

Lab 2.3.3 Examining OS and Application Versions

Objectives

- Determine the operating system (OS) version and revision.
- Examine the method used for configuring Windows XP updates.
- Determine the revision number of a particular application.

Background / Preparation

It is important to keep operating systems and applications up-to-date to ensure stable operation and to address security vulnerabilities. These updates are called revisions, updates, patches, or hot fixes. There are three ways to update the Windows XP operating system: automatic updating, downloading patches automatically and manually determining when they are installed, or manually downloading and installing the patches.

This lab can be done individually, in pairs, or in teams. The following resources are required:

- Computer with Windows XP and an application such as Microsoft Word installed

Step 1: Determine the Windows XP version and revision number

- Click the Start button and select All Programs > Accessories > Windows Explorer.
- From the **Help** menu, choose **About Windows**.



- c. Which version of Windows XP and service pack is installed on your computer?

- d. How much physical memory (RAM) is available to Windows XP?

- e. Why is memory important to an operating system?

- f. Click on the End-user License Agreement link on the About Windows screen.
According to the license agreement, how many backup copies of Windows XP can you legally make?

- g. Close the end-user license agreement window. Close the About Windows window.

Step 2: Configure Windows XP for updates

- a. Click on the **Start** button and select the **Control Panel** option.
- b. If the right window pane shows **Pick a Category**, select the **Switch to Classic View** link in the left pane. Double-click the **Automatic Updates** option.
- c. Which four options are available for automatic updates? _____

- d. Click on the **How Does Automatic Updates Work?** link. Expand the **How Are Updates Downloaded?** section by clicking on the + (plus sign) beside the option.
- e. Based on the information presented, what happens if you are using your computer, updates are being downloaded, and you disconnect from the Internet?

- f. Expand the How Are Updates Installed? section.
Based on the output shown, what is the default time for when updates are installed?

- g. Close the How Does Automatic Updates Work? window and return to the Automatic Updates window.
- h. What is the current setting for automatic updates, and why do you think the person who set up the computer chose this option?

- i. Close the **Automatic Updates** window.
- j. Another way of configuring a system for automatic updates is through the **System** control panel. Click the **Start** button, click the **Control Panel** option, and double-click the **System** control panel icon. Click on the **Automatic Updates** tab.
- k. Are the options the same as before? _____
- l. Close the **System** control panel.

Step 3: Determine an application version

- a. Open any Windows-based application such as Microsoft Word.

- b. From the application **Help** menu option, choose the **About** option.
- c. What is the application version? _____
- d. If this is a Microsoft application, there may be a **System Info** button. If there is a button, click on it. If there is no button, skip to the next step. Explore the different options available under **System Info**, including information related to your specific application. **System Info** provides similar information to that provided by **winmsd.exe**.
- e. Click on the **Help** menu again. If there are double down arrows at the bottom of the menu, click them to show all the menu options. Some applications have a **Check for Updates** option. Does the application have this option? _____
- f. Do you think that Internet access is required for an application that has a **Check for Updates** option? Why or why not? _____

- g. Close the application.

Step 4: Reflection

- a. When is it important to get an update for an application or an operating system?

- b. List one instance when you might need to know which version of the operating system or application is being used. _____

