

From: Greg Whitten (gregw)  
Sent: Monday, November 22, 1993 10:51 AM  
To: Bob Atkinson; Bob Muglia; Jim Allchin  
Cc: Mike Maples; Paul Maritz; Tony Williams  
Subject: RE: WP, OpenDoc

We have to take the hard line. We can't give OpenDoc even an inch as easy runtime interface to OLE 2.0. We don't want to lose control of the API that ISV's are writing to. MFC is a special case since it belongs to Microsoft. If we say that OpenDoc is an OK runtime, then they will use that position to get ISV's to write to that interface plus they now get cross-platform benefits, etc.

I did not understand the part of your comment about the OpenDoc interfaces not being new and by implication different from OLE 2.0. Is Apple using OLE 2.0 interfaces or are they wrapping them?

Three more things.

Nagel has been jerking us around. We should be taking a harder line against Apple, IBM, and Novell and especially with any ISV's in their coalition. I.e., an ISV's participation in CIL could disqualify them from OLE prerelease information. We should let WP know that in uncertain terms along with all the other hard messages we given them.

We should start up the vaporware PR campaign for OLE 3.0 (1994) and OLE 4.0 (1995). I would like to see a brief feature comparison of OpenDoc vs. OLE 2.0. I have not seen a proposal for an OLE 3.0 feature set. Tony and Bob should put together an initial list for distribution.

I suggested quite a long time ago that we should do an OLE assessment day for OLE 2.0 usage within the company. This needs to happen for the compound document and automation parts. We need to get clear feedback about OLE 2.0 from our internal clients and what should be added, fixed to increase the quality of our implementations, and to spread the understanding about what can be done with all the OLE 2.0 interfaces and its object model. I don't know of a better way for DAD to state their opinions and learn about OLE and for us to take the feedback and make OLE better. I don't have anyone to set this up. Someone else should do it. This should happen sooner than later. It should have happened before the PDC so that we could be more concrete about where OLE would be going.

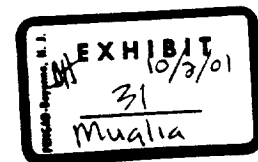
From: Bob Atkinson  
To: Bob Muglia; Jim Allchin  
Cc: Greg Whitten; Mike Maples; Paul Maritz; Tony Williams  
Subject: RE: WP, OpenDoc  
Date: Mon, Nov 22, 1993 9:44AM

I still think there is a less hardcore position that has a lot of value in causing churn inside OpenDoc. I think that in writing it off entirely at this stage you are being too black and white about it. That we'd be so summary with WP and yet so wishy-washy with Apple as we are presently doing is beyond me. Apple is clearly out to get us, and there's nothing that will dissuade them, while it's still plausible that WP is just afraid of us.

We need to be very careful about following a direction of using opendoc to build OLE apps. Opendoc (apparently) defines a different set of interfaces. It is critical that we maintain ownership of the interfaces and not cede this to Opendoc.

Absolutely true: we "must" retain ownership of interface definitions. Despite their hype, though, most of OpenDoc, is largely not new interfaces. Yes, they have a couple of features that we don't have, and to retain control I was proposing (sorry, didn't make that clear in the last mail) that as part of what we do we'd set up and define "OLE" interfaces as the interoperability standard for these features. There's only a couple of 'em.

Further, I am convinced from my conversation with Mark Ericson that Opendoc will fail, at least on Windows. They are much further away than they claim and it is not at all clear that



MS-PCA 1515695  
CONFIDENTIAL

they can get OLE interop working without our help. Without OLE interop, they are toast. We have significant momentum with OLE, all we need to do is execute on our deliveries and continue our ISV evangelism.

I know that it will come late. But complete failure, I'm not at all so sure. Not at all. Witness the amazing amount of reception that a piece of trash like SOM gets. 60% solutions can still be a big headache.

Specifically, I do not want to begin any conversations about merging opendoc and OLE.

I agree. This would be a total mistake. But this is not at all what I'm suggesting. Nobody claimed that we merged OLE and MFC, for example.

We are in a position of strength. If we execute on the base we've established, we are well positioned to maintain our leadership position for many years to come. Screwing around with opendoc can only hurt us and the ISVs who have followed our lead with OLE.

If we "screw around" then we've failed. Indeed we must do this without compromising OLE's leadership. But if we offer and sell a position that is both technically truthful and socially palatable to WP, we can end up with them getting on board in just the place we want them: as solid supporters of OLE.

Instead, I think we need to follow-up with Wordperfect but from a much more hardcore position. Although I need to get more details on the politics of the situation from doughe and crew, I want Wordperfect to understand that we consider Opendoc as a competitor to MS Systems. We will not help them.

Indeed it certainly is a systems competitor today. But their mispositioning is the point: I think I'm offering a way that we can be a lot less confrontational ("OpenDoc is fine, we just think you've haven't understood where it fits in") even if in the end the two approaches end up with the same actual effect.

I make Opendoc work. They also need to understand that if they pursue bento as their storage format, they will have a significant disadvantage in the Cairo world where docfiles are transparently converted to native OFS storage.

Curious: do we yet have any real numbers on the performance advantage that, say, Word6 would see?

I essentially told Mark all of that when I saw him at Comdex, but I want to follow-up with his management so that it is clear that wordperfect has gotten the message.

Bob

MS-PCA 1515696  
CONFIDENTIAL