

From: Steven Sinofsky
Sent: Friday, October 08, 1999 11:14 PM
To: Bill Gates
Cc: Steve Ballmer; Bob Muglia (Exchange)
Subject: RE: Office thought leadership

Ouch! I know you are trying to be helpful, but I feel like I have to say that this mail hurt a bunch. It is bad enough for you to call me, effectively, an idiot, but it is even worse when you do so in front of everyone who works for me, my peers, and my boss. I need to say some things about where we are and I'm doing it in mail because I have failed at trying to communicate at all in person.

Mostly I want to emphasize that I'm not defensive about where we are-I'm sure I sound that way because well, I do think your mail calls for a little defense from us/me. I am as realistic about this as anyone and I live these issues 24x7x365. I am saying that I think this is a much harder problem and it is not Office's alone. What is perceived to be going on with Office is the same thing we are seeing in Windows and Developer. I know you know that, and I know we are all worried about that.

I continue to be optimistic about what we are doing and what we enable. On the other hand, we need to find some way to recognize the changes in the marketplace. I feel like we are doing relevant work in Office-but it is not the most exciting work. The things that excite IEUs are not just in the Office space right now.

You asked for some suggestions on how to help more so let me be so bold and offer two:

- Please stop distancing yourself from the product decisions. I think mail like this puts a distance between you and our team-that somehow we got stupid all by ourselves and whatever is going on was not something you were aware of or had anything to do with and it is up to you to have us be less stupid.
- Please take the time to learn and listen more. Some of the issues below are things I've answered for you a bunch of times (netmeeting integration) and some are things that we've done for a couple of years but somehow you don't know about. It might be as simple as just asking rather than assuming we're stupid and didn't do something (like have case studies or the intranet starter kit).

In terms of being part of the problem/solution rather than separating yourself from Office, I have really killed myself for Office 2000 (and Office10) to keep you informed about the product. For Office 2000 we had the following meetings with you:

- 2 full day retreats in pre-planning
- vision meeting where Jon and I walked you through the vision and priorities (weeks after we presented to the team), plus the vision was emailed to you in draft and final form during the process.
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- 5 separate drill down meetings (2 hours each) on the main vision pillars (html, tco, data, outlook, collaboration)-all during the first milestone. Most of these meetings focused on that we should not do HTML.
- developer hallway walk through
- full 3 hour meeting of demonstrations (which you sent very nice positive feedback about)
- exec staff demonstration
- PLUS we sent an incredibly detailed status report every other month with a complete list of features, adds/cuts, and risks. And our spec site is up to date, consistent with what we're building, and always available to you.

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Remember the environment we were in back in the Spring of 1997-Java Office was going to make us irrelevant, TCO was out of control and the most important thing to reduce, bloatware was rampant and people only use 10% of Office 97, and oh by the way Office 97 was a complete dog of a product. While we were planning Office 2000 not a day went by when we didn't read reviews or articles about the end of Office and the end of productivity software because the web would make them irrelevant (remember eSuite-Lotus killed a few weeks ago). The WSJ headline "Office 97: 4500 features, some useful, most arcane". The NY Times review, "Office 97: The Leviathan Sets Sail". Gartner was estimating that an Office 97 upgrade was worthless to users ("Stick with Office 95 if you are on 32 bits, wait until you buy new hardware and move to Windows 95 and then consider Office 97") and more importantly was going to cost \$12000 a year to maintain.

Plaintiff's Exhibit

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Comes V. Microsoft

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[As an aside, I would contrast these reviews with the Office 2000 reviews that were generally positive but just said that the release was too focused on web and tco-which of course is no surprise since that is precisely what we focused on].

