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OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
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Contact: OMB Communications, 202-395-7254

**OMB ANNOUNCES ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW WEBSITE TO ASSIST AGENCY
IMPLEMENTATION OF SECURE CONFIGURATIONS**

WASHINGTON -- The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) announced today the establishment of a Web site to assist departments and agencies with the implementation of secure configurations to improve the security of their information technology investments.

The new Web site established today hosts "virtual machine images" - tools for the agencies to simulate what will happen when they transition from their current operating environment to the secure Windows XP and VISTA operating systems using these new configurations. Additionally, these images will allow agencies to see what happens to their current applications when operating with the secure operating systems of Windows XP and VISTA. Earlier this year, OMB requested agencies using or planning on upgrading to Windows XP and VISTA to adopt common security configurations. Doing so will improve IT security while reducing operating costs, for example, by managing risk when using file sharing technology. As part of this effort, OMB informed agencies that a new resource -- virtual machine images -- would be established to assist agency planning efforts.

The images contain pre-configured security settings for agencies to use when testing and evaluating their applications to ensure they function effectively and securely when they migrate to these new operating systems. The images were established through a collaborative effort with Microsoft and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the Department of Defense, and the Department of Homeland Security.

"This resource facilitates agencies' efforts to implement common security configurations which will boost government's information security, improve system performance, and decrease operating costs," said Karen Evans, Administrator of OMB's Office of E-Government and Information Technology. "We encourage new collaborative efforts, such as this one, with both public and private sector partners to support agency adoption of the Microsoft XP and VISTA configurations."

In addition, NIST's National Checklist Program is working with a number of information technology providers on standardizing security settings for a wide variety of products and environments. NIST maintains over 120 common security configuration guides used by agencies.

Frequently asked questions about the web site, virtual machine images and other technical information for adopting the Windows XP and VISTA configurations can be found at:
<http://csrc.nist.gov/fdcc>

OMB's memoranda, M-07-11 of March 22, 2007, "Implementation of Commonly Accepted Security Configurations for Windows Operating Systems" and M-07-18 of June 1, 2007, "Ensuring New Acquisitions Include Common Security Configurations" can be found at:
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/memoranda/index.html>

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