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To: 'microsoft.atr(a)usdoj.gov'
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

See attached Microsoft WORD document for comments.

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This letter is written to comment on the Department of Justice proposed settlement of the Microsoft Antitrust case.

As a corporate purchaser of Microsoft products, we conclude that the settlement does nothing to address the real concerns of the customer. Those concerns involve the increasing ability of Microsoft to set extreme pricing policies without fear of customer loss, and to design products without proper concern to the customer's needs.

Microsoft products have served our company fairly well in many areas and we believe Microsoft brought many innovations to PC desktop tools. However, we also believe that Microsoft used questionable practices to drive out the competition or acquire it at a very low cost. For the most part, especially for products like WINDOWS, OFFICE, and INTERNET EXPLORER, we feel we had and still have no real alternative to Microsoft products.

Our other software vendors who work with Microsoft endure extreme pressure to do it Microsoft's way. If they don't, they face severe penalties by a company that truly controls the desktop market. Rather than respond to the customer, we find many of our vendors responding to Microsoft so that Microsoft revenues are maximized.

We question the "freedom to innovate" banner that Microsoft uses to justify their practices. In fact, all we see is slavery to Microsoft for customers and other software vendors.

It may be that Microsoft could have won its present monopolist position just through the quality of its products and hard work. We'll never really know. We do know that they are now exercising that monopolistic position to the detriment of the customer. We are now being forced to pay millions of dollars to upgrade to product versions we don't need. The only viable alternative given to us is to pay much higher prices when they finally force us into obsolescence. All software companies try to generate revenue through planned obsolescence, however, only a monopolist can carry it to the extent that Microsoft has, and make the profits it has.

The present proposed settlement barely slaps Microsoft on the wrist for past practices and will not deter it from future anti-competitive practices. Moreover, the root of the problem – Microsoft's control of both the dominant desktop operating system and the major application software for desktops – will result in costs for the consumer that are not controlled by competition and not in line with the value delivered.

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