Microsoft Me Essay, Research Paper

MICROSOFT ME

Microsoft is committed to the stress free PC for home users. People want a computer that does all the cool stuff and anything that works. For the first time, Microsoft Corporation will focus its development efforts on ways that people use their personal computers at home for fun, convenience, access to information, and communication. Microsoft Me is a new operating system that will be introduce on September 14, 2000 to 25 U.S. cities where visitors can test drive the latest home personal computer in music, digital media, and home networking.

Windows Me is the latest version of the Microsoft operating system designed specifically for the home users. Windows Me was built to be the optimal platform for users who want access to a full range of computing activities at home. It was developed for people who have two or more computers in their house or home networking. The home networking capabilities in Windows Me allow all the users in the house to share access to the Internet and other computing resources. Windows Me is very useful because you can share printers and even hard drives.

Some of the most exciting advances I home computing are happening in the realm of digital media and entertainment. With Windows Me, your home computer is a multimedia entertainment center. It is a snap to work with digital photos, videos, music, or play games with wonderful graphics and audio. People can take advantage of Windows Me because it has Windows Movie Maker to create and edit movies, then send them to others via the Internet. When exploring music, Windows Media Player lets users play their favorite music right off the web or record their personal music into their hard drive from a compact disc. Windows Me allows users to build a digital photo collection. It is easier to acquire pictures from a scanner or digital camera and you can preview rotate, and print the pictures. Users can also create custom slide shows and send them to friends or use them as screen savers. And of course, Windows Me offers the best graphics and sound for PC gaming. It is faster and easier to find opponents online.

It provides the most powerful and reliable way to browse your favorite websites, send e-mail and instant messages, and play online games. It is also a computing made easy. It has new wizards, tours, help and support resources abound to help set up your computer and keep things running smoothly.

For added convenience, many newer PCs running Windows Me can remember the exact state of the PC when the user shuts down and quickly return to the identical configuration when the PC is powered up again. When the PC is powered up, System File Protection prevents the accidental or unauthorized overwriting of system files and helps keep the system stable. This new feature greatly reduces the likelihood that users will face an interruption due to system file problems.

While Windows Me allows us to play productively, it allows users to browse the internet more efficiently that includes enhancements in reliability and performance for navigating around the web faster and easier. A user can print documents over the Internet directly to remote printers that are configured for Internet printing without having a hard-wired home network. The print preview feature gives people a way to make sure their document is set up to print as intended. Users can also take advantage of the e-mail capability because it includes the Outlook Express messaging and collaboration client for sending and receiving e-mail or to exchange messages instantly.

WINDOWS 2000

It was never difficult to install Windows NT 4.0, but it is lack of support for Plug and Play that is the reason Microsoft came out of Windows 2000 that is easy to install and accept most peripherals. Windows 2000 is not a single operating system. There are four members of the family: Professional, Server, Advanced Server, and Datacenter Server. The four of them have differences. For any size of business, Windows 2000 has the right stuff, both as a workstation and as a server. It is stable, easy to install, and it has enough new features to make it a must-have upgrade from Windows NT 4.0.

Windows 2000 Professional is the name of the new operating system software from Microsoft. This software is designed as an evolution of Windows NT and provides enterprise, small business, and home office users with the security, reliability, and manageability they have come to expect from business software. Windows 2000 Professional also makes it easier for these types of users to do business on the Internet and take advantage of all the latest hardware, from the smallest mobile devices to the largest e-commerce servers. Windows 2000 Professional is not intended as a direct upgrade for most Windows 95 and Windows 98 users.

Windows 2000 s dizzying array of new server tools will keep larger businesses busy deciding which one is to deploy and the server is sophisticated enough to make it worth the extra effort. The Server is for small to medium sized businesses that has four central processing unit and it does not have clustering.

Windows 2000 will catch up the server space against Linux and Sun s Solaris. Advanced Server is for larger businesses that have eight central processing unit (CPU) and it has two clusters. If the one server dies, then the other will take over. This operating system was out February 17, 2000.

The other family of Windows 2000 is Datacenter Server and it is not out yet. This is for data warehouses or for large-scale critical applications. This operating system has 32 CPUs and 64GB of memory.

Including the four members of Windows 2000 family, the biggest surprise is that it makes such a good operating system for laptops. Windows NT 4.0 did not appeal to most notebook users and manufacturers because it had little power management options. But windows 2000 has enhanced support for advanced power management, docking stations, and other laptop features.

