

From: rcooper
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 3:07pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I am the IT director for James Coney Island, a small fast food chain in Houston Texas. We have been in business since 1923 and have 23 Locations in the Houston area. I Am writing because as a concerned citizen of the United States I feel I have an obligation to complain about the proposed settlement with Microsoft.

I have been in the computer industry for over 23 years and have seen the landscape change a lot over the years. I find it very alarming that Microsoft seems to get away with doing what it wants in an industry it rules with an iron fist. No where in the proposed settlement agreement do I see where Microsoft is being punished violating the Sherman Antitrust act. No where do I see any reasonable solutions that will keep Microsoft from violating the law again.

If the court really wishes to solve the Microsoft problem and allow a level playing field in the industry, it would require that Microsoft's closed binary office formats (such as Word and Excel) be opened up to everyone. In this way, the average consumer and business can freely communicate with anyone using software of their choice and not being forced to use Microsoft products.

Currently, I conduct a lot of business via Email and because of Microsoft's monopoly, I get a lot of Email attachments in either Excel or Word formats. The problem is I do not wish to use Microsoft's products. Their Monopoly status has ensured I have no choice in using tools of MY choice that I make my living and conduct business with.

Another problem is the Internet. Because Microsoft has a monopoly on the Desktop and because it illegally tied Internet Explorer into its Operating system, much of the web is being designed to view content correctly only under a Microsoft Browser. This is just wrong. No one company should have this kind of power over me.

There are many reasons to be concerned. I have yet to see any American company hated as much as Microsoft. Why is this? Their actions speak louder than words, they are so big they feel if they are above the law. Now is the time to set the example to everyone that breaking Federal Monopoly laws will NOT be tolerated. Please rethink the settlement and give this company the monitoring and punishment it deserves after having put countless competitors out of business and price gouging world wide consumers for years through illegal monopolistic, anti-competitive practices. This HAS to stop now if the computer industry is to make any progress in the future.

Thank you

Ron Cooper
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Houston Texas.