From: Brian Gluth
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 1998 6:02 PM
To: Brian Hall; Robert Bennett; Lora Shiner
Cc: Dave Fester; Bob Visse; Craig Beilinson; Jay Goldstein; Mike Nichols; Bill Koszewski
Subject: IE5 directional questions

ISPs

Timing
If NSCP does not ship final bits and an CCK before we do, we should be able to keep the ISPs focused until IE5. But if we slip too far out, I am not sure how long IE4 can be seen as "leading edge" in the ISPs minds since many would like to have what IE5 could promise, as soon as possible.

However, if we don't do a launch or at least a co-advertising campaign, the ISPs may not find it compelling to ship it right away since they usually liked having a launch event and/or being able to do some co-mktg activities (ads) around it. If we truly deliver a browser that has *Speed*, *Small Size* and is rock-solid which will reduce their calls and costs for *Support*, this will help maintain our current status in the majority of the top ISPs as their default-installed browser.

If it's Office9 that launches IE5, this is not a story that ISPs can tie into - if it's around NT5, they might also feel left out since NT5 is *not* an end user focused launch or campaign push for people to update their OS/Browser from an end user perspective.

Launches or something news worthy gives the ISPs momentum to build around and goals for them to make (be ready to ship IE5 by xx/xx/xx and be eligible for co-mktg activities, etc.) Remember, ISPs operate on slim margins and anything we can do with the timing of an event can help build interest, adoption, switching, etc, would be a benefit to them.

Cross- platform
ISPs need to support as many enduser platforms as possible. Also, ISPs do not like releasing CDs with mixed versions. They do not like to ship IE5 for Win32 but IE4 for Win16 and Mac and then a NSCP browser for Unix. They don't want to have mixed versions on a CD. (and if the ISP has contracts with small businesses or schools/universities, MAC and Unix is on par with Win32 in importance).

We need to have Win32, Win16 and at least the Mac IEAK kits available and ready for them to ship as close as we can to release. Sim-shipping is very important. (Most have a varied mix of platforms. Majority have Windows 95 and Win16 right now, but ISPs like Earthlink have up to 30% Mac users.

Standards
As long as the end user (the customer of the ISP) can read 99% of all the websites out there with what is being posted on the websites, the ISP is happy. Give them me a core browser that is all standards based and then use the component model to add other enhanced capabilities would be fine.

Feature set
As I've hoped learned over the last year and half these are the hot buttons - and still are:

* Branding: The ISPs still want that logo in the upper corner when people are surfing the net using their service.

* IEAK - they want more control, like corps. They want to be able to gray out more options - we have way too many choices they think that consumers can screw up. Why not offer a beginner vs. professional version of the browser via the IEAK?

* Size. Make it small. ISPs have to use CDs to update their customer base because it takes too long to download. The smaller the better, the easier to switch people too. (And it fits on space-constrained CDs, like music CDs that ISPs want to get on)

* Speed. That's enough said. The internet is perceived to be so slow, let Microsoft be the fasted part and have a non-bloated and the fastest software program out there. <grin>. (If the internet seems, try a faster browser... etc. etc.)

* Simple. Make it simple. If you want to introduce a new shell, or tons of new technologies, do it in the OS, not in the browser. You'd be surprised to hear how many ISPs mention in passing that they want the OS to contain all the "heavy" stuff and let the ISP just ship a viewer with a connectoid.

* Simultaneous shipping of all versions. One IEAK with all the versions on it.

* Support. Make the product rock-solid and minimize the support calls the ISP could possible get.

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Most important is the five "S's." Speed, Size, Simple, Support and Sim-Shipping

(if we hit these, the ISPs will be happy to redistribute our product)

-----Original Message-----
From: **Jay Goldstein**
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 1998 5:10 PM
To: Robert Bennett
Cc: Dave Fester; Brian Gluth; Brian Hall; Bob Visse; Craig Beilinson
Subject: IE5 directional questions

Rob - here are my issues that I think exist with corps. If you think of others, please add them

Dave - this is from this afternoon's meeting with everyone on the cc line. The net of the meeting was that we probably need to get stronger direction on how we are really going to position IE5. This is due to :

- The direction of the dev team's efforts -move away from open standards, less end-user features, focusing on ISVs & ICPs
- The perceived, but still unstated, direction from execs that we're basically only going to focus on the Win32 solution in order to continue building value in Windows (and remove a lot of our past standards and x-platform positioning)

Timing- ship one version in July, to go with NT5 beta 2 and Off 9, close to time of Win 98 launch
- Probably not a big impact for corps who will not focus much on Win 98
- Only issue is that they may not engage much on IE5 as they give their mindshare to NT & Off

Standards - though we can technically say we're submitting open standards-based features, the reality is the tags we create and natively support will be an IE5 feature.
- Many corps have told us that if a feature is not supported by Nav, then to them it's not an open standard
    - They also told us they will likely have a mixed-browser environment, and that they have don't plan to enforce a single-browser, esp. since to them the browser is not a critical piece of software
- We have spent the last 12 months telling developers that we are really the open-standards company when it comes to browsers. We have said they should hold Netscape's feet to the fire on the open-standards story. This will all be gone with IE5
    - There are plenty of anti-MS folks at many corps. Pro-NS developers will not create IE5 based apps in this situation

Cross-Platform - Many new Trident features will not be supported across all platforms (though it's still not clear which ones and to what extent - e.g. may be supported on Unix, but not W3.1)
- If the new tags are not supported in Win 3.1, companies that are slow to upgrade their OS will not create IE5-based apps
    - This may be fine with Chase/Allchin as a way to continue to motivate 32-bit upgrades
- There are still Unix bigots who don't want to "give in " to IE. Currently, many are likely starting to check out IE given our Unix support. This will be lost if we push the technical abilities of IE, but they're not supported on Unix
    - As these tend to be the technical folks at corps, they have a disproportionate share of input on s/w decisions.

Product features & implications
- Don't think there are any features that are "must haves" for corp users that are not being supported in IE5

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