Microsoft Memo

To: John Parkey
From: Jon Reingold
Subject: Win Word Strategy
Date: July 24, 1990
cc:

I've been thinking over Jeffr's reaction. Here are some thoughts.

1) We need to be more specific about beating WordPerfect. We're a little vague here. By the end of the presentation you need to be crystal clear about how we are going to gain some share against these guys. The presentation as it currently stands talks about some tactics we are going to employ (trial and pushing customization/integration) but it doesn't really say where WordPerfect's weak spots are, and how we would convince people that we are better. I think this has something to do with Jeffr's feeling that it is diffuse and not strong enough for the sales force and PR to know what to do.

2) In terms of positioning and our PR strategy, I think we need to say something like: "Word for Windows is a new generation word processor. It allows you to do many things easily which are either very difficult or impossible to do in WordPerfect. WordPerfect 5.1 is built for standalone use of word processing with predominantly text. It is difficult to use with other applications, because the interface is totally different, and because it doesn't have good hooks for integration. Windows WordPerfect is just a port of WordPerfect 5.1 — a port of a DOS app, so it suffers the same problems. While it does have WYSIWYG, which is a big improvement over WordPerfect 5.1, it still has an inconsistent interface, and it still lacks the hooks to integrate with other products. So you still don't get the major benefits of Windows: a consistent suite of integrated applications."

The idea here is to position Win WordPerfect as a port which doesn't exploit Windows, and to show that this is a BIG problem because it makes training and support costs higher, and prevents you from being able to do important things — like tie your word processor and your email together, or to automate your purchasing system, etc. To maek this credible, we need to have good examples of customers who are really doing this, and who will say that this is very exciting and important. The good news is that I bet we can get someone like Will Zachman to back us up here. We need to make this a very mainstream message that indicts both their Windows products (vaporware) and their current 5.1 product.

3) Sales strategy. We should explain concretely how the sales force is going to go out and beat WordPerfect. I think there isn't much revolutionary here, but we can explain how we can tie into their overall corporate pitch (which we already explained in our presentation), and we can give some more specifics on how to position and sell the product. We need to enumerate who the key targets are (Windows and OS/2 accounts). We should also address how we sell to take advantage of Word 5.5, to maximize revenues instead of cannibalizing them.

4) Leveraging the line and family. I guess these should be explicit strategies. I don't think we have a lot to say about the family, because in truth Win Word is the wedge we use to sell more PC Word not vice versa. However, there is still the multi-platform message, and I think we may be able to leverage Mac Word more than we currently do. This relates to #3 in the sense that we need a coherent statement about selling PC and Win Word against WordPerfect's lowest common denominator approach. In terms of the Win Line, we should have a statement reiterating that a consistent set of Windows apps which have hooks for integrating are a superior solution to character-based ports masquerading as true Win apps.

In summary, this presentation should be more focused on how we will beat WordPerfect. It should have a master positioning against WordPerfect. It should then have specific strategies for achieving this: PR, Sales, Advertising, Third Party Mktg, Direct Mail. I think we will still have the major points about Trial and pushing customization/integration, but more specific guidelines for PR and the sales force.