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## Microsoft Palladium

**This 2002 scheme was to further monopolize the operating system market. A rant ensued.**



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A few weeks ago there was a front page article in EE Times magazine regarding [Microsoft's Palladium security system](#) [since canceled]. ([Microsoft scheme for PC security faces flak, July 15, 2002.](#)) I would like to clarify and expand upon the facts brought out in that article. The most disturbing thing about the article is a casual reading would give the impression that Microsoft's Palladium initiative is about security. It is not. Now Microsoft may say it's about security but anyone the least bit familiar with computers

and the software industry knows better. Palladium is about monopoly market power rent-seeking anti-competitive bully tactics. In other words Microsoft business as usual. Palladium and .NET are trying to achieve 5 objectives. Firstly they are trying to insure that the egregious Microsoft EULA (end user license agreement) is able to be enforced.

Second, they are trying to make it impossible for any competitor to read or write Microsoft's propriety file formats such as .doc or .xls. third they are trying to destroy the free and open file

formats used in the TCP/IP protocol to force the use of Microsoft servers and programs. Fourth they are trying to blunt and destroy Linux, which is becoming a serious threat to their imperialist software hegemony. As an added, but not central goal the fifth objective is to provide media companies with a way to institute DRM (Digital Rights Management). This means your kids won't be able to download MP3 files or trade movies over the web.

You will not see these five goals stated so bluntly in software publications since they give tacit approval to Microsoft's marketing lies in order to insure the substantial revenues Microsoft can bestow in advertising and other favors. Some Indians always live around the fort and these publications will regret their obsequies quisling behavior if Microsoft achieves its goals. There will be no trade publication and no advertising revenue in a world with one software company. You'll just take what's given to you and shut up not complain.

Please excuse the drama, but it is obvious that Bill Gate's ambition is world domination. He most reminds me of an evil character from a James Bond film. When someone such as Bill Gates assumes such massive power as he has his world view becomes quite distorted. You might see Microsoft as company that must produce products and service that people want in order to prosper.

Bill Gates sees humanity as serfs in his goal to rule the world. In our view it is the people who are central. In Bill's view it is he that the sun revolves around and we are just barely relevant little cogs in his machine of world domination and oppression (1 corporate suicide).. Please do not think these terms are hyperbole. Bill Gates

has amassed such incredible wealth and power he has become a megalomaniac. He will lure us in and seduce us with the promise of all tyrants--it will be so much simpler if we just let him do the thinking and now worry out little peasant heads about all this complicated software stuff. Bill is not happy with being the richest man in history. He now wants to go the next step--control. Total control. He wants us all to go down to the crossroads and sign our souls over to the devil.

Palladium will give him his next victory in the road to total control--it will give him taxing authority. Now tyrants for time immemorial have understood the great advantages of taxation. If everybody has to pay, well, the math is pretty compelling. That's what Bill wants. He wants everyone to give him \$100, no make that 500 dollars a year. Microsoft's fee will be about \$2000 for every person in the world. In other words, every human being on earth will "contribute" \$2500 a year in tribute at the throne of Microsoft. That's about 12 trillion dollars a year. That should be just barely enough to pay the heating bill on the Bill's mansion. Expenses you know, it's not easy being the richest man in history, much less staying the richest man in history.

Let's look at my five assertions about Microsoft's goals with Palladium. First is the EULA. The End User License Agreement is the software industries weasel words that relieves them of the responsibility of providing something that works. Under Microsoft's leadership there has been a recent turn to an even darker development: You don't even own the software. Furthermore you can't do things like the old Borland license would allow: Have one paid for copy of Windows installed on two computers at same time, even though you only use two computers at once.

As a megalomaniac it has long tormented Bill that a lot of people put multiple copies of his software on their computers without paying Bill tribute. He sees it as disrespect. They try to convince the government that it is bad for the economy--like the 300 dollars you didn't send Microsoft won't get used for some other worth purpose. Now having you pay good money for something that doesn't work has made Microsoft pretty cocky. So it was logical the next step is to sell you something that doesn't work and that you don't really own. Is it any surprise that Palladium is primarily about instituting a system where you have to not only pay good money for something that doesn't have to work, but you have to pay for it over and over and over again. See what I mean about taxing authority?