At the same time while we were trying to plan, our organization was being turned upside down and sideways. Office was working for someone who hated Office 97 and told us that all the time (a product with no soul). The Outlook team was moved out of Office, and our marketing leadership was ousted. We eventually recovered from the Outlook change, but not before Outlook Express got created (to confuse our client strategy) and Outlook was essentially split into "internet mail" and "exchange mail", and the team was cut in half to create netdocs. Are we surprised that we are not getting the most out of Outlook after the pain we have caused that team and the change in direction we have forced upon them? [Outlook "rejoined" Office 2000 at the start of Milestone 3]

Marketing is finally on the path to recovery-there has been no one leading marketing for over a 18 months. I feel like I personally did all the PR for Office 2000's launch (half of it from my sabbatical)-I was reviewing box copy, reviewers guides, and whitepapers (I think I was the most experienced marketing person on the PR team-everyone else was driven away by the constant state of flux and lack of leadership). Are we surprised that we have failed to execute on Office 2000's launch? The team had no one of experience, no leadership, and was randomized by "yet to come" org changes for the 6 months prior to launch.

We were in a total bind about what to do about building the next Office. How do you build the next generation of a product that is used by so many people in so many different ways, and at the same time is the source of scorn and ridicule internally and within the industry. Our sales force was hostile towards us over the supportability of Office 97 and I was personally spending countless hours in conference calls with irate customers.

In terms of THOUGHT LEADERSHIP-**we made a monster bet that two-way webs** would be a thought leadership idea. We talked endlessly about this with you in early planning. Many times I asked you for better ideas and tried to explain the challenges the web brought to Office. We were fighting complete irrelevancy with Office. We talked specifically about the vision for the product and the scenarios of making departmental we sites. We also talked specifically about making "Personal Productivity" priority #6 in our vision-because we had been tagged by bloatware and Office 97 had more features than anyone wanted. We spent about 75% of our resources on TCO (infrastructure for deployment and management), Web (infrastructure for HTML and web server), and accessing Data (infrastructure for OLEDB and SQL) We also were very specific in our vision statement what the priorities were (here is the text).

We have a challenge in designing Office9 in that for the vast majority of PC users, Office 97 is still well ahead of the average user's need for Internet functionality. Office9 will be a leading-edge product in terms of focus on Internet scenarios. Office9 is a technology-centric release based on leveraging the standards in infrastructure. It is the case that decisions will be made that take into account where technology trends are taking the industry rather than specifically focusing on today's customer feedback or expectations. Office9 is a leadership product for the industry and customers.

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So we made a bet on the web. We made a bet on technology. We knew we had so much infrastructure to do that we had to tone down the random features. We focused our demos on cross-suite features we thought we have high impact in web scenarios (collect and paste, answerwizard on the web). We also had the challenge of building a new release that was an easy upgrade, which implied that we not intentionally alter the UI in a radical or noticeable way→ people can't tell that there is a new Office on a machine.

And today we find ourselves in a world that we did not predict-a world where the web is just not taking off inside of corporations. Why? We don't know except we know the following:

- The infrastructure is just not something people want to deal with. The webs for a .COM site are run by IT as mission critical. The intranet is designed by contractors/pros (like razorfish).
- IEUs could care less about getting work done using the web. To them the web is all about the next cool online store (a radical change from the "next cool search engine" or "push" or some other fad), news, buying books, and beanies baby auctions.
- IEUs just aren't interested in changing the way they get their day to day document creation done. They are more interested in integrating their Palm Pilot into their work, or trying out the latest Sprint PCS phone with a microbrowser.
- Email has subsumed file sharing and information distribution. Rather than use file servers at all, people are sending around documents. That keeps the admins out of the loop completely-you never need to worry about offline/online or who can read what share, where the heck a share is, or if you are working with a person that is outside the company or in another geography. All of that is easily fixed by just sending attachments.

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I'm all for radically changing the focus of Office. And we have done that with Outlook. But at the same time we have a legacy product that we have to deal with.

