

# Microsoft announces UK Team for Windows 2000 launch

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Microsoft stands shoulder to shoulder with its industry partners for the launch of Windows 2000

The line-up for the UK's Windows 2000 launch team of 12 partners has been announced today by Microsoft. The Partner Rapid Deployment Programme (PRDP) team is made up of partners who will work on deployments and pilots for early adopting customers.

The UK partners who will be launching Windows 2000 are:

- Cap Gemini UK Limited
- Compaq Computer Limited
- Compel
- Computacenter
- Data General Corp
- ESOFTE Global &#61623; Hewlett Packard
- ICL
- Morse
- OS Integration plc
- Pygmalion Computer Group
- Unisys

The programme is designed for partners to provide consultancy to early users of Windows 2000 in areas such as systems integration, training and support. By participating in the programme, the team members will be able to develop their skills for Windows 2000 ahead of its launch, ensuring they are ready to implement solutions for customers when the final product is available.

The partners will also receive significant support from Microsoft through its consultants, technical support service, online chats and briefings. Anne Mitchard, business and enterprise marketing manager for Microsoft comments:

"We have complete confidence in all the partners we have to launch Windows 2000 with Microsoft in the UK. Microsoft's business model ensures tailored offerings are provided through the partners' strong expertise in a variety of skills and we see the launch of Windows 2000 as an industry event that will succeed or fail on the strength of our relationship with our partners. When the final product goes to market we intend to have all our partners standing shoulder to shoulder with us on launch day."

Team reactions

Jim Proctor of Cap Gemini says:

"In the E-Commerce world users and tasks will require complex capabilities and functionality. Windows 2000 is a fundamental foundation for Cap Gemini to deliver innovative E-Business solutions to the new business world"

Mark Yates of Compaq says:

"As a provider of professional services to the Enterprise it is important for Compaq to work with Microsoft and benefit from our alliance, and be a member of the Partner Deployment Programme for Windows 2000. There is a mutual advantage to be gained by Compaq, Microsoft, Partners and enterprise customers. This advantage is obtained from the collective knowledge and experience of the PRDP partners, applied to each company that migrates to the enterprise operating system environment provided by Windows 2000."

Peter McCartney of Compel says:

"We know many of our customers are already very interested in knowing more about Windows 2000 and some will be rolling out Windows 2000 as soon as possible. It was important to both us and our customers that Compel took part in the PRDP programme to ensure our customers were first in line to receive the latest information and highest level of support from Compel in adopting Windows 2000. Over the last twelve months we have invested heavily in extensive training for every consultant within our consultancy group which allow us to deliver high-productivity Windows 2000 business solutions that have the lowest cost of ownership."

Mike Davies of Computacenter says:

"Computacenter is delighted to be chosen by Microsoft as a PRDP partner; we believe it is a natural extension to our Alliance with Microsoft and illustrates our continued investment around the Microsoft platform. In terms of its impact on our customers, Windows 2000 represents one of the most important technical developments for many years. As a PRDP partner we will be at the forefront of the Windows 2000 revolution allowing us to bring the benefits of Windows 2000 to our customers early. Early design and deployment by our customers will mean they can quickly start reaping the benefits of Microsoft's enterprise class computing infrastructure."

Ali Shirnia, Data General says

"The launch of SQL Server 7.0 last year enabled our customers to deploy core business applications on Microsoft Windows NT and SQL Server. These applications would further benefit from the additional scalability and reliability features built into Windows 2000. We have partnered with Microsoft to build our combined consulting and professional services, solutions design and customer services skills in Windows 2000 to help our customers deploy their 24 x 7, mission-critical applications as rapidly as possible."

David Sidwell of ESOF Global says:

"ESOF Global has developed Windows 2000 Cell Technology. It enables existing applications to be delivered to specific groups of users of Windows 2000 quickly and easily, but under measurable, controlled conditions to enable the collection of accurate cost and benefit information. The technical skills developed, and experienced gained by our consultancy division have made ESOF Global a natural choice as one of Microsoft's Key Partners in the delivery and management of early Windows 2000 pilots."

Graham Stewart of Hewlett Packard says:

"Windows 2000 is the technology that will take commodity computing to the Datacenter. Windows 2000 delivers significant benefits to customers deploying Mission Critical Infrastructures through superior scalability, reliability and manageability. Pivotal to Windows 2000 success in the Datacenter will be datacenter disciplines, processes, and skills."

"HP is an acknowledged leader in Mission Critical Computing with Proven Intel Server technology, effective processes, and high quality support and consulting capability. Being a Microsoft PRDP Partner allows HP's newly formed Microsoft Services Organisation to quickly build a high level of Windows 2000 knowledge and expertise. The MSO will provide a range of services to enable customers to gain early skills and experience of using Windows 2000 in the fastest and most economic way."

Paul Lynch of ICL says:

"Windows 2000 is the future of enterprise computing. It is crucial that ICL, as a leading IT services company, has early and detailed experience in deploying the technology for the benefit of our customers. Participation in the Partner Rapid Deployment Programme builds on our substantial experience with Windows 2000 and ensures our customers will get early benefit from this powerful new product."

Mark Byatt of Morse Group, says:

"Morse has many years' experience of building secure, robust enterprise computing infrastructures. We have worked closely with companies like Compaq, IBM and Hewlett-Packard to deliver Windows NT solutions in the past, and Windows 2000 represents a major step forward in this technology. We have a dedicated consulting team working on server-centric (thin client) computing, and are particularly excited by Windows 2000's built-in support for such projects. We plan to provide Windows 2000 proof-of-concept facilities for our customers at our Enterprise Computing Centres throughout Europe."

Juliet Camp of OS Integration says:

"It's about competitive advantage for our customers. We are one of few Microsoft skilled consultancies with an existing and broad experience in Directory Services. This, combined with our early access to Windows 2000 means our customer development and implementation teams can leverage the product to build better global, enterprise-scale e-business and knowledge management oriented solutions for our customers. We can begin work with our customers the moment Windows 2000 is released and be quick to deliver. Being early to implement, our customers will gain over their competitors."

Aine McGuire of Pygmalion Consulting Services says:

"A large number of our customers are telling us that they see many benefits in moving to the Windows 2000 platform and 90% of these are advising us that Windows 2000 is in their short - medium term plans. The Pygmalion Consulting Services division wanted to be part of the programme as it is important for us to be there to assist our customers with early 'limited implementation' programmes, that are a natural precursor to a full blown implementation. Our consultants have put together a range of 'packaged service offerings' that will help customers easily identify the various steps involved in the deployment process. In addition Pygmalion is offering specialist expertise in the powerful security features of W2K based on PKI (Public Key Infrastructure) and smart-card technologies. A range of seminars and demonstrations will be available.

"Undoubtedly our customers will gain competitive advantage by deploying early, and ensuring that important business applications are ready and tested on Windows 2000. Customers will get the benefit of working with a Microsoft Partner that has spent 12 months skilling and preparing for this product. In addition they will also get the support of the Microsoft Consulting Services division that in turn is giving direct support to the 12 Rapid Deployment Partners that were appointed to the programme."

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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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