



EMBROIDERY Office 8



Embroidery Office® 8 and Windows® Vista®

About this document

This document was prepared to inform users and potential users of Embroidery Office 8 about the results of testing performed by Sierra Technology Group regarding functionality of Embroidery Office 8 products running on Windows Vista.

The observations expressed herein do not substitute, complement, or otherwise modify the terms of the Limited Warranty as mentioned in the License Contract accompanying the product.

Software and hardware used during testing

Testing was performed on the following product:

- Embroidery Office 8 - Version 8.10

Running in these Operating Systems:

- Windows Vista Home Premium – Version 6.0 (Build 6000)
- Windows Vista Business – Version 6.0 (Build 6000)
- Windows Vista Ultimate – Version 6.0 (Build 6000)

Computer specifications used during testing

The most important specifications of the computers utilized for testing were:

Computer 1

Intel® Pentium® IV Processor, 1.7 GHz

1 GB RAM

Nvidia GeForce 6200 video card, w/ drivers ForceWare 100.54 (released January 30, 2007 - Beta)

Computer 2

Intel® Pentium® Dual Core Processor, 1.7 GHz

1 GB RAM

Nvidia GeForce 6200 video card, w/ drivers ForceWare 100.54 (released January 30, 2007 - Beta)

Computer 3

Intel® Pentium® Dual Core Processor, 1.7 GHz

1 GB RAM

ATI Radeon X1650 PRO video card, w/ drivers Catalyst Software Suite 7.1 (released January 29, 2007)

Things to consider when running Embroidery Office 8 on Windows Vista

User Account Control - UAC

UAC is a Windows Vista feature that helps prevent unauthorized changes on a computer, by way of requesting an administrator password or permission from the user before carrying out any action that may affect the functionality of the system, or otherwise alter configurations affecting other users on the same system. This is intended to prevent “malware” or “spyware” from being installed or executed on the system without knowledge from the user.

This very same security aspect however also prevents access to certain folders and system resources altogether, causing some legitimate applications to function incorrectly or not function at all in such protected environment.

To run Embroidery Office 8 on Windows Vista, the user must have an administrator account and must also turn off the UAC feature.

The online help available in Vista offers information on how to deactivate the UAC feature (Control Panel >> User Accounts).

Video

The video subsystem is where Windows Vista introduces its most important changes, starting with Aero (the codename for the User Interface in Vista). Features like the transparency mode in Aero and a new method for handling graphics require a heavier, more intense use of the video subsystem than previous Operating Systems ever did.

Taken from Nvidia's web site (www.nvidia.com):

Your graphics card is probably the most important upgrade you can make in a computer that's less than four years old. That's because Vista's Aero interface draws heavily upon the graphics card. Not having enough graphics card memory will not allow you to experience Vista as it is intended to be used. -Playfuls.com

January 12, 2007

Taken from Nvidia's web site, in reference to Intel's web site (www.nvidia.com):

In some PC's, especially if limited by integrated graphics, some games and applications perform poorly or won't run at all.

Taken from Microsoft's web site (www.microsoft.com/windowsvista/getready/capable.mspx)

A new PC running Windows XP that carries the Windows Vista Capable PC logo can run Windows Vista. All editions of Windows Vista will deliver core experiences such as innovations in organizing and finding information, security, and reliability. All Windows Vista Capable PCs will run these core experiences at a minimum. Some features available in the premium editions of Windows Vista—like the new Windows Aero user experience—may require advanced or additional hardware.

Basically, Windows Vista defines a new standard for video controllers (WDDM Windows Display Driver Model), therefore video controllers from Windows XP cannot be used on this new Operating System.

Even though Windows Vista does include a video controller that is compatible with the main video chipsets, the manufacturers of those video chipsets only offer basic functionality, producing results for an acceptable user experience in Windows Vista, however they stop short of taking full advantage of the more advanced features present in video hardware, i.e. Open GL acceleration.

Manufacturers of the main video chipsets (Intel, ATI, Nvidia, etc.) have now produced a new series of video controllers that are compatible with Windows Vista, and release by release, they are slowly making available the advanced video hardware features to the applications running on Vista.

