

CompUSA Closures Mean Vista Fire Sales

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Local CompUSA closures are producing some fire sales on Microsoft Vista and other Microsoft software.

If my local store is typical, going-out-of-business CompUSAs are having one helluva Vista fire sale. The deep discount raises good questions about what people should pay - and we'd like you tell us (and Microsoft) what that price should be.

The shelves are starting to look pretty bare at the local CompUSA, where discounts range from 10 percent to 40 percent. Notebooks are holding at 10 percent off, while Zune gear and some digital cameras are discounted 30 percent.

The big deal is on Windows Vista, which the soon-to-close CompUSA has discounted by 40 percent. Other Microsoft software is discounted just 30 percent.

Impressive deals:

- * Vista Home Basic Upgrade just \$59.99 instead of \$99.99

- * Vista Home Premium Upgrade just \$99.99 instead of \$159.99

The discounts mean that some closing CompUSAs are selling the full-version Vista Premium for less than what many other retailers charge for the upgrade. For example, Amazon asks \$145.99 for the Premium upgrade version.

What a deal. But who's buying? I spent about 30 minutes observing and then later asked. The 40 percent sale isn't drawing a whole lot of customers, although a salesperson indicated that most customer interest was in Windows Vista Ultimate—and there weren't many copies left.

But the store had scads of Windows Basic (aka Home Basic) upgrades, which just weren't moving very fast, even at \$59.95.

For anyone living near one of these closing stores and wanting Vista, these are big discounts.

My question for Microsoft Watch readers is, What would you pay for Vista?

If you would take the 40 percent deal, please tell us why and which version. Other readers, please explain what price for which version, from any retailer, would be enough to convince you to make the upgrade. And, everyone, please tell us what you think is a fair price—whether Microsoft's list price or something else—for Windows Vista by version.

Please feel free to comment to this post or drop us a line via the Microsoft Watch Tips box.

By the way, I captured these images with my camera phone, which explains why they aren't studio-quality.

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