I just spent two days walking around InternetWorld in NYC. This is the IEU show to end all IEU shows. Microsoft is, and I am being dramatic, utterly irrelevant to this crowd. The most crowded booth the Handspring booth. The other crowded booths were ATT and Sprint (wireless connectivity, DSL, etc.). The couple of software booths that seem crowded were Adobe (Go Live!), Macromedia (Flash), and AOL (people checking their mail). I am not making this up, but the only Microsoft product that consistently generated 10-deep crowds with engaging and excitable questions was FrontPage, followed closely by PhotoDraw. HotMail was also super exciting and nearly every machine I saw at the show (everywhere) had hotmail in the recent history. We're confusing people with some slide show of BizTalk and making them laugh with demos of a new operating system that isn't Linux. We know 100% of these people use Office, and many have upgraded to 2000 (we got lots of questions from people with the product) but IEUs crave newness, and Office, no matter how hard we try, just isn't new. A cloned Palm Pilot is new and cool. MP3 players are new and cool. I was incredibly depressed walking around. I see this challenge as enormous.

But we also know that when we do get to show Office 2000 to people there is exciting stuff there (PowerPoint all-in-one, autoauto correct, improved charting, quick address in outlook, and at least 20 other easily demonstrable cool features). I attended three 400+ person "Team Web" IEU events in different cities and each one of them was enthusiastic and the survey results were all dominated by "I will buy". The booth demos of Office did pack people in and there was interest. We are fighting some perceptions of cost (and some realities)-given limited money, \$300 on an MP3 player seems like a much cooler investment.

But somehow, Office 2000 has gotten the "no IEU excitement" bit flipped. We don't know why since the only data we are seeing is (a) low results at retail and (b) a complete and near total lack of market awareness of the product in surveys. We do not have a bunch of reports saying "I've seen the product and it is not exciting". But we do have a bunch of reports that say "Sure I've seen the product, but I am focused on MP3 players, Palm Pilots, and eCommerce". Also, we have some issues with the perception of the price that worry me a lot. We might need to recognize that for the time being the IEU community is just somewhere else-I do not think this is very different from the developer community just moving away from Win32 and focusing on Java and PERL.

Let me try to address some of your specific points below.

Concern What we have so far

Excited by Office We have several case studies on www.microsoft.com/office <<http://www.microsoft.com/office>> in the IT section. In particular, the UT Austin one is a great one regarding web stuff. But frankly it is too early and we just don't have the deployments out there yet. We have several on TCO issues which are all enthusiastic. Obviously this is something we continue to work on.

Templates/ Wizards for intranets We had the intranet starter kit for Office 97 and this is updated for Office 2000. We continue to show it and the field uses it. I was just at Internet World and watched us continue to use it in the theater presentation. This was a mainstay of our web site all through the Office 97 cycle.

Community Have you visited the newsgroups for Office? They are active (both the Microsoft ones and the internet comp. ones). As you can imagine they are also filled with their share of rants and raves. But we have a community of people out there and they do share experiences.

Meetings I sent along features we have for NetMeeting (I've sent this several times and spoke about this at mid-years and our three year plan). We have seen an incredible rise in the use of PowerPoint so in some sense we have been driving a big change in how meetings are done. We have numerous features in powerpoint for doing presentations (broadcast) or taking notes/action items. These just aren't used. Like anything, you have to overcome discovery and inertia-we can't put every feature front and center; there's no way. We have also greatly improved meeting scheduling and attendee tracking. You don't see this because you work with an assistant, but for many people this is something that has fundamentally changed meetings. You can find scheduled times, you can find the right room with the right resources, you can have admins that manage conference rooms and a/v equipment. And of course all of those scheduled meetings can happen online. I saw your write up of experiences with NetMeeting. I think that should help you to understand the challenges we face here. But I also think you should get it connected and then have a meeting. It takes an experience no one likes (meetings) and makes it worse. You talk to a postage stamp sized person and see out of sync pictures while you share a low resolution white board. A conference call and a fax, or an emailed powerpoint presentation, are superior means to do this. That's what people do today. PowerPoint made this better!

