

From: Lawrence Wade
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/24/02 2:14am
Subject: Microsoft Security, Market Penetration and The Lawsuit

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Hi,

I want to move my network entirely to Linux or FreeBSD. However, I'm discovering problems in doing so. The biggest one of which is that I must maintain compatibility with Microsoft Office users, and I'm therefore forced into the same regime of upgrading Office to support features that no human being will ever use in order to maintain the ability to read their proprietary *.doc and *.xls files.

Or to be able to watch streamed media on the Internet, which is more and more in *.asf format, "advanced streaming format". ASF is a proprietary format, a slightly modified industry-standard AVI file, and will only play on Windows Media Player.

Of course, in order to be able to use Office XP and therefore read files from clients, I need to run Windows. But that's easily enough done, I had to pay for Windows (which I promptly deleted) when I bought a new machine on which to run a Linux webserver. In fact, in the past year, I've paid for Windows four times because the various PC manufacturers won't (can't) remove it from bundles, and yet I still need the machines. (I use Windows on exactly *one* machine.)

Needless to say, I'm trapped. I am writing this e-mail on a Windows machine.

Bandwidth, in the computer field, is a commodity like electricity or gasoline. I pay for it as I use it. Every time someone visits my Linux webserver, the communication between the visiting machine and my servers consumes bandwidth, and I pay for it. Every time someone e-mails me, their mail server contacts my mail server, and we consume my bandwidth.

Microsoft software is notoriously poorly written, and full of security flaws which allow (literally) children to write things like the Code Red worm. Code Red, you may recall, attacked Microsoft IIS webserver. Now, by the way Windows installs "features" by default, there are literally thousands of people on the Internet right now, running IIS webserver software without even knowing it. Many who run IIS deliberately don't even know that there are known vulnerabilities and self-propagating programs which exploit these Microsoft flaws.

As a result, my webserver gets lots of visits (below) from people whose infected Windows machines are blindly attempting to infect my Linux servers. And, in the process, that costs me bandwidth. Which costs me money.

You can imagine how much it costs me whenever some jackass writes a Windows e-mail virus, a phenomenon which is nearly impossible in any responsibly-designed operating system.

Companies which produce operating systems *should not* be allowed to sell software or other services. And file formats (*.doc, *.xls, etc.) should be based on standards devised by consortium using the same RFC ("Request For Comments") processes that brought us HTML and FTP and DNS.

What kind of gas mileage would you expect from your car, if the car companies were owned by the oil companies? If Ford was owned by Exxon, could an Explorer run on fuel from Shell?

I'm a staunch Libertarian, but this is too much: Break up Microsoft.

Lawrence Wade
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Infected Microsoft webserver attempting to infect my webserver and wasting my money (you can see current results at http://www.glowingplate.com/broken_microsoft_products/) :