



The waiting game

Okay, it's not the networking article Terence Green promised last month, but he does have a good excuse. And if you're waiting for a full native SmartSuite for OS/2, take a deep breath...

Last month I promised a networking article, but all I can say is, never trust a journalist. As I was starting to put this column together, IBM released the first of a series of enablers for Warp, Windows 95 and Windows NT network connections. I haven't had time to try them out and only one of the three components is available at the time of writing: that's a new Windows 95 client which allows you to have a single log-in from a PC running Windows 95. It replaces the Microsoft or NetWare client you're currently using and enables you to store user profile data on a Warp Server.

Currently (the beginning of February) there are some bugs being reported by early users but nothing too serious. The other two new network components are a Windows NT client and a Network Neighbourhood enabler for Warp Server. These were in beta at the time of writing. Check out the Warp Server home page at <http://www.software.ibm.com/warp-server/> for more details.

I'll do the networking thing in the next issue and put the new clients on the Cover CD for the June issue, if that's permitted in the licence.

I had hoped to be able to plonk the first FixPack for Warp 4 onto the current issue but it hasn't surfaced yet. It's slipped out once but that was unofficial. Why would you want a FixPack for Warp 4? Well, it's a case of "Lotus SmartSuite — the Nightmare continues!"

Nightmare on SmartSuite

I recently attended the annual Lotusphere conference and spoke to the new OS/2 product manager, the previous incumbent having managed to escape back to sanity

IBM Centre for Java Technology Development**

Welcome to our Web site ([index here](#)) for news, information, [free code](#) and [access to us](#). We work on Java support for ALX, OS/2 Warp, OS/390, and Windows** 3.1.

The essential update site for IBM's Java developments is down south at <http://ncc.hursley.ibm.com/javainfo/hurindex/html>

after what must have been some very trying times. Basically, the Open32 saga has yet to run its course, and in order to install and run the Generally Available (GA) versions of Lotus WordPro 96 for OS/2 and Freelance 96 for OS/2 on Warp 4, you must have the Warp 4 FixPack which may or may not be FixPack 1 when it is released.

In the UK, Lotus has decided not to ship the full SmartSuite 96 for OS/2 which includes only WordPro and Freelance in native OS/2 versions and the rest as Win-OS/2 applications. It will only ship the native OS/2 WordPro 96 and Freelance 96.

Now that the Windows version of SmartSuite 97 is shipping we can expect later this summer to see the full native OS/2 suite, I'm told, and this should include the

final working version of Open32 which is supposedly what the first Warp 4 FixPack will also include and which the '96' GA versions require. The Open32 scheme, which seemed like such a good idea when it was mooted, has taken nearly two years since first being publicly announced to get to the point where IBM has nearly managed to get it working.

Hopefully IBM will manage Java a lot better. For a start, the Java team is pumping out updates at <http://ncc.hursley.ibm.com/java> and the Java story for OS/2 is looking good. The possibility of OS/2 being refined to run as a Java machine to which I alluded in an earlier column now looks like becoming a reality in the not too distant future.

Currently, Warp uniquely ships with a native Java Virtual Machine so does not need to run Java applications in a browser; which means that a Warp client can run Java, OS/2, DOS and Windows applications. Some people call this a "thick" client to distinguish it from a "thin" client which, for example, would be a network computer that only ran Java applications or perhaps used one of the ICA clients such as Citrix mentioned in the previous column.

Warp NC

Clearly there's a huge interest in Java as a means of distributing applications to networked computers from central servers. Whether you're an end-user in a corporate running a small portfolio of applications, or a home user with a WebTV, thin clients are going to enable many more people to have access to computing services as the equipment will be cheaper than a PC and easier to manage. The way OS/2 fits into this scheme is that it can serve either or both purposes, thus providing a seamless transition from client/server computing to networked computing. With the full set of Warp services, a company could start to run Java applications while still maintaining traditional client-server applications. Later, Warp could be run without the WorkPlace Shell and with a Java interface instead, perhaps running the Kona Desktop, a collection of Java components, that Lotus demonstrated at Lotusphere.

The Lotus Kona desktop components are similar to Lotus ActiveX Components but contain more functionality, and they're tied together with the InfoBus, a dynamic component bus which allows them to interact. So in effect, it would be possible to have Warp running on a PC (and even perhaps on non-Intel architectures — remember the ill-fated microkernel Warp for PowerPC project?) without the WorkPlace Shell.

This sits neatly with the IBM NC (see <http://www.internet.ibm.com/networkstation>) which only runs Citrix at the moment but will run a Java front-end by mid-year. The problem some people have with this approach is that it is not flexible or powerful enough and therefore the Warp middle way is seen as a more viable integration path until Java comes of age. Once Java does begin to provide the services that take it out of hype space and into the real world, we can expect computing to become a lot more interesting. The problem with Windows on the PC is not that it's the wrong way, but that there are some things it simply can't do, and networked computing with Java can take both PCs and many other computing devices into areas where they can't go today.