Other features of Windows 2000 is the new Offline Files that allows you automatically to update copies of critical files on your laptops; you do not have to move them to a special folder or briefcase to make sure they are synchronize when you reconnect to your network. Once you are reconnect, the files automatically synchronize based on the last time they were modified. Best of all, you network folders look and act the same whether or not you are connected to the network.

Windows 2000 is more of an incremental change not a dramatic change because not everyone is convinced that it outperformed Windows 95. But for businesses, it is a serious improvement over Windows NT. However, Microsoft executives said that Windows 2000 is the most important product in their history and a watershed event for the industry.

WINDOWS 98

Windows 95 was originally called Memphis then Windows 97, but Microsoft changed the name when they realized that it was going to miss its released date on 1997. Windows 98 is a widely installed product in Microsoft s evolution of the Windows operating system for personal computers. Windows 98 expresses Microsoft s belief that users should have a global view of their potential resources and web technology should be an important part of the user interface.

In Windows 98, Microsoft s Internet Explorer is an integral part of the operating system. Using the active desktop of Windows 98, users can view and access desktop objects that reside on the World Wide Web as well as local files and applications. The desktop is a web page with HTML links. With Windows 98, users can set up news and it specifies web sites.

Microsoft Windows 98 improves on key areas that keep users waiting on their PCs today that includes opening applications and two to five times faster when shutting down the PC. It reduce the number of setup steps, the applications load faster by identifying the most frequently used applications, more disk space, and the maintenance wizard automatically schedules and executes tune-up activities to keep the PC running in top form. Windows 98 also provides DVD and television reception capabilities, allowing a PC with a TV tuner card to seamlessly receive and display television and other data distributed over broadcast networks. With Intel MMX technology, it provides faster audio and video functionality. And systems with Windows 98 used the FAT32 file system.

The second edition of Microsoft 98 is designed for consumers. It allows your PC to work better, play better, improves the online experience, enhances hardware support, and delivers home networking capabilities. It also comes with Microsoft Internet 5. With the Internet Explorer 5, users can use AutoComplete to find the addresses of pages they visited, use the search bar to see a list of their search results, easily find an Internet service provider, and find the information they need whether it is on your computer, LAN, or the Web. It also enhances your entertainment experience with a new generation of technologies such as WebTV, Windows Media Player, DirectX API, Multimonitor Support, DVD, USB, Windows Update, Maintenance Wizard, and Power Management. Also, it makes it easier, faster, and more efficient. With IEEE 1394 in it, users can transport high bandwidth data between computers and electronic products. Just as Windows 95 enabled a range of new software applications, Windows 98 second edition empowers a new range of hardware and entertainment functionality.

After the second version of Microsoft 98, Microsoft Plus! 98 came out. This operating system features utilities like McAfee VirusScan that protects your computer with Network Associate s top selling anti-virus software. Users can customize their wallpaper, screen savers, pointers, sounds, favorite cartoon characters, and 3-D screen savers for exciting visuals. By having a Deluxe CD Player in your PC, users can place their favorite CD in their computer, can easily access information about the songs and the artists with an Internet connection. Users can organize their start menu by removing broken links and empty folders by having the Start Menu Cleaner.

MICROSOFT NT

Customers are no longer looking for single or limited operating systems; they need a server operating system that can play a multi-purpose role. So Microsoft believes that Microsoft NT will meet the customer requirements of a multi-purpose operating system today and in the future.

Microsoft NT is better it is the most complete platform available for building and hosting Web-based applications and the easiest server operating system. It is flexible and compatible, users will realize significantly reduce hardware and software costs. They will experience far less reliability and easy management. It was designed to help developers build and deploy business applications faster. The Option Pack help users set up their Web sites, manage content, and analyze usage patterns to improve their site. Multiple Web sites on a single machine, innovative Web publishing features, customizable tools, and new wizard technologies make Microsoft NT the best platform to publish and share information securely over corporate Intranets and the Internet.

Microsoft NT offered TCP/IP and DHCP support since its first released in 1993. Compare to Novell, Microsoft NT TCP/IP implementations does not employ encapsulation of any kind. Novell is providing Compatibility Mode to support the many non-NCP services that depend upon SAP and IPX. In contrast, Microsoft NT offers comprehensive built-in remote access, virtual private networking, phonebook management, and routing and telephony services.