Digitally Stored Information You are correct that we have not invested in this area. It is a little unclear how Office, the document creation and editing tools, can add a lot of value since this seems more like a storage and viewing issue. I certainly understand the annotation scenario here, but given the complexities of editing, creation, and analysis we have not focused on this area. The ePaper team is, however.

Examples for your speeches What do you want?
How about asking? Have you shown presentation broadcast? Have you shown round tripping HTML documents to a server? Have you shown subscribing to a document? Collect and Paste? Have you shown and custom inbox filtering for

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mail management in Outlook? Have you shown custom answerwizard? Answerwizard on the web? Have you shown lock down for IT? Have you shown terminal server? Full fidelity roundtrip HTML in FrontPage (a huge IEU pleaser)? Have you talked about Boeing, UT Austin, Nortel? I don't know, but no one has ever asked me for things to show. All I am ever asked for for your speeches is a "Future of Office" slide, never an "Office 2000 slide".

ActiveDirectory We had a huge plan to use active directory and our web components-then the fact that AD was not really an OLEDB provider did away with the killer scenarios we had planned to do pivoting, reporting, and more importantly custom views on web pages using our web components (I raised this issue at least 3 times during development). It is correct that we have not baked in more granular features like document security-on the other hand, this is a scenario that is much better addressed by just using the Permissions dialog in explorer for the file server, I think. We have work to do here-as you know AD was not the most stable piece of Windows 2000 to build upon.

PDA devices Enormous work went into making ActiveSync 3.0 amazing for Outlook. The CE team did a great job improving this and it is better than anything out there.

Moving settings We will have an officeupdate service to save your settings to Microsoft.com and reload them on any machine. We ship a utility that allows you to do this without the internet as well-the Office Profile Wizard. This came out of all the work we did for TCO. This works today and we are just rolling out the web service. I sent you the link to try this out months ago.

Communicate demost I would have to say that I think a Quiz about Office is about the furthest thing from the mind of any of our customers or IEUs. We cannot scale a WTS demo, but we do have a bunch of screen shots. For Office 97 we tried to do screencam movies but they were too big and people hated downloading them. We can't do streaming content because the screensize is too small. The technology that would work for this is MacroMedia FLASH.

Digital Dashboard I don't understand the plans either yet. I have cautioned everyone that I feel we oversold this concept. I don't see how to make this an out of box experience. If you have a programmer and more importantly if you have access to the data there is an infinite amount of flexibility. They can just write an activex control that talks to whatever back end and displays it anyway. We should take a lesson from PUSH and from customized home pages like my yahoo that show these not to be very sticky for people. I have not seen the things from erp/accounting firms, but I can say that if we can restrict ourselves to data that we create and no about we can do a great job-the example we have for that is Outlook Today and mail data. You might say this is not the most interesting data, but it shows that if you know the data you can make a very whizzy and customizable interface. There is much work to be done in this type of area. But we know from recent focus groups and studies that this is not something that resonates with end-users (we show them screen shots and discuss it and they yawn). It is super exciting to CEOs and executives, but end-users are skeptical as they are about custom home pages and push. Even given that, we just released a great DD CD that is quite nice (done by betsy's audience marketing team). It really works and gets the point across.

I am not unloading or anything (honest). The mail just raised a lot of issues that I needed to clarify. There is enormous stress and pressure on the team and when mail like this goes around it does not raise morale or improve our chances of success. I wanted to give you some of the context around where we are right now.

Thanks for listening

-----Original Message-----

From: Bill Gates
Sent: Monday, October 04, 1999 6:36 PM
To: Bob Muglia (Exchange)
Cc: Bob Muglia's Extended Staff (Exchange DL); Steve Ballmer
Subject: Office thought leadership

We need to be the champions of the idea that Knowledge Workers will become more empowered and more effective because of the great software tools on the PC - primarily Microsoft Office.

This requires a level of THOUGHT LEADERSHIP that goes beyond the specific product plans. It requires thinking through the scenarios and finding great examples of how those allow a company to work in a better way.

