson, it's not elementary at all. What is UAC and why should it devastate my accounts in this dastardly fashion?

The **User Account Control** is a security feature beloved of my simple Vista. Simply, you log in with your user account, normally with administrator settings. With XP logging in with an administrator account was enough to give you total control over your computer. You could, without more ado, install, uninstall, download and do what you would without let or hindrance. This was lovely for the user (me) but not so good if you managed to download a malicious piece of software. Having landed on a computer with full administrative privileges, the software could install itself and carry out whatever ill-intentioned plans its programmer designed.

Pretty Vista came up with a blinging new security feature. Every time you – as an administrator remember- want to install anything, a control panel feature pops up and asks you if you are sure you really want to do this. (A Microsoft clone of Harry Enfield if you like).

I can't tell you how annoying I have found this in every day use, as I haven't once been interrupted by spy or malware trying to install itself by stealth. In the course of my work I have to download and test various programs and every step of the way I have to over-ride the UAC function. Yes, I really am grown up and I really want to install this program.

What I hadn't realised was that the UAC feature viewed my Microsoft money with deep suspicion. So when I opened the database, updated my accounts and then closed them the UAC saw this as suspicious and probably anti-American activity. Without prompting me or alerting me in *anyway* it simply prevented my changes from being written to the database. How safe and secure and *completely* infuriating.

So I have turned UAC off (Start, Control Panel, User Accounts) and guess what? My life is transformed as far as Vista is concerned. My Money is back and behaving itself. It no longer freezes and takes forever to open. And the best thing that I have back on my computer – yes its Comodo BOCLEAN. This is a free and effective anti-spyware anti-malware program.

BOCLEAN sat on my task bar in a sulk since Vista was installed. Every time it tried to download latest updates from the Comodo site, I would receive a message saying the Vista Firewall would not allow it access. I have spent hours configuring the firewall trying to get it to allow BOCLEAN access and to no avail. Having switched off UAC, I now have a fully functional anti-malware package on my laptop. It doesn't interfere with other legitimate software and quietly gets on with its job of protecting me, VISTA take note.

During the Vista upgrade, Microsoft announced that *Time is Precious* and promised that Vista would restore my time to me. Alas my Vista, I know her well, and she has given me neither measures nor money.

This has not been a happy upgrade. I can understand difficulties with drivers and hardware issues as Microsoft can't program for all eventualities. The struggle with Microsoft Money has been an unexpected and difficult business issue. Although I am an IT consultant and expect to work through software issues, this problem seriously impacted the smooth running of my business.

If I could turn back the clock, I would not upgrade my laptop again. I would buy Vista on a new machine with new Microsoft software, Office and Money designed for Vista, fairly confident that they would work together.

However, having putting up with diva Upgrade Vista's behaviour, I feel exhausted. It has been an ongoing battle as the most unlikely programs crawled or froze. I would now use Open Source products on my next new computer and keep this laptop for teaching purposes only.

If you, dear reader, are happy with XP there is no pressing need to upgrade. Supermodels and mortals just don't work the same way.

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*I'm lucky because I can maybe work one or two days a week and stagger my schedule.*  
Cindy Crawford.