From: Justin Hopper and Bogdana Manole
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/6/01 10:38am
Subject: Absolute Outrage

I am a long-term software developer and user of Microsoft's products, however that does not blind me from their unjust business practices. I have seen once strong products like Netscape Navigator, Quicken and WordPerfect, literally crumble as Microsoft pushed it's way into the markets. Everything that is developed by Microsoft creates a further dependency on their products, including the operating system. What we have seen over the past years is more and more software products being developed by Microsoft. It used to be an operating system and now the company offers a complete end-to-end solution for IT businesses in just about any market. Where's the diversity?

I currently reside, in Romania, a former Communist country. I can tell you first hand the dangers of a monopoly. For example, there is one telecom company in Romania (sound familiar) and the whoever wants to make a phone call must pay them a set tariff. Who ever wants to set up an ISP must pay them a set tariff. Who ever wants to receive extra phone services or even make and international phone call, must pay them a set tariff. If the consumer does not like it then who do they have to turn to? Noone! They are stuck with whatever price Romtelecom sets. Now tell me how this settlement is going to prevent this from happening to the technology market.

The decision to make Microsoft give its software away for free to public schools is almost funny. Not only does it give Microsoft's operating system a leg up in what may be one of the only fields that it doesn't have control over; but it will probably be the end of Apple Computers. This is an ingenious idea and whoever came up with this proposal must have done so knowingly. The Department of Justice looks like a naive child being led by the giant software developer to do whatever it wants. Who is running the court-case, Microsoft or the DOJ?

Sometimes it is hard to know.

Sincerely,

Justin Hopper