

Win 3.1

Win 3.1 Beta Plan

Draft

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Types of Beta Programs:

There are three concurrent Beta Programs planned for Windows 3.1.

Technical Beta
Pre-Release
Preview

Technical Beta is defined as those actively testing the Retail Windows product as part of a Beta Test. Pre-Release is to give customers, primarily ISVs, early access to Retail, the SDK, and the DDK as appropriate. The Preview program is for those who will not be actively doing testing, but who wish to preview the Retail product (ie, Corporate Accounts).

There are four other groups which will be receiving the Windows 3.1 software early. They are Windows Development Partners, ESP (Early ship program) OEMs (Original equipment manufacturers), general OEMs and some Press/Authors. There may be some general OEMs who are also Technical Beta testers, but it is important to note that they will be receiving additional software besides the retail product.

Objectives:

The purpose of the Beta programs is to:

Get feedback from external sites as to the stability of the product
Test the product on a variety of machine configurations provided by the beta test sites
Allow early access to the software and tools so ISVs gain a "head-start" on updating their applications
Provide early exposure for the product

Number of Sites:

There will be approximately 360 sites involved with the Technical Beta. This group will consist of Corporate accounts, ISVs, and End users. The Pre-Release program will have upwards of 2500 ISV participants. Approximately 500 retail copies will be given out as part of the Preview program. There are approximately 12 Development partners, 15 ESP OEMs and 300 general OEMs who will be receiving Windows 3.1 software.

Software and Frequency of Shipments:

Program	Software	Frequency
Technical Beta	Retail	3x (1/21,3/15,5/10)
Pre-Release	Retail/SDK/DDK	3x (2/15,3/29,5/10,6/10)
Pre-Release (Strategic)	Retail/SDK/DDK	every 4 wks plus 2/15,3/29, 5/10,6/10
Preview	Retail	2x (1/21,3/15)
ESP OEMs	OAK	every 4 wks, plus 2/15,3/29,5/10
Development Partners	Retail/SDK/DDK	every 2 wks plus 2/15,3/29,5/10
General OEMs	OAK	3x (2/15,3/29,6/10)
Press/Authors/etc.	Retail	1x (3/15)

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Length of Beta:

The Technical Beta is scheduled to start on 1/21. The Pre-Release program officially starts on 2/15. Primarily the difference between 1/21 and 2/15 is to allow time to create the SDK, DDK and OAK kits and also for some additional testing time. The next major update will be on 3/15. Some hardcopy docs (updated File Manager/Control panel and release notes) will be included in the 1/21 and 2/15 shipments with the possibility of an updated version being sent with the 3/15 version. 5/10 is the approximate Retail ship date and 6/10 is the approximate SDK ship date. See table below for dates and approximate numbers shipped.

Key ISVs	ISVs	Others	Total Number
2/15	2/15	2/15	~1500
3/29	3/29	3/29	~2000
5/10	5/10	5/10	~2500 (Retail)
6/10	6/10	7	~3000
~200	500-2500	~500	~9300

Beta Coordinator:

The DOS/Windows Beta Coordinator will assist Program Management by providing information on how to start and run a beta program with specific duties in the following areas:

- 1) With initial input from Program manager, define fields and write database tables using SuperBase as startup database.
- 2) Make recommendations on staffing levels of temporary staff including start date and duration of assignment.
- 3) Hire and manage temporary staff.
- 4) Disseminate flow of incoming information to the admin and tech staff.
- 5) Coordinate mailings and other projects.
- 6) Maintain inventory of beta equipment, including printer to do labels (most of this equipment is currently in use by the DOS 5.0 beta program).
- 7) Special projects as requested and time permits.

Support:

Up to two people from PSS (OSBU) will be providing support for the Technical Beta testers. One person from PSS (SSBU) will be answering SDK-type questions from the ISVs (ie, Pre-Release participants). These dedicated PSS members will be resident in bldg 3 during the Beta Programs. There will be a dedicated FAX, and answering machine to report bugs. Use of Online 2 will be required by the Pre-Release members. Those customers who are previewing the retail product can Fax or phone in their bugs, but will not be given support unless they buy Online. A bug report sent to Online will not be counted as an SR.

Note: The use of CompuServe has been suggested. I am waiting to see how well CompuServe works for DOS 5 before deciding whether it will be used in the Windows 3.1 Beta programs.

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