

are to Have a Little Fun?

The mainstream press is strangely silent about Apple these days. I guess they've been burned so many times with their asinine projections that they'd just as soon pretend Apple didn't exist. I distinctly recall the local paper running a big front-page article when Apple had to lay off employees. When the iMac was the leading selling computer in the U.S., Japan, and France in the fourth quarter of 1998, I didn't hear much more than an occasional peep. You know, the little one column-inch blurb efficiently hidden in the business section between a couple of huge stories about mergers or buy-outs. Strange how that works. Strange how people like me keep writing to them to point out their radically different standards for covering Apple. Big coverage when doing poorly. Little coverage when doing well.

But this brings up an entirely different point. When Apple Wizards editor-in-chief Erik J. Barzeski decided that there was a need for an evangelism column in this publication, it was in the middle of "the dark days." Gloom, doom, and despair filled the air. Media "analysts" and "experts" had side bets on what day Apple would finally collapse. Turns out some of them crashed before Apple did. Oh, sweet irony!

With all the good news coming from Cupertino, it's very difficult to say that there's a need for a column devoted to evangelism, you know?

Well, now Erik says we don't need a column devoted to evangelism anymore. I agree with him. He thinks this column should transcend evangelism. I agree. That's why this column's been retitled. It reflects the notion that we're going to address the entire Mac landscape from this little corner of the ether. I'm very much looking forward to it. I hope you enjoy the broadened horizons.

egin Initial Surface Penetration

For old times' sake, I'm going to take one more shot at the company the whole world loves to hate. From this vantage point it looks like Microsoft is committing a very slow and torturous form of seppuku. They're losing legitimacy across the board so thoroughly it's almost no fun. Almost...

In the Mar/99 issue of Family PC, editor-in-chief and publisher Robin Raskin addresses some issues that those of us who use Windows and the Mac OS already are painfully aware of. In the lead column "Double Click," Raskin writes about "The Trouble with Windows." Herein she takes Microsoft to task for being so unreliable. She mentions how reliable her Sony PlayStation is and ponders why computers aren't as reliable.

She says "Some would argue that game machines are single-function and so can be built to be more reliable. But that doesn't explain why the Mac OS — which arguably does as much as Windows — is much more reliable and stable." Please look at that last part one more time. "...is much more reliable and stable." Not "some." Not "a little." But, "much more."

here's Dr. Evil? Where is He?!

Microsoft's "screw everybody" attitude has finally alienated the only friends they've ever really had — the corporate information systems gang.

One of our support people told me his biggest problem was keeping Microsoft's "features" turned off. "I've got to make sure that Active Desktop™ is never on or everything messes up," he told me. One life-long friend is a professional network support guy. He's school-trained and current not only on UNIX but also as a Microsoft Certified Support Engineer. He told me just two weeks ago that the general consensus among his peers is that Windows 98 should not be installed. Imagine that. While I'm sure there are some somewhere, I know of no business that's "upgrading" to Windows 98. In fact, our new computers, which arrived just this week, are running Windows 95. Not even our government is that dumb.

Another acquaintance of mine is a computer scientist, as well as a Microsoft partner and reseller. He was one of the beta testers for Windows 98. I remember him telling me how he kept reporting bugs to Microsoft and they kept telling him they weren't bugs. Beginning to doubt his own sanity, he checked with some other beta testing geeks. Sure enough, he was told,

they're bugs. Like the Ragu™ spaghetti sauce ad says, "It's in there." And in this case, that's a one spicy meat-a-ball!

For those who yearn for danger enough to install Windows 98, they had better be sure and install the Y2K patch from http://www.microsoft.com/technet/year2k/product/user_view32165en.htm . I guess this year 2000 date thing was a mystery to Microsoft. Or perhaps it's a marketing scheme. Maybe they figure they can scare everyone into buying Windows NT. I don't know. Maybe they're just that dumb.

No wonder the IT people are getting fed up.

e've got Freedom and Responsibility. It's a Very Groovy Time.

Just remember, when Microsoft asks you where you want to go today, tell them you're going out for a can of RAID™ to take care of their bugs. Or better yet, tell them you're heading on down to the Apple Store for a documented better computer product.

I'll be looking at a lot more than Microsoft's foibles, follies, and pitfalls in coming articles, but sometimes I just can't resist. Some targets are simply too easy to pass up. So, no matter what else we may cover in this column, we'll always reserve a little room to have some fun at little Billie Gates' expense. While it's goodbye Apple Wizards Evangelism and hello CoxFiles, there's always a little evangelism left in this heart.

In the January column, I discussed a Wired magazine article titled "83 Reasons Why Bill Gates's Reign Is Over." I'd like to thank reader Craig Gee for writing to let me know that the article can be found online at <http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/6.12/microsoft.html> . This is an article that everyone with any interest in computers whatsoever must read. Print it out, if you have to, and give it to your Windoze-using friends, acquaintances, relatives, enemies, whatever. You'll be doing them a huge favor.

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