



Decision time for Win2000 users

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Thousands of UK IT buyers are pondering their next platform move as mainstream support for Windows 2000 (W2K) desktops and servers runs out next week. W2K loyalists that have yet to decide their course have a choice of paying a premium for extended support, upgrading or moving off Windows.

Most support for the OS runs out on 30 June, after which Microsoft will only patch important security holes and accept support calls on a paid-for basis.

Firms seeking an alternative may look to Apple, thin clients, Linux or Microsoft's forthcoming Eiger - a lean-client Windows that accesses most applications via a server connection.

Despite Microsoft's deadline, W2K is still widely de-

ployed. AssetMetrix Research Labs last week said it runs in almost half of global corporate sites surveyed in the first three months of this year, down only four percent since the end of 2003.

AssetMetrix said firms are redeploying PCs running W2K to other users rather than upgrading or scrapping them. "[Many firms] will have their XP transition rate dictated by PC obsolescence rather than by intelligent planning and forecasting," said managing director Steve O'Halloran.

Mark Wilson of services firm Conchango said, "A lot of companies are waiting for Longhorn and saying 'Windows 2000 is a risk we're willing to accept'."

Other platforms are being dumped. Windows 95 and 98 together fell from 28 percent in 2003 to under five percent, while XP leapt from under seven percent to 38 percent.

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Wilson. Firms are willing to tolerate Win2000 risks