

From: Scott Pepple
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To Whom It May Concern,

As a consumer of Microsoft products for over 15 years and a citizen of the United States, I've got a few opinions I would like to share with the Department of Justice, The Federal Court and the general public.

The progression of the Microsoft Anti-Trust trial over the past couple of years has filled me with hope that we were after all a nation ruled by laws rather than by money. The decision of the Department of Justice to conclude the proceedings with a hastily negotiated settlement after they had all but won the day has been a sad realization for me that we still have a long way to go.

Any person with sense can see consumer choice is limited when the same company that produces the operating system used by 80% of the desktops in the country also produces software to run on that operating system. Name any competitive Word Processing Program on the market. There are none. Is that because Word Processing Programs are so tough to write? Is that because Microsoft's Word Processing Program is so good? It's because Microsoft is constantly making efforts towards it's prime goal - the creation of a unified, monolithic Desktop under their control. Whether by coding practices, marketing practices or by manipulation of the legal system, they have been more successful than not in achieving their prime directive.

Regardless of the lack of acceptability of the current situation, it appears that the current administration is less than ardent in pursuing justice at the risk of their campaign and whatever other contributions they can expect from Microsoft.

Given that situation, the current structure of the initial agreement between the Department of Justice and Microsoft should be modified to expand the portions on interoperability. A strong emphasis in the resolution on this one area will yield the greatest longterm benefits to the industry and the consumer. If Microsoft's standards and interfaces were well known natural competition will follow. To state that such information is a security risk is merely covering the weaknesses of an insecure platform.

Second, any penalties that should be levied on Microsoft need to be recompensed in Cash! Anything but goods and services! The very nature of Microsoft's business model seeks deployment of the maximum amount of software to obtain dependency among the greatest number of people. By exacting payment in goods and services you will simply be helping them to achieve their prime objective.

Simply put, your settlement should try harder to make the bad guys work with the rest of us in a fair manner and your penalties should not let the bad guys do more bad.

Scott Pepple