IBM has spun off a Network Computing Project from the OS/2 developer team which will look at "mission-critical" Java applications, and at a recent seminar talked

more about this. The developers have been through the OpenDoc component architecture mill and have taken that experience into the JavaBeans component architecture. At the same time, IBM, Sun, Novell and Netscape are embarking on a Java World Tour to promote the "100% Pure Java Initiative". See <http://javaworldtour.sbxpos.com> or any of the major Java sites for more details.

The aim of the Pure Java initiative is to ensure that Java retains the "write once, run everywhere" ethos and does not fall into the trap of "enhanced HTML" which "runs best on" this or that web browser. Such moves, whereby companies try to gain a competitive advantage with proprietary enhancements, have confused the browser world and Java would suffer if it went down that road.

Reader response

We have some utilities coming up that have been written by readers, but the only material on the current cover CD is a set of backup and restore utilities for Warp LAN Server disk quota management (THCDASD.ZIP). They were written by Steve Sharrad of Henley College who is happy to take email at ssha@henleycol.ac.uk on the subject of LAN Server. Steve plans to upgrade to Warp Server this summer. He has "200 multimedia-hungry, yet totally diskless, stations running from two 486-DX33 servers". He has nearly 3,000 home directories to manage and reckons his OS/2 servers can give Windows NT a run for its money.

Several people responded to my query regarding Hauppauge Win/TV drivers and I should have given more detail in the last column as there are several Win/TV boards. Faye Pearson has a Win/TV PCI board. She discovered that drivers were being written for the Win/TV PCI back in December. They may be ready now at <http://www.wdi.co.uk/os2tv/os2tv.html> which is the homepage for the Warp/TV application and where you will find drivers for the more expensive Celebrity and Prisma boards.

Paul Bristow wrote to me that Warp includes a driver for the standard Win/TV card. He's running a Win/TV Celebrity and says the drivers are kept well up to date.

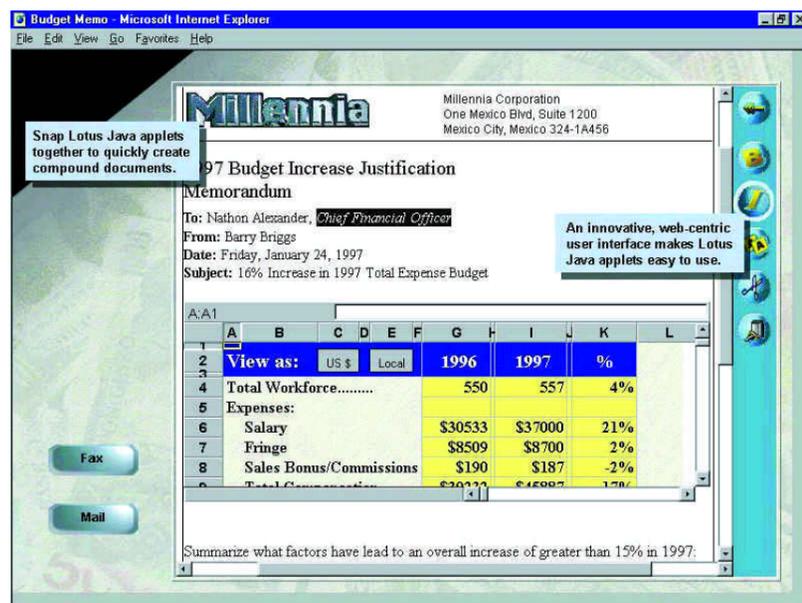
John Hern says he has used the Windows NT 4.0 workaround on about 25 configurations and has seen no problems so far. This is the fix that puts HPFS support



More details of the totally cool Lotus Kona Desktop technology can be found at <http://www.kona.lotus.com>



Visit <http://www.strath.ac.uk/~cadp44> to try out the games that Miltiadis Mitrakis has ported to Java



The Kona Desktop from Lotus consists of a suite of Java applets which can be snapped together to create web applications

back into Windows NT 4.0. John is also looking for a way of dealing with Win95 and HPFS on the same system. The easy answer, John, is to dump that pesky FAT file system, but that's not always possible.

John also wants to hear if anyone supporting Windows 95, Windows NT and OS/2 Warp can recommend a solution for "backing up different OSs on the same network with one program" as he has problems with restores. He's testing backup hardware and currently has a Seagate EIDE 4000 tape streamer.

Miltiadis Mitrakis responds on the subject of Java with a suggestion that

readers might wish to try out a couple of Java games he has ported from the OS/2 originals he wrote last year. He says the Chinese Checkers for Java game scored "Top 5%" in *JavaWorld* magazine in Japan. You can find the games on Mil's site at <http://www.strath.ac.uk/~cadp44> where there are applet and application versions.

PCW Contacts

Terence Green can be contacted by post via the PCW office or at os2@pcw.vnu.co.uk