

## he Times They Are a Changin' (or Why Windows Will Not Consume the Mac)

### Part 1 (of 3) — The Media

On August 6, 1997, Apple's Interim CEO, Steve Jobs, stunned the MacWorld Expo crowd by announcing "We have to let go of the notion that for Apple to win, Microsoft has to lose." For good measure, Jobs threw in "the competition between Apple and Microsoft is over as far as I'm concerned."

OK. He looked like Jobs and talked like Jobs. He must then be a Steve Jobs from an alternate reality. That's right, an alternate reality.

See, in this little niche of the time/space continuum, Microsoft IS Apple's enemy. In fact, here in the real world Microsoft is everyone's enemy. Perfectly good Power Macs are being ignominiously removed from desktops, replaced by crummy third-rate machines with Microsoft Windows™ operating systems of one flavor or another — not Sun's Solaris™, not Silicon Graphics' IRIX™, not even IBM's OS2/Warp™. Apple's MacOS is losing out to Microsoft products — period, end of story, finito, finis.

The mindset in the Apple community is all too often one of surrender — to Microsoft. I'm here to tell you that it's not inevitable. Microsoft is not going to rule the world — no matter how bleak the future of the Apple universe seems at times.

Let's be real about this — the only two serious contenders as desktop OSs are Windows™ varieties and the MacOS. It therefore stands to reason that when Windows™ loses market share, it will be to the MacOS. Microsoft is the enemy and whatever evil befalls Microsoft is great news for Apple — alternate Steve Jobs' comments notwithstanding.

Well, here's the sodium bicarbonate for that gastro-intestinal distress you suffer when you hear the word Microsoft. It's not a "please stay with Apple" plea. I'm talking about Microsoft taking a fall, plain and simple.

Obviously the rantings of a lunatic, you say? Well, OK, but that's beside the point. There's a natural order of things in this universe. An inescapable rise and fall which no one, not even Bill Gates, can escape. Ask the Babylonians, Mongols, Greeks, Romans, or British. Nature loathes empires. There are signs aplenty that the mighty Microsoft behemoth is stumbling. The foundation's rotten and most people don't even know it. Just how aware are you that the Microsoft empire is starting to crumble?

In this 3-part series, I will survey the media, the PC hardware manufacturers, and information technology (IT) professionals to pull a pulse check on Microsoft's dominance of the computer industry. We guarantee you'll be surprised. This patient's sick! Check out your knowledge of the media's attitudes with this brief test. Answers follow the quiz.

## The Quiz

1. Who said "It Might Be Time For Microsoft to Cry Uncle"?
  - A. Apple Interim CEO Steve Jobs.
  - B. Guido "The Swordfish" Fanducci - Head of the Cupertino, California branch of La Cosa Nostra.
  - C. PC Week.
  - D. MacAddict.
2. Who said "Though Win98 is the best version of desktop Windows yet, it's more hype than hot."?
  - A. Another spine-tingling Apple advertisement.
  - B. MacWeek.
  - C. Erik J. Barzeski — Apple Wizards' Editor in Chief.
  - D. Windows Magazine.
3. Who said "It's Time to Draw a Line in the Sand With Microsoft"?
  - A. Apple's Chief Evangelist, Guy Kawasaki.
  - B. Former president George Bush.
  - C. Every Macintosh owner.
  - D. PC Week.
4. Who said "I have this fantasy vision of Janet Reno smacking around Bill Gates, Jim Barksdale and Scott McNealey. They should put that on

- pay-per-view. I think I'd watch."?
- A. A frustrated WWF fan.
  - B. MacUser, oops, that's Macworld, magazine.
  - C. Larry Flynt, Hustler magazine publisher.
  - D. PC Week.
5. Who said "In fact, Microsoft is using cost-cutting to increase its market share. As the Wolf said when Little Red Riding Hood commented on the size of his teeth, 'The better to eat you with, my dear.'?"
- A. Department of Justice investigators.
  - B. Syndicated columnist Molly Ivins.
  - C. Some guy named John overheard at a bar after 7 gins and tonics.
  - D. PC Week.