Microsoft has staged the software version of kristallnacht with their Software Assurance program. It should be called Revenue Assurance but Microsoft marketing is nothing if not great spin-miesters. Software assurance means you don't just pay once for something you don't own that doesn't have to work. Software assurance means that you get to pay each and every year for something you don't own that doesn't have to work. Now Bill rightly realizes that there is a large contingent of people that will make up for the egregious nature of the latest EULA by simply paying tax on one seat of Microsoft's buggy, slow unusable technology inept products and then install that product on multiple machines.

Palladium will put a hardware spy, a silicon tattletale that will prevent the use of any software not enabled by Bill Gates. If you get uppity he will simply put the plug and you will not have the software anymore. In a sense you never had it anyway. You will not be able to install the same copies of windows on two computers. You will not be able to take Outlook

express from work and install it on your home machine so you can do work at home. You will not be able to install your own personally bought software on machines at work unless you take it off your home machine.

Don't even think about letting your friends load a copy of your software to try out. Palladium, the digital KGB, will be constantly snooping on your machine, looking for any transgression of the gold you are to render Caesar and if you try to install multiple instances of one software Palladium will stop the software from working. I'm sure that when .NET is fully implemented a report will be sent over Microsoft's proprietary internet format direct to the FBI who can then pick you up and start the criminal proceedings. I suppose they will break the original working copy of the software too, just to spite you. Anyone who has worked with the buggy unmaintainable monstrosities that is Microsoft's product line will immediately see insanely intractable problems with this scheme. What if your machine crashes and you have to re-install the software? What if you want to install two copies of Windows on the same machine so that when it becomes so buggy and corrupted it no longer works you can switch to the other and still be able to download the patches, service packs, and driver updates needed because software vendors never ship anything that works the first time? What happens when your disk dive or motherboard fails? You have to replace then but how can you prove to the uber-fureres at Microsoft that the new install is not a bootleg? Horror, oh the horror.

The second purpose of palladium is to prevent any other software company from using Microsoft's proprietary file formats. Now understand at the outset that the entire concept of secret proprietary files formats like .doc and .ppt are completely unnecessary--that is only an artifice to force you to stick with one

company. Also realize that there is no reason that a file format could not be forward compatible. In other words, if word 2.0 had drawing utilities that word 1.0 did not there is no reason that word 1.0 could not open a file written in word 2.0 and at least be able to do all the text manipulation that was common to both versions. You would not be able to see the graphics but at least you could read and even update the text.

The reason Microsoft did not architect their programs this way is simple" They want to force you to buy the newer version. By getting the big companies to adopt the newer version in mass all the small fry have to adopt too in order to stay compatible.

Bill wants to tax you for communicating with your fellow humans. That's why Bill hated and disowned the internet at the beginning and why he rightly saw it as the huge threat that it is. People are communicating, sharing ideas and using computer hardware and they are not paying Microsoft every year and every day for the privilege. Bill hates that. He talked the talk for a few years about open systems and XML but that was only a stall until he figured out how he could shut it all down and make us all pay him for every packet that is transferred.

With Palladium software vendors will be able to prevent anyone from reverse engineering their file formats. Oh, you could do it but it won't matter because the hardware and encryption will prevent you opening the file unless it was from an "approved" program. Approved by who? Well Bill Gates of course. He hopes the other software companies will sign up for this. This is where we will be able to see who else gets their name knitted into the shawl so we can recall them during the revolution.

Third is the destruction of the free file formats and the TCP/IP protocols. The Transmission Connection Protocol/Internet Protocol was an open standard developed by universities and researchers funded by DARPA, the military research arm of the defense department back in the 70s. Since its purpose was to share information, not make Bill Gates money, the protocols are open and published and available to anyone to incorporate into their software. Bill hates things like that, not to mention HTML and all the internet related file formats that he can't make you pay for an upgrade every year or two. Windows XP provides insecure socket connections. Insecure socket connections are used by "script kiddies" hackers to take over your machine and launch denial of service and other malicious viruses. Bill Gibson of Spinrite fame has been railing against insecure sockets ever since Windows XP was launched. No one could figure out why Microsoft would allow such a blatant security risk in a consumer product. Robert Cringely of PBS struck upon one explanation. By poisoning the existing TCP/IP based internet with hackers and script kiddies it would provide the incentive to change protocols, and who better to author a new global protocol than good ol' Microsoft? By combining the .NET and Palladium initiatives Bill can provide advantages to running Microsoft servers running Microsoft programs delivering Microsoft proprietary .asp pages to other hardware that will not work unless the source pages come from our "trusted" friend, the Microsoft corporation. Now Microsoft would never be able to sell the world a totally closed internet protocol. They will instead do exactly what they have done by selling both operating systems and applications. The applications will benefit from the secret knowledge and strategies of their internet protocol.