We have often been called a great marketing company and I hope we can prove that to be true of our THOUGHT LEADERSHIP marketing of Office. I wouldn't say I have seeing us stepping up to this yet the way that I think we need to.

Right now the world thinks the must do thing is to build a great web site. The idea that information flow inside the company also needs to improve in radical ways is something that we are not getting out there the way we must. This is the path that makes Office and its richness and quality well worth the world staying totally in touch with and being enthused about.

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Let me be clear on the kinds of things I am expecting.

I am expecting to hear about users and companies who are excited about what they are doing with Office. What are your favorite 10 stories about people who used Office2000 to build great Intranets? How about one example other than the ones done in the Office group itself? What templates/wizards exist to help people who want to do these Intranet web sites? Can I find these on our web site?

What kind of community is Microsoft building around Office users who share their experiences and work?

What is our view of how meetings should change? How should Microsoft technologies help with this? What are we doing internally? Do people spend a lot of time in meetings? How could it be better? How does Netmeeting fit into this? I sent a lot of mail about this and never heard anything back.

The whole idea of storing information digitally instead of on paper. Does Office have a role in helping people here?

I spend about 10% of my time thinking about Office thought leadership. Let's say we have 3 people full time on this - then we would have 30x what I have come up with for the book with Digital Feedback loop, Digital Dashboard, and the metrics for how a company can say they are empowering their Office worker. What is the report card that makes you want to have Office2000? We need about 30x more than just me trying to push this stuff forward.

When was the last time I got a great example from the Office group and used it in a speech? Maybe there are lots of these but I looked on our website to try and find some. Is it stored in a secret place?

Let's take secure documents. Microsoft has Active Directory - how can I share a document in a secure way with another company? I know this requires cooperation with systems but Office has to drive the scenarios that count. Document sharing in a secure way is a real scenario. The password stuff in Office today is a really bad solution to this problem. Is there any relationship between Office and AD?

Is there any relationship between Office and PDA type devices? Is there any work to make it easy to move share state between two PCs where I get all my Office state replicated between them?

I liked the demo that was done at MGS of Office but can I have a quiz or a WTS or other way of looking at those when I visit the Microsoft web site?

The Digital Dashboard thing is an example where we are going full speed ahead but I still don't understand the concrete plans. If apps want to publish things in a small space on the screen how do they develop those controls? Do we make that easy? If Digital Dashboard is super concrete then great. I have seen Oracle and SAP and GreatPlains and others doing quite concrete stuff. Have we learned from them? Are we a superset of them?

Knowledge workers being allowed to do a great job is something deeply important. We have allowed ourselves and the world to lose sight of this by not driving forward neat new examples that people can relate to. We need this thought leadership - even just for the product we are shipping today.

It is necessary that this come together. Let me know how I can be more helpful. I am glad to sit and brainstorm how we get the thought leadership going. Believe me this is fun stuff once we get started.

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From: Bill Gates
Sent: Saturday, October 09, 1999 10.35 AM
To: Steven Sinofsky
Cc: Steve Ballmer; Bob Muglia
Subject: RE: Office thought leadership

I apologize if my message was discouraging at all.

I was trying to saw constructively there is a vacuum in terms of getting people to understand that Knowledge workers will become a lot more productive using great software tools (office) and we need to do more there

It was mostly a piece of email about our marketing situation.

I agree I should ask more for examples. I will.

I want to be a constructive helper in this discussion

One thing that was weird was that the alias I picked I couldn't expand to see how big it was. I still have no idea how big it is.

I used to be able to see the size of these aliases.

