

review: Microsoft World Domination '99

Microsoft sent a preview of their new operating system, World Domination '99, to me for beta testing. World Domination is scheduled to be released in March of 2001, just prior to the scheduled release of Windows 2000. The purpose of the interim OS is to prepare the masses for the great transition to Windows 2000. After installing World

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Domination '99 (which runs on all platforms and kitchen appliances), the user is greeted by an introduction/tutorial in which our friend and leader Bill Gates educates us about the new world order. I can't tell you too much because of the NDA that I was forced to sign, but here are three of the great new features Microsoft has to offer.

1. Customizable "Blue Screen of Death"

New and improved, the new BSOD control panel lets you choose between five different flavors of crashes. Not only can you pick the color of your Blue

Screen of Death, but you can choose between hard drive failure, motherboard incompatibility, or a corrupted registry before you crash. Finally, the freedom to pick our own MS Nightmare!

2. Inspector Gadget

Trying to imitate the success of Apple's Sherlock, Microsoft introduces Inspector Gadget, a new utility that searches your hard drive's contents and then swiftly reports that the relevant files are corrupt and must be deleted. Is this a bug? Or just Microsoft's way of asserting that anything not created by Microsoft is inherently evil and must be destroyed?

3. Built-In Toaster Oven

This version of Windows will support Intel's new PentiumIII Toaster Oven. The Pentium processor will reside on a tray that slides in and out of the computer. Simply place your English Muffin on top of the processor, slide the PIII back into the machine and by the time Microsoft Office opens your Excel document, your English Muffin will be ready. This feature still needs work — my food was always burnt and the crumbs screwed up my video card!

de To The Mac Community

used to be a benign little Mac user with a trusty old Mac Classic. That Mac was my quiet little friend. I never thought much about OS wars — heck, I didn't even know they existed until Marc 'Mac Junkie' Messer came into my life! Back around the time I met Marc, I remember looking at our friend's new Windows95-equipped Gateway thinking, "Uh, what's the big deal? It's like my Mac but lame." I naturally concluded that there was no reason to replace my old Classic with a newer machine.

Then 1997 came and I bought my 6400. It wasn't long until became a rabid Mac freak. After all, those were the days when Mac users constantly had to defend their decision to use the "dying Macintosh." Soon after that Apple Wizards came to be, and my involvement in the Mac community has allowed me to witness something truly amazing. Thousands of people banding together in a grassroots effort to protect their right choose quality and innovation over slick marketing tactics, despite the world's "persecution" of Mac users. There aren't too many grassroots campaigns that actually

accomplish what they set out to do, but we can be proud to know that we have succeeded. Mac loyalists provided Apple with the motivational and public support they needed in order to create the new iMacs and G3s and to make an amazing comeback. To these faithful hordes I would like to say, "Thank You." If it wasn't for all of you, we'd be destined for an inevitable Windows hell.

Reader Mail: Millennium Madness

Wow! You guys have really given me an earful for casually referring to 1999 as the last year of the millennium in last month's issue. For

the record, I am completely aware that 2001 technically the start of the next millennium. But then again, isn't our whole calendar about 7 years off, anyway? Here's a sampling of the feedback that I received:

Forgive me if I seem to be a nitpicker but: Our calendar is a ten base system. One is the first year of a decade (from the Latin decas; ten). Ten is the last year. The next millennium will begin when this millennium has finished counting 2000. Therefore, the next millennium will start Jan.1, 2001. You start counting at one not zero.

Leigh MacKay

You are forgiven this time, but only because you have "Mac" in your last name.

One reason the Little Dennis called the first year 1 AD instead of 0 AD may be that the Roman number system doesn't have a zero. This makes me wonder about Apple's choice of OS X. Do we really want to name our favourite OS with a number system that only has one of the two numbers fundamental to computing? Maybe Steve Jobs has been watching too many Super Bowls?

I don't think either you or your editor can spell "millennium" (from the Latin mille — a thousand, and annus — a year), by the way.

Martin Stephens

Oh yeah? I thought it was spelled 'anus.' Making fun of the fact that Erik and I received our high school educations in Pennsylvania is not a good way to make nice with us!

The myth that 1999 is the last year of the millennium is a myth spread by PC geeks (among others ;-)) trying to convince us that either a) the sky will fall or b) we should have the party a year early because the sky will fall.

Sure the "BS Artist Formerly Known As..." had a great hit with a catchy tune of a nifty title, but he, you and every other calendrically ;-)) challenged media person have got it wrong. Sorry ;-))

Steve J.

Ack! I'm a media person? I always thought of myself as a mere

commentator.

In response to your letter, I don't think that the "myth that 1999 is the last year of the millennium" has been orchestrated by PC geeks. This "myth" has been around longer than the news about Y2K. Yeah, yeah, I can definitely agree with the argument that the 21st century doesn't officially start until 2001, but I believe that you are just "peeing in everyone's fuit loops" (to quote Apple Wizards reader Sean Monaghan). Where's the fun in waiting 'til 2001 to celebrate the new millennium? Think about all of the things that make the new millennium fun and exciting. Things like the Y2K bug and writing "20xx" on our checks instead of "19xx". These are all things that come with the change of date next year and will be old hat by the time 2001 comes around. And don't forget the apocalyptic groups throughout the world that will surely be making headlines by the end of this year. They aren't waiting for 2001. For one reason or other, all of us are anxious about changing the first two digits of the date. The fact that the millennium doesn't really start 'til 2001 means that we get 2 straight years of some really kick-butt New Year's Eve parties!

[2001 supporters are] only "right" if [they] subscribe to "The Original Error" — the one made when a starting date was fixed — an arbitrary date, mind you. They started off with Year 1 instead of ending with it. Did this error occur simply because the concept of zero was not known at the time? I read that zero was not "invented" until half-way through the Second Millennium. C'mon, it was always there. We're just full of ourselves, aren't we. The truth is that zero hadn't yet been discovered. So nowadays I guess people can't just admit that we didn't know how to calculate time correctly back then, make amends, and move on?

J. B. Schatz

Can't we all just get along?

Alert! This Computer Has Lost Its FPU

This is obviously a case where Macintosh software is pretending to be Windows 98. What other explanation could there be? Thanks to Robert Z. for sending this along.

Reader Mail: Thanks For Letting Us Know

I am my Wizard.
I am my God.
I am Me.
I am Melisa Wiese.
Melisa Wiese

A We're not quite sure why Melisa sent this to us. Is it a warning?
captured moment of enlightenment? Who is Melisa Wiese?
And where the heck is Waldo?

Comic! My Valentines Day Gift To You

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