The forth objective of palladium is to destroy Linux. Linux is getting to be a bigger and bigger threat to Microsoft. When Windows 2000 was coming out the Microsoft goons flatly stated that it simply had to take over the server market in order to be judged a success.

Well, intelligent operations that demand reliability and performance use either free BSD, Linux, or Sun Solaris, all of which are UNIX variants. The modern hip IT manager knows he has to rip out his doggy Windows-based servers and install a Unix type server. The only reason he can't it's the typical insidious nature of Microsoft's business strategy--if you use less experienced and able programmers that need to utilize Microsoft's Active Server Page-produced pages, then you have to run those pages on Microsoft servers. The resultant pages are slow, buggy and often will not render properly on non Microsoft browsers.

But in Bill's world there aren't supposed to be competing browsers or competing anything. Only Microsoft--one choice, just like Russia in 1917. This is quintessential Microsoft--tying your hands and feet together so you can be raped repeatedly without the tiniest threat of retaliation.

The ASP/Windows2000 server relationship is the prototype for Microsoft's entire web strategy. Just as any active server web page forces you to use Microsoft's server products, Bill hopes to so tie up and bind the internet to his proprietary formats you will only be able to run web pages written with Microsoft products, and sent by Microsoft servers,. It is a given that you will have to use a Microsoft browser. Palladium and .NET are the ropes that will bind you to this horrible vision.

The fifth objective is to provide DRM or Digital Rights Management. This is so that not only software companies can reap untold steams of wealth but also media companies. I suspect this is the deal Microsoft offered to the government to get the antitrust guys off their backs. Sure, Microsoft argues, it might be bad to have a company with 95 percent market share but if that company helps the government and the power elite control what information the rabble are allowed to see and use then it's pretty handy having a single point of contact. DRM will mean you won't be able to download MP3s or any other shared media. You won't be able to assemble you own albums of different songs you like. You won't be able to take existing works and sample them or modify them for experimentation or enjoyment. Your little girl will not be able to include a DVD clip in her multimedia book report because it will be a felony. There is already a huge controversy surrounding DRM and I will let those voices express the appropriate concern for this freedom-killing initiative. I will simply point out the brilliance of Microsoft's strategy--give the media companies a bone and they won't give you any bad press as you take over their world.

There are the issues that we face as we enter the third millennium. If you think I exaggerate the danger or Microsoft's intent you only have to ask anyone that has had to work with Microsoft or their products at the root level. My mentor was the first to alert me to Microsoft's ethics. 20 years ago he was using Microsoft's first C compiler, a program that you use to write programs with. He came across one of the many bugs in the compiler. He called Microsoft. The support guy said; "Well, we never heard of that bug before, we will get right back to you." After a few days passed with no resolution my friend had his partner call Microsoft as he listened in on an extension. His

partner described the exact same thing my friend did. He was talking to the same support person. The fellow said: "Well, we have never heard of that bug before, we'll get right back to you." Its 20 years later and the lies have never stopped.

I have heard from two different sources about a teleconference over at Microsoft's Web TV here in silicon valley. In the meeting Bill Gates was described as screaming, screaming at his people: "How's that going to make me money?! What's that going to do to make me money!?" Decent humans realize that capitalism works because the goal and intent is to improve peoples lives and then get justly rewarded for doing so.

Microsoft has always lied, conned and shipped crappy products that tied you into using more of their crappy products. Bill never once thought: "How can I make peoples lives better?" He only thinks, "How can I force them to pay me money?" He is not a great entrepreneur, he is a thug and a highwayman whose ethics are finally catching up with him. A passive aggressive little monster that doesn't have the balls to point a .45 in your face and rob you, he just tricks you into handing him the cash, but it is a shakedown nevertheless.