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From: Steven Sinofsky
Sent: Friday, October 08, 1999 11:40 PM
To: Bill Gates
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And today we find ourselves in a world that we did not predict—a world where the web is just not taking off inside of corporations. Why? We don't know except we know the following:

- The infrastructure is just not something people want to deal with. The webs for a .COM site are run by IT as mission critical. The intranet is designed by contractors/pros (like razorfish).
- IEUs could care less about getting work done using the web. To them the web is all about the next cool online store (a radical change from the "next cool search engine" or "push" or some other fad), news, buying books, and beanies baby auctions.
- IEUs just aren't interested in changing the way they get their day to day document creation done. They are more interested in integrating their Palm Pilot into their work, or trying out the latest Sprint PCS phone with a microbrowser.
- Email has subsumed file sharing and information distribution. Rather than use file servers at all, people are sending around documents. That keeps the admins out of the loop completely—you never need to worry about offline/online or who can read what share, where the heck a share is, or if you are working with a person that is outside the company or in another geography. All of that is easily fixed by just sending attachments.

I'm all for radically changing the focus of Office. And we have done that with Outlook. But at the same time we have a legacy product that we have to deal with.

I just spent two days walking around InternetWorld in NYC. This is the IEU show to end all IEU shows. Microsoft is, and I am being dramatic, utterly irrelevant to this crowd. The most crowded booth the Handspring booth. The other crowded booths were ATT and Sprint (wireless connectivity, DSL, etc.). The couple of software booths that seem crowded were Adobe (Go Live!), Macromedia (Flash), and AOL (people checking their mail). I am not making this up, but the only Microsoft product that consistently generated 10-deep crowds with engaging and excitable questions was FrontPage, followed closely by PhotoDraw. HotMail was also super exciting and nearly every machine I saw at the show (everywhere) had hotmail in the recent history. We're confusing people with some slide show of BizTalk and making them laugh with demos of a new operating system that isn't Linux. We know 100% of these people use Office, and many have upgraded to 2000 (we got lots of questions from people with the product) but IEUs crave newness, and Office, no matter how hard we try, just isn't new. A cloned Palm Pilot is new and cool. MP3 players are new and cool. I was incredibly depressed walking around. I see this challenge as enormous.

But we also know that when we do get to show Office 2000 to people there is exciting stuff there (PowerPoint all-in-one, autoauto correct, improved charting, quick address in outlook, and at least 20 other easily demonstrable cool features). I attended three 400+ person "Team Web" IEU events in different cities and each one of them was enthusiastic and the survey results were all dominated by "I will buy". The booth demos of Office did pack people in and there was interest. We are fighting some perceptions of cost (and some realities)-given limited money, \$300 on an MP3 player seems like a much cooler investment.

But somehow, Office 2000 has gotten the "no IEU excitement" bit flipped. We don't know why since the only data we are seeing is (a) low results at retail and (b) a complete and near total lack of market awareness of the product in surveys. We do not have a bunch of reports saying "I've seen the product and it is not exciting". But we do have a bunch of reports that say "Sure I've seen the product, but I am focused on MP3 players, Palm Pilots, and eCommerce". Also, we have some issues with the perception of the price that worry me a lot. We might need to recognize that for the time being the IEU community is just somewhere else—I do not think this is very different from the developer community just moving away from Win32 and focusing on Java and PERL.

Let me try to address some of your specific points below.

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Concern**What we have so far**

Excited by Office

We have several case studies on www.microsoft.com/office

<<http://www.microsoft.com/office>> in the IT section. In particular, the UT Austin one is a great one regarding web stuff. But frankly it is too early and we just don't have the deployments out there yet. We have several on TCO issues which are all enthusiastic. Obviously this is something we continue to work on.

Templates/ Wizards for intranets

We had the intranet starter kit for Office 97 and this is updated for Office 2000. We continue to show it and the field uses it. I was just at Internet World and watched us continue to use it in the theater presentation. This was a mainstay of our web site all through the Office 97 cycle.

Community

Have you visited the newsgroups for Office? They are active (both the Microsoft ones and the internet comp. ones). As you can imagine they are also filled with their share of rants and raves. But we have a community of people out there and they do share experiences.

