

DOJ - Legal

From: Christopher Graham
To: Harel Kodesh; Philippe Goetschel
Subject: FW: 6/3 - Tech Strategy
Date: Friday, June 04, 1993 11:02AM

From: Steven Sinofsky
To: Bill Gates; Brad Silverberg; Christopher Graham; Chris Peters; Daniel Petre; Darryl Rubin; David Fulton; Jim Allchin; Mike Maples; Paul Maritz; Pete Higgins; Peter Neupart; Roger Heinen
Cc: Steven Sinofsky
Subject: 6/3 - Tech Strategy
Date: Thursday, June 03, 1993 5:42PM

The following are some notes from the Tech Strategy meeting held on 6/3. The topics were Borland Office, Notes, Database, Text Controls, Help/online docs, and some other topics brought up at the end.

One thing to keep in mind for those at the retreat is the theme "How do we increase our application market share by being dependent on cool Chicago technology?"

Borland Office

There was a brief discussion of the Borland Office product. Most were confused over why WordPerfect would choose to funnel revenue through Borland. WordPerfect will be producing their own bundle containing WP, Presentations, Office (mail), and Pdox. It is believed that the pricing agreement is reciprocal, though we do not know for how much.

Notes (and general Lotus discussion)

Before the discussion, DanielP mentioned some new market research they did on Notes customers (not sure when this will be made available). He also explained how we have a great opportunity because cc:Mail has just begun work on client/server support (previously the Notes team had prevented them from doing such work). This gives EMS a potentially big advantage in the marketplace.

Bill updated the group on the work being done in DDT as a Notes competitor. The key is that this issue is so important that we are willing to somewhat confuse people over Access 2.0 and VB4, hoping that this project ships soon enough that it will help diffuse the Notes PR. The key will be to leverage our programmability strength in VB3 and customizable forms strength (VBXs). In order to compete with the Notes aggregate views, the DDT team will develop some VBX controls for hierarchical viewing. The downside of this approach is that it still leaves "Notes" and mail as distinct products, though this is no worse than Lotus. It also lets us keep all the mail functionality, such as directory services, in Mail.

LewisL raised the issue that code required to view a note should be on a server and not required on the local machine. DarrylR pointed out that the code will be in the store and when you "enlist" in a group the code will be replicated to your machine.

ChrisP asked how this impacts the Paradox v. Access battle. Bill commented that since Access does not allow installable controls, it does not enter the Notes picture at all and will continue on its current path, so this battle is really unaffected by the Notes product.

The next Notes issue that came up is one of layout forms. Bill insisted that this will only get done by Word. Chris assured everyone that Word is going to think about it for Word7.

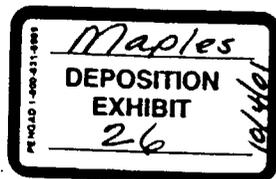
ChrisP talked about how the 123/W4 demos have been poorly done, but that the press is itching to write the "Lotus is back" story.

Chicago

There was a brief side track discussing Chicago dependency. Bill pointed out that it is an excuse to not be dependent on it. It is very important (critical) that apps become dependent on Chicago. Lotus apps were the example, though, we do not have a lot of real use data to see just how well integrated they are. LewisL said that LotusScript is becoming a problem for them. They have been wildly extending the language (added ~250 keywords) but it is not clear if they will ever be able to integrate into their products, though they are still promising to do that.

Forms

There was not a lot of talk about forms. There is general concern about the time frame of the forms work. ChrisP reiterated his desire to not ship another forms package that isn't the strategic one with Word7.



Database

JimAll updated as much as he could on database support. With DDT people focusing on Notes, this is currently on hold. After 6/10 the DDT people might be able to return to working on the common database API. Jim explained that he can't work on this without DDT.

Text Controls

The conclusion was that there are two text controls that support the same message based interface (Cairo and Mail). Chicago will use one of them for WritePad and that will be the one that will ship. Since mail will be using the one they developed, Chicago will most likely use that one assuming it is the smallest and fastest. JimAll said that to insure compatibility, work will be done to use the component tests. It is unfortunate that we have two of these controls that are substantially the same.

Help

There was a general discussion of problems in both authoring online documentation and in viewing it. Bill views it as important that Word become a great authoring platform, which Chris will look into for Word7 (things like links). There was some discussion of the current MSDN limitations (build time, lack of incremental compilation) and how other groups would like to get access to their online tools and support. The general consensus is to first move to minimize the amount of work to produce online documentation, which means carefully delineating the few things that need to get done between Help and CDROM based docs and getting our tools to do these automatically. Even if user-ed wants to go and do different things for CD, it will be important to minimize those. Bill reiterated that we need to figure out how to reduce the number of words in the documentation as well and we must still have a Quality approach for online. PeteH says there are contractors that have been doing work for us that take less time and money to produce the online docs.

This is an issue that needs to be coordinated between MSDN and the product groups. PeteH will be looking into this (let me know if I can help).

Other

Bill updated the group on the current Online efforts, Gerstner, FTC, Apple.

ChrisP raised the issue of exploring the work being done in ATBD Natural Language for use in Word. He will follow up.

BradSi updated the ValuePoint/PS1 dos situation. There will be a follow up meeting.