From: John McCutcheon
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 11:20am
Subject: Microsoft settlement

To: Renata B. Hesse
Antitrust Division
U.S. Department of Justice
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Washington, DC 20530-0001

I am submitting this comment, as permitted by the Tunney act, regarding the remedies proposed as the outcome of the Microsoft Antitrust trial.

As a scientist in training, I must work with non-Microsoft operating systems and products every day. The proprietary and ever-changing FILE FORMATS used by Microsoft, however, make even the exchange of simple text files between Microsoft and non-Microsoft programs incredibly cumbersome.

Any proposed Microsoft remedy which does not include the absolute requirement for openly published data file formats falls far short of the required public benefit.

On the day-to-day office work level, it is this intentional file format incompatibility which forces purchase of Microsoft products, and further, it is the artificial incompatibility BETWEEN VERSIONS OF THE SAME MICROSOFT PRODUCT which forces purchase of ever newer Microsoft products, EVEN THOUGH THEY FREQUENTLY ADD NO RELEVANT FUNCTIONALITY OVER THE OLDER
PRODUCTS.

Publicly available Microsoft file format specifications would allow third-party developers to produce file conversion tools which completely obviate this unfair Microsoft practice.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this judgment.

Sincerely,

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