**From:** Andre_A_Smith@RL.gov@inetgw
**To:** Microsoft ATR
**Date:** 1/25/02 9:23am
**Subject:** Microsoft Settlement PLEASE READ

The only thing the Microsoft's competitors really need to level the playing field is to have access to Microsoft's file formats, free of charge or at most nominal, for the Office range of products. Without access to these they will never have the ability to compete in the corporate world. IT departments simply cannot ostracize themselves by picking an alternate OS then not having compatibility with their computers via email and document exchanges. How frustrating is it for you when someone sends you a file via email that you cannot open, now imagine that times a 1000 or 10,000 how long would you keep your customer base. There are great products out there that major corporations simply cannot afford to use them do to the amount of work involved in getting them to be useable outside of the company by their customers and business contacts or partners. Just take Microsoft's ability to lock customers in just because that's what every body else uses.

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