From: Jim Allchin (Exchange)
Sent: Tuesday, December 23, 1997 7:14 PM
To: David Cole; Moshe Dunie; Rich Tong; Jonathan Roberts; Bob Muglia (Exchange); Frank Artale; Bill Veghte; David Vaskevitch; Chris Jones
Subject: IE

I had a meeting with bradsi, paulma, and billg yesterday. The plan that was discussed was that IE stays with bradsi until IE5 ships and then pieces of it move over. I don't know the final schedule, but it was talked about as if it was near the end of 1998. Apparently, there had been discussions about moving trident now, but brad said that david told him that removing trident now would be very hard.

I personally disagree with this strategy. First, I don't know what "IE" is. We have to get very specific. IE is composed of a ton of pieces. What pieces are we talking about being moved. At one point I said that anything that takes a reboot, is the system and we should distribute that through service packs, etc.

- browser,
- java,
- direct media (directplay, direct show, direction animation, etc.)
- outlook express
- active desktop
- wallet
- netmeeting
- netshow
- fp express,
- web publishing wizard
- chat
- internet client sdk
- open software distribution
- html help
- administration kit
- vrml
- ms agent
- VDOlive
- web fonts
- Interactive music control
- etc.

I explained we have problems in two dimensions. First, technical synergy. Are we ever going to start working on not confusing the OEMs with different OEM install capability? think about unifying caching? think about unified software distribution? start synergy work between trident and user++, etc.? How do we really get a unified UI if things are split? I could go on. Second, we have a marketing problem with IE 5 coming out after win98 without a clean story. The last thing that I think we need to do is undermine win98 with IE 5. I think we are on a path to do exactly that.

We have several goals from my perspective as a company -- no matter where the work is done. That is why this is tough. We have to continue to win against Netscape on the browser. This means that we need to consider downlevel and xplatform solutions. In addition, it is possible (although that is yet to be proven to me) that we might have to ship more frequently than once per year. And at the same time we need more integration with Windows --- both technically and marketing-wise. We need that for business reasons (ignoring the preception issue of the DOJ). I see this as critical. This is a hard balance, but I feel that we need to slant things much more toward Windows while we still accomplish the other goal against Netscape.

I don't think we can explain this to the organization. I believe they will laugh at management again for not making a hard call. If you think people will be ok with moving pieces (not positive which ones) of IE after IE 5, then I will stop trying.

I do not know how you guys come out on this. If you have opinions, I suggest you send them to bill and paul. There is no need to copy me on these.

jim

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