Meetings

I sent along features we have for NetMeeting (I've sent this several times and spoke about this at mid-years and our three year plan). We have seen an incredible rise in the use of PowerPoint so in some sense we have been driving a big change in how meetings are done. We have numerous features in powerpoint for doing presentations (broadcast) or taking notes/action items. These just aren't used. Like anything, you have to overcome discovery and inertia-we can't put every feature front and center; there's no way. We have also greatly improved meeting scheduling and attendee tracking. You don't see this because you work with an assistant, but for many people this is something that has fundamentally changed meetings. You can find scheduled times, you can find the right room with the right resources, you can have admins that manage conference rooms and a/v equipment. And of course all of those scheduled meetings can happen online. I saw your write up of experiences with NetMeeting. I think that should help you to understand the challenges we face here. But I also think you should get it connected and then have a meeting. It takes an experience no one likes (meetings) and makes it worse. You talk to a postage stamp sized person and see out of sync pictures while you share a low resolution white board. A conference call and a fax, or an emailed powerpoint presentation, are superior means to do this. That's what people do today. PowerPoint made this better!

Digitally Stored Information You are correct that we have not invested in this area. It is a little unclear how Office, the document creation and editing tools, can add a lot of value since this seems more like a storage and viewing issue. I certainly understand the annotation scenario here, but given the complexities of editing, creation, and analysis we have not focused on this area. The ePaper team is, however.

Examples for your speeches: What do you want? How about asking? Have you shown presentation broadcast? Have you shown round tripping HTML documents to a server? Have you shown subscribing to a document? Collect and Paste? Have you shown and custom inbox filtering for mail management in Outlook? Have you shown custom answerwizard? Answerwizard on the web? Have you shown lock down for IT? Have you shown terminal server? Full fidelity roundtrip HTML in FrontPage (a huge IEU pleaser)? Have you talked about Boeing, UT Austin, Nortel? I don't know, but no one has ever asked me for things to show. All I am ever asked for for your speeches is a "Future of Office" slide, never an "Office 2000 slide".

ActiveDirectory

We had a huge plan to use active directory and our web components-then the fact that AD was not really an OLEDB provider did away with the killer scenarios we had planned to do (pivoting, reporting, and more importantly custom views on web pages using our web components (I raised this issue at least 3 times during development)). It is correct that we have not baked in more granular features like document security-on the other hand, this is a scenario that is much better addressed by just using the Permissions dialog in explorer for the file server, I think. We have work to do here-as you know AD was not the most stable piece of Windows 2000 to build upon.

PDA devices

Enormous work went into making ActiveSync 3.0 amazing for Outlook. The CE team did a great job improving this and it is better than anything out there.

Moving settings

We will have an officeupdate service to save your settings to Microsoft.com and reload them on any machine. We ship a utility that allows you to do this without the internet as well-the Office Profile Wizard. This came out of all the work we did for TCO. This works today and we are just rolling out the web service. I sent you the link to try this out months ago.

Communicate demos

I would have to say that I think a Quiz about Office is about the furthest thing from the mind of any of our customers or IEUs. We cannot scale a WTS demo, but we do have a bunch of screen shots. For Office 97 we tried to do screencam movies but they were too big and people hated downloading them. We can't do streaming content because the screensize is too small. The technology that would work for this is MacroMedia FLASH.

Digital Dashboard

I don't understand the plans either yet. I have cautioned everyone that I feel we oversold this concept. I don't see how to make this an out of box experience. If you have a programmer and more importantly if you have access to the data there is an infinite amount of flexibility. They can just write an activex control that talks to whatever back end and displays it anyway. We should take a lesson from PUSH and from customized home pages like my yahoo that show these not to be very sticky for people. I have not seen the things from erp/accounting firms, but I can say that if we can restrict ourselves to data that we create and no about we can do a great job-the example we have for that is Outlook Today and mail data. You might say this is not the most interesting data, but it shows that if you know the data you can make a very whizzy and customizable interface. There is much work to be done in this type of area. But we know from recent focus groups and studies that this is not something that resonates with end-users (we show them screen shots and discuss it and they yawn). It is super exciting to CEOs and executives, but end-users are skeptical as they are about custom home pages and push. Even given that, we just released a great DD CD that is quite nice (done by betsy's audience marketing team). It really works and gets the point across.