### The Answers:

1. C. The October 27, 1997 issue of PC Week's lead editorial, "John Dodge: This PC Week," offers commentary on why Microsoft should plead guilty to the Department of Justice's charges that Microsoft broke a 1995 consent decree by forcing PC manufacturers to bundle the Internet Explorer web browser. This editorial was titled, "It Might be Time for Microsoft to Cry Uncle."
- Online at <http://www.zdnet.com/pcweek/opinion/1027/27week.html>
2. D. The January, 1998 edition of Windows Magazine cover story "Hot or Hype," has this to say about Windows 98: "Though Win98 is the best version of desktop Windows yet, it's more hype than hot. Most of the additions are available as downloads and the rest supports hardware you probably don't have yet. Even Microsoft has played down Win98 in favor of Windows NT 5.0, which it sees as the eventual successor for most businesses. Where does that leave Win 98? With both Windows 98 and Windows NT 5.0 still in the rough beta stage, Win98 may turn into just a time-and-money-consuming detour to NT."
- Online at [http://www.winmag.com/library/1998/0101/cover098.htm#Win\\_98](http://www.winmag.com/library/1998/0101/cover098.htm#Win_98)
3. D. The November 3, 1997 PC Week editorial by Jesse Berst, editorial director of ZD Net AnchorDesk, is titled "It's Time to Draw a Line in the Sand With Microsoft." In it Berst says, "So let's see. Microsoft is locked in a tough fight with Netscape for the browser market. Suddenly, browsers become a "natural extension" of the OS. What's next? Microsoft is locked in a fight with Intuit for the personal finance market. Will Microsoft Money soon become part of the OS, to the detriment of Quicken?" I, personally,

view this as a sign that Berst is recovering from the de rigeur brainwashing he underwent when he jumped ship from covering Mac issues to following the Dark Side. Credit will also be given to those who picked choice "C," which is obviously correct.

- Online at <http://www.zdnet.com/pcweek/opinion/1103/03berst.html>

4. D. The November 3, 1997 PC Week editorial by Bill Machrone, Vice-President of Technology for Ziff-Davis, Inc., entitled "DOJ is Trying to Solve the Wrong Problem" contains this quote. Machrone also says, "Will it even make a difference when the browser and the operating system are merged (ugh!) in Windows 98 and beyond?" A sentiment heard frequently in Wintel oriented magazines' letters to the editor.

- Online at <http://www.zdnet.com/pcweek/opinion/1103/03mach.html>

5. B. Nationally syndicated Fort Worth Star-Telegram columnist Molly Ivins is the quoted person. In a column which appeared in the November 25, 1997 issue on the op-ed page of the Huntsville (Alabama) Times (among several other papers), she expounded upon why the DOJ should rain death and destruction on Microsoft. Ivins also had this to say — "He (Gates) has also driven his old arch-rival Apple Computer, always the more fun and user-friendly of the two companies, to near-extinction, creating still more non-fans."

## So, Get to the Point Already!

This brief survey of the media is only a tiny sampling. I could list pages and pages of this sort of thing. The folks making these comments aren't just run-of-the-mill yellow-dog journalists. They are people who derive their income, to some (mostly great) extent, at the mercy of Microsoft. Let's face it. PC Week and Windows magazine rake in most, if not all, of their advertising income from either Microsoft, platforms hosting the variety of Microsoft OSs, or products tied to one or the other of those. In the case of Molly Ivins, she states, "I need to disclose here that I write a monthly column for an on-line women's magazine owned by Microsoft." It takes a sudden infusion of starch in one's shorts to stand up to the company which most determines where your next paycheck will come from.

Things finally smelled so putrid that these pillars of journalism developed some king-sized huevos. And they're getting more and more fed up. They are ripping into Microsoft like a pack of Dobermans. Since Microsoft has thumbed its nose at the Department of Justice, the mad dog attacks are escalating at a feverish pace.

All right, let's recap. The lap-dog press corps has finally had their fill. They're making growling noises instead of doing tricks for Scoobie Snacks. OK, so what's it mean to you and me that these journalists are fed up? How can that stop the Microsoft glacier that's not-so-slowly-but-surely grinding away any competition still dotting the landscape? Well, because it's not just the journalists.

Please join us next issue for Part II of "The Times They Are a Changin' — The Industry Revolts."

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