Erik Stevenson

From: **Brad Chase**
To: Bill Gates; Brad Silverberg; Mike Maples; Paul Maritz; Steve Ballmer
Cc: Brad Chase; Collins Hemingway; Marty Taucher; Richard Freedman; Claire Lematta; Colleen Lacter; Pam Edstrom
Subject: MS-DOS directions
Date: Tuesday, August 11, 1992 6:24PM

bradsi has told me about some of the debate about what we say about ms-dos 7 in the press.
To some degree we have taken a direction in recent weeks. A couple of weeks ago in infoworld and pc week we talked about win32 on dos.

I have concerns and some feedback to our direction. First concerns:
* MS-DOS 6 has tremendous potential. The MS-DOS 6 Upgrade alone could be a $300M business worldwide in the first year. Sure we're throwing some pieces in the box and some are not well integrated. But the reality is that Astro has a super exciting feature set that is much more exciting than MS-DOS 5 and may be more exciting to the average nonpower user (which represents most users) than ms-dos 7.
* This is no different than any other product. Good PR will be CRITICAL. We must be very careful to set the correct perception among the press, customers and OEMs. We should NOT communicate that
  - our NEXT version of MS-DOS will support 32 bit apis, multi-tasking etc. or
  - that the only cool version of MS-DOS is the one that supports 32 bit apis, pre-emptive multi-tasking etc.
  - MS-DOS 6 is just a response to dr dos 6

Unfortunately some of the press already have this perception and once someone's viewpoint is formed it is harder to turn them around

How do we turn this around?

Message

They key is to demonstrate our commitment to ms-dos, our vision and leadership driving it forward, and to always talk about the vision of MS-DOS with both versions in mind
- that way we appropriately set expectations and yet show the rationale behind our direction.
- this gives us the opportunity to put ms-dos in the proper context of a windows strategy.
- it allows us to talk about a future for ms-dos beyond 6 that people care about without materially impacting the success of ms-dos 6 itself

A. Commitment

With all our versions of Windows many people question our commitment to MS-DOS. Some even see DR/Novell as leading with innovative dos technology. We must reaffirm our committment to MS-DOS (We are more committed to MS-DOS than we ever have been. We have more people working on it than ever and we are working on two version simulataneously to avoid the long time between releases we have had with MS-DOS in the past. etc.)

B. MS-DOS vision in the short and long run

Our MS-DOS vision reflects the practical short term need to provide better and cool tools to MS-DOS (and Windows) users to help them better manage their PC in the midst of lots of change (windows and its apps taking up hard disk space, michaelangelo, networking growth etc)
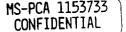
It also reflects the longer term need to make architectural changes to MS-DOS so we can take advantage of the 386 architecture move Windows forward and so users can have the advanced functionality they want on the machines they have without giving up compatibility.

Both in the short term and the long term our vision reflects that windows is our strategic platform and that ms-dos changes will reflect that central strategy. People believe Windows is funadmentally limited by MS-DOS and in many ways that is not true. We will improve ms-dos in dramatic ways. We should be clear though that MS-DOS will never become Windows NT. No new API work for MS-DOS apps (no reason to do this since isvs are writing for windows), no multi-processing support etc.

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Additionally, as paulma says we will continue to provide ms-dos users "more and better" features for them too.

This is bascially what i told pc mag when they were here recently and it seemed to work very well. I of course had more detail.

Two key points to reinforce:

- we need to reflect our excitment about MS-DOS 6 and our MS-DOS strategy internally and externally. We are genuinely very excited about the product so this should not be a problem.
- if it is appropriate to talk about ms-dos 7 (for example when it leaks which may be before we ship Astro), don't talk about it without the total picture, i.e. talk about ms-dos 6 too. don't demo ms-dos 7 until momentum for ms-dos 6 is established and even then we should be careful.

Tactics

This is a quick and dirty summary of what we are actually going to do in the next few months to try and get the right perception set in the press and to build pre-announce excitment for MS-DOS

* Short press tour next week to what PR calls "talkers", analysts who we will talk to about MS-DOS 6 and show how cool it is and who will likely have trouble being quiet
* MS-DOS Lives press tour a few weeks later. A full fledged press tour to articulate basically what i discussed above
* We are working on an idea for broader coverage in the business press
* We will have a more detailed MS-DOS 6 press tour in October and work with the key books to try and get cover stories for when we announce.

comments welcome.

From: Brad Silverberg
To: Brad Chase
Subject: FW: Stick with DOS = >Microsoft

From: Bill Gates
To: Steve Ballmer
Cc: Brad Silverberg; Jonathan Lazarus; Mike Maples; Paul Maritz
Subject: Stick with DOS = >Microsoft

There is one thing about our strategy that I am wondering if we are positioning properly. Its a fairly major issue so let me explain it clearly.

As a pc user I am probably convinced I need to have 32bit and multitasking- certainly as a large corporate customer. The easy way to capture this is that I am convinced that DOS will not meet my needs in the future so I need to make a change. The thing I change to will require more hardware. Since I need this change I can consider a lot of things - UNIX, Os/2, Windows NT even perhaps Apple. Based on my programmers specific backround, what articles they read, what demos they see we make a choice and end up with one of these 3 things. This basicly means the non-Microsoft choices will end up with a lot of the market since there are a lot of people who love UNIX, IBM and a lot of negative stuff on us. People even sort of blame us for having to make this change rather than just stick with DOS. All of our NT marketing plans reinforce the need for change to get cool 32bit stuff.

However this is not our strategy at all. Our strategy is to keep updating DOS as long as we need to with every mainstream feature people want until we have something that matches their hardware so well and has so much compatibility that it will

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really be considered a form of DOS. Specifically we are
developing DOS 7 that has virtually all of the features that
people dont expect in DOS and are causing them to have to make
a painful change. I am really wondering if we should get a lot
more public about DOS 7 even doing public demos of the product
this fall and make sure people know they aren't forced to
change.

We should discuss this at length since it would be somewhat of a change.