

**From:** Todd Spears  
**To:** Microsoft ATR,tatw@fox.com@inetgw,TCSpears\_ebay@ho...  
**Date:** 12/10/01 8:37pm  
**Subject:** I'm sorry....

I'm sorry but I have to voice my opinion and disagree with the proposed settlement with Microsoft. The settlement as laid out does absolutely nothing to curb or stop Microsoft and their illegal business practices. I have used personal computers since the late 80's the original DOS operating systems and in that time I have seen our choices in software expand to include many different types of operating systems, word processors, databases, and spreadsheets - only to collapse back upon itself to where there really is only one or two choices. And the choice everyone is left with is Microsoft.

This has primarily happened due to the practices of Microsoft on the free market. I remember years ago a friend of mine worked for a computer manufacturer (Packard Bell) and he told me that thru exclusive contracts and refusal to ship items (would you like MS Word with that? No.. I'm sorry we cannot ship the rest of your order for eight weeks. Oh, you'll take the MS Word? We'll have your order out tomorrow). And that was only one of their dirty tricks.

The next in their bag of tricks is the proprietary format - their software will really only work with other Microsoft software. Then, in order to remain compatible more and more people are forced to choose Microsoft products. The same thing goes with the bundling of the browser and media player. Any market the Microsoft feels threatened by they simply lock their own product to the operating system and use that same operating system to disable any competitors products. This has happened to me personally. Using their updating service one day I found that in upgrading itself the media player has also disabled the other two types of players on the computer.

The final thing that scares me with regards to Microsoft is their overall plan to make every person who uses their software pay a yearly subscription fee. At the same time they provide no real service or guarantee for this subscription fee - I as a consumer must pay the fee, but they as the provider of the service must provide nothing. According to the license agreement (as I understand it) they don't even have to provide a product that works. They have no responsibility to do anything - even if their product goes so far as to harm your computer.

Another thing I've found is you cannot even buy a computer without paying a fee to Microsoft - they have exclusive contracts with all of the top computer manufacturers. Between Dell, Compaq, Sony, Hewlett-Packard and IBM they control almost 75% of the computer market and yet you cannot buy a system from them without paying a fee to Microsoft whether you want to or not.

I don't know what the solution is - whether to breakup Microsoft or just seriously curtail their illegal/immoral activities - but I do know that though I've never seriously looked into Linux I may start too.

Sincerely,

Todd C. Spears

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