

From: Dillon Dale Civ OC-ALC/LGPA
To: 'Microsoft.atr(a)usdoj.gov'
Date: 1/4/02 2:30pm
Subject: Comment on settlement

Dear sir or madam

Please be advised that I do not agree with the current settlement as proposed by the Dept of Justice.

In summary, what I see is this, Microsoft owns the only trainstation, that is the OS. It knows where it layed the tracks and how the tracks operate, (internal workings of OS) this gives them a HUGE advantage on software developement. No one else knows this as well as Microsoft and it protects and uses this knowledge to it's sole advantage.

I am by trade an accountant. I have dabbled in computer systems for years, learning to program in various programming languages. I can remember Microsofts first set of side products that had direct impact on me. QuickBasic was the applications name, it was a wonderful product and it was all due to competition with Borland and the great programs that they had. (Borland lost a lot of ground when Microsoft switched from DOS to Windows version 95. Borland no longer makes a Basic programming language.)

I can remember the big switch when Microsoft introduced it's Windows operating system and it's suite of Office products. Suddenly the things that I knew the most lotus, peachcal, supercal etc... spreadsheets disappeared from the store shelves. Everyone had to learn a new interface, you couldn't share spreadsheets because of all the things Microsoft did to make it hard to switch from their product to other products. (This was no doubt by design and still is by design.) Microsoft now totally domainates the market when it comes to spreadsheets, but they still lag behind some of the orginal spreadsheets ability.

Where our office went from lotus and supercal we acquired more work, not less, MS Excel created more keystrokes for us and a decrease in productivity. The macro ability was greatly reduced and it created for us a very large problem, we had to basically carry two spreadsheets. One DOS based from ages ago and the other Windows related (MS Excel). In short we still have not upgraded the majority of our spreadsheets because Excel does not do as good of job.

In our office we use programs that where written in Basic or GWbasic many years ago. This ability and language was provided by Microsoft or IBM with the purchase of an OS many years ago. Microsoft no longer provides this type of program with the purchase of the OS, I admit I do find it strange that they will add an internet browser for free, but won't keep a language that was a standard feature of the OS for years and years. I am currently writting Java based programs to replace the programs written in Basic or

GWbasic many years ago. If Microsoft is allowed to drive Java out of business or goes to big lengths to make sure it does not work with it's system then nothing I can do will replace those programs that we do business with now. I do not have the money to buy the solution from Microsoft.

If you pay close attention to the Government you will find that a lot of Government facilities are now stuck with the older version of Internet Exploer (version 5.5 service pack 2), because a lot of Government pages are written to work with Java. The newer version of IE (version 6) will not work with Java. Why would Microsoft do this? Is it now the most efficient product when viewing the web? How much will the Government have to spend to correct these problems? Or will the Government be stuck using Windows 5.5 with service pack 2 until MS decides it won't want to support it any longer? If they give it away as part of the OS package, then it shouldn't be a tool used to destroy the business of others. It should be made to work with other things out there.

To me it is just like buying an OS for a computer that says it is designed for use in any IBM compatible PC, but it won't work with Seagate Hard Drives because our company owns Western Digital. BTW it's about the only OS available as it has driven every other OS out of the market, used it's OS to capture market share it does not deserve, because of unfair competition and it's insider knowlege on the OS. How does it benefit the public? We have seen that the courts ruled it was a monopoly.

Now it's up to you the DOJ to fix the tracks so that other trains can run in and out of that trainstation without being derailed, your settlement leaves a lot to be desired and actually rewards Microsoft, does not force them to retreat from the practices that have hurt so many in the past and cripples innovation.

Dale Dillon