

From: Samuel Klatchko
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/24/02 9:14pm
Subject: comments on the Microsoft Settlement

I do not know if my comments are directly applicable to the current anti-trust case, but I still feel I need to weigh in with them.

I am a software engineer by profession. At a prior job, I used to develop software for Microsoft Windows. A customer requested a feature in the specific product that I was responsible for. After researching the APIs that Microsoft published, I realized that it was impossible to provide the exact feature that the customer wanted (in order to do so, I would need certain support from the OS that was not available). I proposed an alternative solution that didn't quite do what the customer wanted. I was told not to bother and do not know if we lost the customer over this.

About one year later, I purchased and read the book Undocumented Windows. This book documented certain features of the OS that were not documented but were in use by applications written by Microsoft and other large companies. While reading this book, I discovered a function that would have allowed me to implement the exact feature that the customer had wanted. By that time it was too late.

This was my first demonstration of behaviour that Microsoft did to give their own application team an advantage over others. In various interviews, Microsoft officers state that they are successful because they create better products than other companies. That might be true, but in this one case, it was true because they offered features to their own application developers that were not offered to all developers.

I don't believe that any behavioural remedy will work. There are so many ways that Microsoft can give themselves an unfair advantage that they will always find away around a behavioural remedy. Please do not accept the current settlement.

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