Microsoft NT was built for better architecture foundations and offers more comprehensive integrated functionality than NetWare 5.0 today. Microsoft NT has 4 GB memory tuning feature to give applications access to up to 3 GB of memory for improved performance. Intel provides a driver that allows customers to configure Microsoft NT to support greater than 4 GB of memory on Intel Xeon-based servers. It also provides up to 32 processors. It is not built on top of DOS, no direct access to hardware, uses flat memory model, it has a virtual memory manager, uses part of hard drive space as virtual memory, and the multi-task is manage by OS kernel.

Customers can run 32-bit Windows-based applications and enjoy the other benefits of Windows NT like built-in security, preemptive multitasking, and virtual memory, while retaining connectivity to their current NetWare servers. Windows NT based clients connected to NetWare servers can also act as gateways from Windows SMB-based networking to NetWare NCP-based networking. The Windows NT platform will not have the same sort of trouble experienced by older mainframe applications. When using the NTFS file system, which uses a 64-bit time-stamp, the Windows NT platform is “aware” of many centuries into the future. The time-stamp on FAT file systems is good until 2108.

DOS

An operating system is commonly known as Disk Operating System (DOS). DOS is not a programming language. In DOS, you work with commands. That is, you type certain things on a keyboard to give the computer its instructions. DOS was developed for IBM by Bill Gates and his new Microsoft Corporation. In the 1970s before the personal computer was invented, IBM had a different and unrelated DOS that ran on smaller business computers. It was replaced by IBM’s VSE operating system. (www.ceeprompt.com)

Although some experts are predicting the death of DOS, it is still the predominant operating system and a “working knowledge eases the frustration and increases the usefulness” of your PC. The DOS operating is relatively simple only after the user has mastered some basic commands and uses a computer on a fairly regular basis. Today, Windows operating systems continue to support DOS (or a DOS-like user interface) for special purposes by emulating the operating system.

With the popularity of Microsoft Windows 95/98/NT, some people might think that DOS would die fast. Not exactly! In spite of its abandonment by the major companies in the industry, software is still being developed and maintained for DOS.

CP/M

Gary Kildall developed CP/M, an operating system for personal computers. Widely adopted, CP/M made it possible for one version of a program to run on a variety of computers built around eight-bit microprocessors. It looks like DOS but only not so user friendly. Everyone using MS-DOS is still sort of working with CP/M without realizing it. Microsoft’s product is based upon nothing else but a CP/M derivate (www.gaby.de.com).

LINUX

Linux is an operating system that is clone written from UNIX. It was developed by Linus Torvalds and a team of programmers over the Internet (www.li.org). It contains all of the features that you would expect in not only a UNIX, but on any other operating system. Some of the features included are true multitasking and virtual memory. It is also the worlds fastest TCP/IP drivers and of course multi-user friendly, which means tons of people can use the computer at the same time.

Linux runs fully in protected mode, unlike Windows. It supports 32-bit and 64-bit multitasking. Most microsoft based programs will run under LINUX without any modification. LINUX distributions come completely pre configured to a factory configutration, and many distributions also have graphical based configuration utilities and installers.

The central nervous system of Linux is the kernel, the operating system code which runs the whole computer. The kernel is under constant development and is always available in both the latest stable release and the latest experimental release. Progress on development is very fast, and the recent 2.4-series kernels are simply amazing on all counts. The kernel design is modular, so that the actual OS code is very small yet able to load whatever functionality it needs when it needs it, and then free the memory afterwards. Because of this, the kernel remains small and fast yet highly extensible, in comparison to other operating systems which slow down the computer and waste memory by loading everything all the time, whether it is needed or not.

Linux systems excel in many areas, ranging from end-user concerns such as stability, speed, and ease of use, to serious concerns such as development and networking. Nowadays, Linux even offers a variety of commercial productivity packages and office suites which can import and export files from other platforms, including Windows and MacOS.

Linux has long been praised for its stability–Linux boxes are known for running months or even years at a time without crashing, freezing, or having to be rebooted. Linux users sometimes poke fun at other, less stable operating systems, by way of screensavers like BSOD (Blue Screen of Death, which displays crash screens from various other platforms) and games like XBill (where an evil virus masquerading as a popular operating system is causing machines to catch on fire).

