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Subject: Re: Microsoft IIS - possible anti-trust issue
Date: Wed, 18 Dec 1996 17:47:26 -0800
From: pmarca@netscape.com (Marc Andreessen)
Organization: Home Office
To: mhawkins@netscape.com,
References: 1

Thanks, Mike. what this translates into is Microsoft recommending/coercing its IIS "customers" into using a form of user authentication that only works with Internet Explorer clients. This is an example of how their anticompetitive actions on the server contribute to the maintenance of their monopoly on the client.

It is also my understanding that recent licenses for IIS and other Microsoft server products mandate use at least of Microsoft client operating systems by all people accessing the server, and perhaps also all Microsoft client software including Internet Explorer. This would be the licensing equivalent to the above.

Marc

Michael Hawkins wrote:
>
> I am a OEM & Strategic Technical Support Engineer, and was presented
> with a problem that
> took a interesting turn. I was advised to share it with you.
>
> The customer provides front-line support for an ISP who just installed a
> NT server running
> Microsoft Internet Information Server (IIS). All of their users who use
> Internet Explorer
> could do whatever they wanted to, but Netscape Navigator users could not
> successfully
> login at all. I have come up with two possible scenarios for the
> customer, neither of
> which have yet been verified as a solution. One of those scenarios may
> interest you.
>
> Considering this problem to be a web server issue, I started reading
> through Microsoft's
> web site, focusing on the IIS product. Following is a tree structure
> that leads to some
> interesting documentation.
>
> * Microsoft Internet Information Server

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> * Installation and Planning Guide
> * Securing Your Site Against Intruders
> (URL - http://www.microsoft.com/infoserv/docs/SECURE.HTM)
> * Securely Configuring Windows NT Server
> * Preventing Intrusion by Setting Up User Accounts
> * Requiring a Username and Password
>
> Paragraphs 4 and 5 of the "Requiring a Username and Password" section
> are directly quoted
> as follows:
>
> "The WWW service also supports the Windows NT Challenge/Response
> encrypted password
> transmission. Microsoft recommends only the Windows NT
> Challenge/Response method of
> password authentication.
>
> Windows NT authentication, currently supported only by Microsoft
> Internet Explorer
> for Windows 95, encrypts the username and password, providing secure
> transmission
> of usernames and passwords over the Internet."
>
> In other paragraphs, they state that access can be granted to anonymous
> users and to
> non-anonymous users simultaneously. For non-anonymous access, the
> administrator must
> choose between "basic text"/unencrypted access or the NT
> Challenge/Response method quoted
> above.
>
> Most customers will follow recommendations of their software vendors,
> particularly when
> the vendor is a trusted name like Microsoft. If this customer followed
> the recommendation
> of Microsoft, they effectively blocked access to all users who were not
> using Internet
> Explorer as their desktop browser.
>
> To me, this is anti-trust material, and I thought that you would be
> interested in hearing
> about it.
>
> --

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Mike Hawkins |By the time you think you know
> OEM & Strategic Technical Support | where I am,
> Netscape Communications Corp. || may very well be elsewhere!
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