Unfortunately, as of this document's release date, those Vista-compatible controllers put out by the main manufacturers are only available for the latest generation of video chipsets. What this means is that whichever video hardware features are currently available for many applications running on Windows XP, will probably not be available for the same applications running on Windows Vista.

Embroidery Office products in particular, since the version 6 days, have been making use of some of these advanced video hardware features, especially Open GL acceleration and DirectX, allowing for a more natural, comfortable and appealing display of designs (transparency mode, antialias, etc).

The video features required for such results however, while present in the majority of today's video hardware and available for Windows XP, are either not present on the video controllers currently available for Windows Vista, or have considerable performance issues.

It is for this very reason that the performance of visual / display features of Embroidery Office products running on Windows Vista will very likely be adversely affected when compared to the same scenario under a Windows XP environment. Performance of Embroidery Office products is largely tied to the presence of proper Vista-compatible video drivers, especially with functional Open GL extensions.

According to Microsoft (<http://msdn2.microsoft.com/en-us/library/bb173477.aspx>)

Windows Vista provides the same support as Windows XP for OpenGL, which allows video card manufactures to provide an installable client driver (ICD) for OpenGL that provides hardware-accelerated support; note that newer versions of such ICDs are required to fully support Windows Vista. If no ICD is installed, the system will fall back to the OpenGL v1.1 software layer in most cases

Testing results of Embroidery Office 8 on Windows Vista

EO Design

Display of working area: certain tasks will present redraw / refresh issues in the working area, i.e. when changing from stitch editing mode to object editing mode, changing zoom levels, etc. What the user runs into in this case is missing objects on the screen. This problem does not exist if the Aero interface is disabled, or if the video acceleration within Design is set to 1. (see Note 1)

Display of artwork on screen: background images will not appear when using ATI Radeon video cards, due to those drivers not supporting certain texture compression modes. This problem does not exist if the video acceleration within Design is set to 1, or if using Nvidia video cards. (see Note 1)

Interface: drawing issues appear while moving floating windows, i.e. Object Inspector. This problem does not exist if the Aero interface is disabled.

3D Space

General: the application fails to launch, due to 3D Space using a DirectX engine that Vista no longer supports. The problem does not exist when installing the appropriate DirectX engine. (see Note 2)

EO Imaging

Raster mode: The tool to insert text in raster mode does not produce visible text. (see Note 1)

General

While being displayed, splash screens of all EO applications will present a yellow box. (see Note 1)

Note 1: Sierra has planned a maintenance release to address the above issues, called v8.11. Approximate release date, not yet confirmed, is March 1, 2007.

Note 2: Sierra will make available to users a Service Pack that will install the appropriate DirectX engine for 3D Space. This Service Pack will not change the version number of the Embroidery Office products. Approximate release date, not yet confirmed, is February 15, 2007.

Note 3: Sierra will make available to users and potential users an application that will evaluate the performance of Embroidery Office on a computer running Windows Vista. Approximate release date, not yet confirmed, is March 15, 2007.

It is important to note that the “Windows Vista Capable” or “Windows Vista Premium Ready” logo found on computers does not imply the presence of the video performance required by Embroidery Office.

Additional Notes

Installing Embroidery Office 8 on Windows Vista

No problems or other issues to consider when installing Embroidery Office 8 on Vista were detected during testing.

Just like it was the case on Windows XP, installation must be performed by someone with administrator privileges (administrator account). It is not necessary however to disable the UAC feature to install the software. The security device does not require any special drivers.

Running Embroidery Office 8 on Windows Vista

- User must disable the UAC feature to run Embroidery Office 8 on any version of Windows Vista.
- Until v8.11 becomes available, it is strongly recommended to disable the Aero interface to run Embroidery Office.
- On computer systems containing video hardware for which manufacturers have no Vista drivers, the graphic performance of EO Design will be adversely affected due to missing acceleration features present in Windows XP.
- On computer systems containing video hardware with Vista-compatible video controllers, the results can be similar to those in the "Testing results" paragraph mentioned earlier. Graphic performance of EO Design may be adversely affected, in which case it is suggested to:
 - Disable Aero interface to run Embroidery Office
 - Set the video acceleration in Design to 1

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