From: divinegigi@pop.earthlink.net@inetgw
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/25/02 2:06am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

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To whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed settlement between the United States Department of Justice and Microsoft Corporation regarding the finding of antitrust activities of Microsoft.

I am highly concerned that through the predatory actions of Microsoft, Microsoft products are the de facto standards for many areas of personal and business computing and office work. The barriers to competition raised by Microsoft through its intertwined operating system, network products, and Office Suite make it nearly impossible for any competitors to arise in these areas. I am personally quite disappointed in the quality of these Microsoft products, and would be quite willing to purchase alternatives if they existed. I believe that without remedy the situation with Microsoft dominance of whatever product lines they choose will become worse.

I believe that the present remedy proposed by the DOJ will do nothing to improve this situation, or curb Microsoft's predatory practices.

In the interest of brevity, I will discuss the one remedy that I find most important. In an office environment, I find that the use of alternatives to Microsoft products, (Macintosh, Linux, or Office alternatives) is limited by the practical limitations of transferring data (email, documents, etc) from a Microsoft platform to a competitive platform. That is, for me to function in a modern office environment, any documents I send to others must open flawlessly by Microsoft products; any documents sent to me by Microsoft product users must be opened flawlessly by me. Since Microsoft keeps its data standards proprietary, it is nearly impossible to develop a 100% compatible alternative.

Through its practices, Microsoft now dictates the de facto standards for email, word processing, spreadsheets, and presentations. I would urge the DOJ to find a remedy that would force Microsoft to make their format an open standard, readily open to competitors to use. Microsoft would not be forced to turn over sensitive information to competitors on their products; rather, they would be compelled to enable functional competition within data formats that they have made as industry standards through their practices.

I am sensitive to Microsoft's claims that their know how in application software should be preserved. I am much more interested in enabling competitors to build programs that can compete with Microsoft by being compatible with Microsoft file formats. Data must not be captive to one company and format, but be transferable across different formats and systems. The DOJ has it in its power to enable this competition into the future.

In any case, the current proposed settlement is horrible, so I do urge its rejection.

Sincerely,

Paul Drzaic
Morgan Hill, California