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I am not unloading or anything (honest). The mail just raised a lot of issues that I needed to clarify. There is enormous stress and pressure on the team and when mail like this goes around it does not raise morale or improve our chances of success. I wanted to give you some of the context around where we are right now.

Thanks for listening

-----Original Message-----

From: Bill Gates
Sent: Monday, October 04, 1999 6:36 PM
To: Bob Muglia (Exchange)
Cc: Bob Muglia's Extended Staff (Exchange DL); Steve Ballmer
Subject: Office thought leadership

We need to be the champions of the idea that Knowledge Workers will become more empowered and more effective because of the great software tools on the PC - primarily Microsoft Office.

This requires a level of THOUGHT LEADERSHIP that goes beyond the specific product plans. It requires thinking through the scenarios and finding great examples of how those allow a company to work in a better way.

We have often been called a great marketing company and I hope we can prove that to be true of our THOUGHT LEADERSHIP marketing of Office. I wouldn't say I have seeing us stepping up to this yet the way that I think we need to.

Right now the world thinks the must do thing is to build a great web site. The idea that information flow inside the company also needs to improve in radical ways is something that we are not getting out there the way we must. This is the path that makes Office and its richness and quality well worth the world staying totally in touch with and being enthused about.

Let me be clear on the kinds of things I am expecting.

I am expecting to hear about users and companies who are excited about what they are doing with Office. What are your favorite 10 stories about people who used Office2000 to build great Intranets? How about one example other than the ones done in the Office group itself? What templates/wizards exist to help people who want to do these Intranet web sites? Can I find these on our web site?

What kind of community is Microsoft building around Office users who share their experiences and work?

What is our view of how meetings should change? How should Microsoft technologies help with this? What are we doing internally? Do people spend a lot of time in meetings? How could it be better? How does Netmeeting fit into this? I sent a lot of mail about this and never heard anything back.

The whole idea of storing information digitally instead of on paper. Does Office have a role in helping people here?

I spend about 10% of my time thinking about Office thought leadership. Lets say we have 3 people full time on this - then we would have 30x what I have come up with for the book with Digital Feedback loop, Digital Dashboard, and the metrics for how a company can say they are empowering their Office worker. What is the report card that makes you want to have Office2000? We need about 30x more than just me trying to push this stuff forward.

When was the last time I got a great example from the Office group and used it in a speech? Maybe there are lots of these but I looked on our website to try and find some. Is it store in a secret place?

Lets take secure documents. Microsoft has Active Directory - how can I share a document in a secure way with another company? I know this requires cooperation with systems but Office has to drive the scenarios that count. Document sharing in a secure way is a real scenario. The password stuff in Office today is a really bad solution to this problem. Is there any relationship between Office and AD?

Is there any relationship between Office and PDA type devices? Is there any work to make it easy to move share state between two PCs where I get all my Office state replicated between them?

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I liked the demo that was done at MGS of Office but can I have a quiz or a WTS or other way of looking at those when I visit the Microsoft web site?

The Digital Dashboard thing is an example where we are going full speed ahead but I still don't understand the concrete plans. If apps want to publish things in a small space on the screen how do they develop those controls? Do we make that easy? If Digital Dashboard is super concrete then great. I have seen Oracle and SAP and GreatPlains and others doing quite concrete stuff. Have we learned from them? Are we a superset of them?

Knowledge workers being allowed to do a great job is something deeply important. We have allowed ourselves and the world to lose sight of this by not driving forward neat new examples that people can relate to. We need this though leadership - even just for the product we are shipping today.

It is necessary that this come together. Let me know how I can be more helpful. I am glad to sit and brainstorm how we get the thought leadership going. Believe me this is fun stuff once we get started.

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