I bought a DVD of the Matrix last week. It is a perfect analogy to the present situation in software and by extension, the information industries. The real Matrix isn't artificial intelligence fabrication of what we see and hear. It's Microsoft controlling what we see and hear. The agents with supernatural powers are Microsoft's marketing, legal and public relations departments. Morpheus is Linus Torvalds. We're still looking for "the one" but when we find her she will break Microsoft's grip on us and convince us that we really don't need Microsoft and we are better off in a world

of freedom and open source. The agent that said, "It became our civilization when we started doing the thinking" was right and we must not let Bill Gates or any other company, government or individual do our thinking. Software and hardware should do our work, not our thinking. We must keep it that way.

Now I hope I have raised the alarm and you realize what is at stake with the coming battles with Palladium, .NET and DRM. Before you get depressed I would like to remind you that as long as people are taught the issues there is no danger at all that any of these initiatives will be instituted. There is a great B-grade horror sequel named Texas Chainsaw Massacre II" that has an appropriate image. The beautiful and innocent heroine is tied up in a chair (she represents the people and the free exchange of ideas, palladium and .NET and DRM are the ropes that bind her.) The inbred and insane family members are propping a hammer in the hand of the frail and demented grandfather. (he represents Bill Gates, the family is his legions of minions and supplicants.) They are encouraging grandpa to clank the girl in the head, like he used to do the cattle in the slaughterhouse. "Come on granpa," they cheer, "stun her!" They prop the hammer in his hand but it just slips out, impotently brushing aside the girls head and falling to the floor. Bill might have been something big back in the day but when it comes to stunning the whole world he is a frail impotent demented little man. That dog won't hunt because humans and especially Americans are simply not going to put up with this BS.

My mentor taught me that it's the lieutenants, not the generals that abuse their power and I suspect it is the same at Microsoft. Despite my rant's Bill is probably a pretty nice guy that is not really the antichrist as some have suggested. But his organization has been inbred until it is a

raving pack of lunatics that confuse winning market share with good products the same way those rednecks confused rape and love. When there are so many forces resisting this evil at so many levels it becomes obvious that Microsoft's plans will never work. The harder they try to implement the more they will hurt themselves.

At the grass roots are the Linux lovers and gamers. They will not tolerate a machine that robs CPU cycles to insure Bill Gates got paid today. Intel and AMD have never been very fond of Microsoft if only because they had to work with the arrogant dorks the last 20 years. Apple has put FreeBSD as the basis for its OS-X operating system. They will charge for hardware and user interface enhancements on a free software core. IBM, the giant blue monster depicted as Big Brother in the old 1984 Apple ad is instead turning out to be a savior or at least a prophet. IBM Putting billboards up on 101 saying "I Love Linux" is not a good indication for the gang in Redmond. In fact it is a pretty safe bet that Microsoft has lost the server wars.

Proprietary goofy bloated bug-ware is not an alternative on mission-critical stuff like web and file servers. Too much depends on it. The good news is that now that the mentality of "Nobody ever got fired for buying Microsoft" has been cracked in the server world it prepared us for the same sea change on the desktop.

The Software Assurance gang rape is already causing many many hip IT managers to consider Linux. I've been told that it's not just the fact that one 30 dollar disk will replace hundreds of thousands of dollars in operating system and application licensing fees. I'm told the real benefit of the Linux desktop is that it reduces the support cost for keeping the users up and running. It might be hard to explain to an

abused child that not all daddies are sloppy drunken unpredictable raving lunatics who hurt them, but once she sees that some daddies are nice she will realize that she has been abused. The same goes for people who finally use software that actually works.

My friend set up Linux on an old Pentium-II computer to be my firewall. It has worked flawlessly for two years (other than a power supply fan failing). Microsoft is a study in how to rush some half-baked misconceived crap on the market to blunt your competitors, as well as stealing from what works and destroying competitors.

As a friend explained, "That is the essential difference between UNIX and Windows --UNIX is computer science. Windows is a hacked-together hobbyist OS that doesn't deserve to be on a Speak-and-Spell much less an adult's desktop." Microsoft sells booby-trapped puzzles and charges you for training. Suffer on.