

From w-clairl Thu Mar 21 15:40:26 1991
To: cameronm jonl msftpr steveb
Subject: Trip report from SPA press interviews by CameronM
Date: Thu Mar 21 15:24:29 1991

>From w-philm Wed Mar 20 12:27:45 1991
To: w-clairl
Subject: Meeting report for 3/18
Date: Wed Mar 20 12:27:43 1991

Claire, here is the report for the meetings I hosted for Cameron Myhrvold in San Francisco on 3/18.

MEETING OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives for these meetings:

1. Articulate and demonstrate Microsoft's commitment to strong ISV relationships.
2. Use the SPA meeting and SPA numbers to highlight Windows apps sales momentum.
3. Use the ISV program as one element in defusing FTC-related coverage.

KEY MESSAGES

1. MS loves ISVs. Developer support was recently reorganized to give even more emphasis and synergy to working with ISVs.
2. The mission of Cam's group is to promote the sale of systems software by making sure that MS systems are supported with the widest number of applications.
3. MS apps division is treated as just another ISV by Cameron's group.
4. MS has implemented several programs--Open Tools, OLE, Win32 SDK--where we have actively solicited feedback and comment from major software vendors. This supports the goal of winding up with the best systems software and tools that in turn result in the best applications.
5. All of this effort is now bearing fruit as Windows applications sales surpass Mac application sales. The groundswell of Windows apps developers continues to increase via Open Tools, OLE, Win32 SDK, etc.
6. It's in Microsoft's own best interest to make sure that all the major applications support MS system software--there is nothing to gain from giving MS apps an unfair advantage. The ChineseWall is real.

KEY RESPONSES FROM EDITORS

1. The editors we met with understand the role of developer relations. No one questioned Cam's mission or what his group does.
2. They were definitely impressed with the level of ISV support--they were very interested in specifics of things like Open Tools and Win 32 SDK--which
3. The editors were also clearly feeling that smoke equals fire. They indicated either directly or indirectly that MS aggressiveness and sales successes could be construed as crossing the line from hardnosed competition to something else.
4. KEY POINT--no one offered any specifics that would in any way support unfair advantage. The press is in a feeding frenzy now that blood

is in the water.

5. The potential for misunderstanding fine points is immense. The difference between Excel Group and Lotus doing hard-coded OLEW as opposed to using Libraries is just one example. How MS deals with OLE and System 7.0 is another (having OLE sit on top of 7.0 could be construed as a religious or hardball move). In virtually any instance where MS strategy intersects that of another firm, some editor will dig for evidence that MS did something or is doing something underhanded. This is part from just general MS-bashing.

MEETING SUMMARIES

Liz Eva, InfoWorld

Liz started off by apologizing for the previous week's article in Infoworld which failed to distinguish between hard-coded OLE and availabilities of libraries. She claimed that edits to the copy resulted in explanatory sections being deleted--giving the impression that Excel folks had a leg up on other apps vendors.

Liz asked a wide variety of questions:

Does developer relations do internal evangelizing at MS?
Do your networking and OS/2 customers say they're confused?
How do you envision Pen Windows systems being used? Who will buy them?
Does your group get involved in Windows development issues?
Will we see Lan Man 3.0 in Windows 32?

Cameron explained the Open Tools and Win 32 SDK programs; Liz was interested in who was participating. Cameron answered her questions on networking issues by positioning OS/2 as a network-independent OS, and talked about recent Novell announcements as validation of that position.

Liz asked about OLE 2.0, saying that Billg had talked about that at Esther Dyson's forum. The answer was futures vs what we do have--which is nearly-finished libraries and a lot of vendor involvement in making OLE great.

The only area of concern was at the very end of the session, when Cameron was wrapping up the presentation--Liz started to waver and go off into a tangent about the church/state perspective. She needs a follow-up call to make sure all the key points were really understood; she seemed to be in synch up until that last moment.

ACTION: Infoworld is planning another Windows supplement and Liz intends to cover developer-related issues there. She may also cover the SPA numbers release in next week's InfoWorld. Phil Missimore to call Liz Wednesday and make sure Liz understands MS positions on these issues. This may involve an additional follow-up call from Cameron.

Nancy McSharry, IDC

Nancy started the conversation with the Apple suit; then talked a bit about perceptions in terms of the desktop-midrange-server positioning messages that MS delivered in December.