Linux is Y2K-compliant, storing the date in a different way from other computers. (Its trouble date is 2038, by which time a small modification to the kernel should have solved the problem.) Also, because it is extremely secure compared to other platforms, viruses for Linux are practically non-existent.

Linux machines are also known to be extremely fast, because the operating system is very efficient at managing resources such as memory, CPU power, and disk space. More of the Web than one might expect is actually powered by old 486 boxes running Linux and the Apache Web Server, while NASA, Sandia, Fermilabs and others have built very powerful yet inexpensive supercomputers by creating clusters of Linux boxes running in parallel.

As for an intuitive graphical interface, Linux has at least a dozen different, highly configurable graphical interfaces (known as window managers) which run on top of XFree86, a free implementation of the X Window System. The most popular window managers at the moment are KDE (the K Desktop Environment) and GNOME (the GNU Network Object Model Environment). These offer the point-and-click, drag-and-drop functionality associated with other user-friendly environments (for example, Macintosh), but are extremely flexible and can take on a number of different looks and feels. If you want a Linux box running KDE to look just like a Mac, Windows, BeOS, or NextStep machine, you can do it with a few mouse clicks. Today, even complex tasks like system administration, package installation, upgrading, and network configuration can be done easily through graphical programs. Programs that work with one window manager nearly always work with all the others.

UNIX

UNIX was developed by Bell Labs in the early 1970’s. It s a multi-user, multitasking operating system. UNIX was designed to be a small, flexible system used exclusively by programmers. UNIX was one of the first operating systems to be written in a high-level programming language, namely C. (webopedia.com)

Being written in C programming language meant that it could be installed on almost any computer which a C complier existed. It was also very inexpensive. The UNIX operating system has been a product with four elements. They are; the specification, the technology, the registered trade mark, and the product.

It is common these days to read analysts’ accounts and IS professionals’ experiences that compare and contrast the UNIX system with Microsoft Corporation’s latest operating system, called Windows NT. Opinions vary, of course, but a number of common themes have emerged. The UNIX system today is available on a wide spectrum of computer hardware.

Particularly when high performance is at issue, hardware suppliers suggest the UNIX system, rather than Windows NT. The primary appeal of NT is for low-end, office-centered, departmental applications.

Unit shipment growth rates for Windows NT exceed the rates for the UNIX system, which is to be expected for a new product. However, revenue growth in UNIX systems sales is much higher than NT. It is reasonable to expect Windows NT to take a share in the operating systems market, along with other more specialized operating systems. There is no evidence today to indicate that NT will be dominant; in fact, most IT professionals predict that it will not.

Windows NT Server 4.0 is still not a full-function server operating system. While it does support multi-user computing via third-party add-on tools, it lacks certain fundamental features that the UNIX system is known for providing, such as directory services for managing user access and peripherals over a distributed enterprise network.

The presence of the UNIX system in the marketplace has been good for Windows NT. The UNIX system established the market for cross-platform client and server operating environments that NT seeks to address. In turn, NT will improve the market for UNIX systems in the future. That is, competition among UNIX system providers will be enhanced by competition with NT. The choice between open and proprietary products will be quite crisp.

The continuing success of the UNIX system should come as no surprise. No other operating environment enjoys the support of every major system supplier. Mention the UNIX system and IT professionals immediately think not only of the operating system itself, but also of the large family of hardware and application software that the UNIX system supports. In the IT marketplace, the UNIX system has been the catalyst for sweeping changes that have empowered consumers to seek the best-of-breed without the arbitrary constraints imposed by proprietary environments.

There is every reason to believe that the UNIX system will continue to be the platform of choice for innovative development. In the near term, for example, UNIX system vendors will define the scope of Java and provide the distributed computing environment into which the Network Computer terminal will fit and enable it to thrive and grow.

Today’s UNIX system is robust, scalable, and it continues to provide uniform access to a wide variety of computing hardware. For these reasons the UNIX system continues to be the operating system of choice for mission-critical systems. The UNIX system is the key enabler for enterprises that wish to keep switching costs as low as possible. That is, the UNIX system remains the only open alternative to locking in on a proprietary operating system.

Most importantly, the UNIX system continues to be a driving force for innovation because of its commitment to standards. When proprietary differences are set aside, and with the wide implementation of the Single UNIX Specification they are set aside, suppliers compete by adding value. This fundamental tenet is the reason that the UNIX system has thrived – and will continue to thrive in the years to come.

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