Key questions/points she raised:

What is the impact on ISVs of the Apple suit?
How will you incorporate Network Courier into your plans?
Is there an order of importance between servers, tools, clients in Cameron's group?
Do the different groups inside developer relations pitch ISVs separately, or as a group?
Comment: Lotus and Borland seem to be making bad noises about MS these days.

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Do ISVs understand the issues involved in moving from Win 3.0 to Win32 and to OS/2 3.0?
Did the OLE spec come through the Windows/Presentation Manager Association?

Nancy commented that much of what is circulating in the press is simply envy, but she does feel that MS needs to do a better job of articulating that its future plans make sense and are really connected to smooth migrations at the ISV and user level. She was very impressed with the Corporate Developers conferences and would like to attend the San Jose sessions. She was also curious about the DLL process for OLE and which platforms would be completed first.

ACTION: Add Nancy to the invite list (if not already on) to the San Jose Corporate Developers Conference.

Carla Lazzareschi, Los Angeles Times

Carla is working on a story in the same vein as the WSJ and NY Times--and she is clearly trying to be the one who actually digs up specific instances. Fortunately, she hasn't found any and admitted as much.

She has already talked to Dick Shaffer and Go, and will certainly talk to IBM and Lotus.

The purpose of this interview was to give her a perspective on how MS handles its developer relations, NOT focusing on the FTC situation. Carla pushed hard, however, on that issue. Cameron stuck to the standard responses and only offered specifics in relation to what his group does.

Typical questions:

Cut to the chase--is there a Chinese wall?
Why do you have pissed off competitors?
Do you really have a level playing field?
If you talk to Jerry Kaplan of GO, people should never talk to MS.
Is there a code of ethics that your group follows?

Cameron was able to stipulate how MS self-interest dictates that his group be totally even-handed; he referred to the NY times article which showed how MS apps were NOT dominant as evidence that we weren't shifting the playing field.

Carla was clearly on a fishing expedition; she indicated that her feeling was many people who are talking to the press are putting two and two together, that Bill's image as take-no-prisoners CEO and continued MS success results in "maybe there's something there."

ACTION: Carla was scheduled to have a 3/19 phone interview with Mike Hallman; and also wanted to obtain a list of ISVs who would talk positively about MS.

Jim Daly, ComputerWorld

Jim is less focused on MS issues than other trade editors since CW is still trying to refine its PC-based coverage. He was less focused on the FTC issue than the other editors we met with. His questions tended to focus on what Cameron was presenting, asking for clarification rather than looking for holes.

Questions:

If you look at the Top 10 Windows apps sales, 5 products are from MS. Why? Doesn't that look like you've got a head start?

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Would you split off the apps division?
What's the status of Windows 3.1? Will it be 32-bit?
Is Win 32 two years away?
What are the vertical markets you cover with your group?
Would Object Vision employ Open Tools?
Why MAC Support for OLE?
When will WLO 1.0 ship?
Who is involved with piracy issues for MS?

Jim was clearly interested in how MS product plans would roll out. He asked if DLLs would ever extend to UNIX, and was trying to understand all the issues related to Win32 and future versions of product. Cameron talked about the increasing interest in entry-level software developers under Windows, and he was curious how that was defined by MS (explained to him as education, personal productivity).

ACTION: Jim is working on a column relating to development tools and feels that MS efforts in this area should be included. Cameron needs to specifically get back to Jim on whether Object vision employs Open Tools specs; and he is also covering software piracy as an issue in a future column. Phil Missimore to e-mail Carrine Greason at WE to make sure Jim is contacted by appropriate person.

Heather Clancy, CRN

Heather had written the previous week's FTC story in CRN and commented on how difficult it was for her editors to understand the concepts. She said she had to explain the hard-code vs. libraries difference in OLE to them more than once before they understood, and even then they edited her copy incorrectly. Her focus was to reaffirm all level playing field concept, and to understand more about tools and apps development, and the role of Cam's group.

Questions:

How do you treat MS apps division?
Did the OLE spec wind up in the Excel group before it went anywhere else?
Is it common for developers to use CompuServe for libraries access?
How does your group find new/smaller software developers?
Is there a Windows emphasis in your group?
Are people who were doing OS/2 tools now doing Windows tools? How many in total?
ACTION: Heather is working on a May 18 supplement on Windows applications and is open to talking to a variety of ISVs about not just their MS relationships but the broader process of apps development and tools. We need to get her a list of ISV contacts and proactively suggest additional themes for tools-related coverage.

Phil Missimore