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Microsoft Kills Off Two Products Bill Gates Thought Would Be Enhanced By The Internet

from the *so-much-for-that-plan* dept

Dave Winer [points](#) to an [email Bill Gates sent him nearly fifteen years ago](#), where Gates insisted that the internet would enhance, rather than harm, the market for two specific Microsoft products:

The Internet is a great phenomena. I don't see how the emergence of more information content on a network can be a bad thing for the personal computer industry. Will it cause less personal computers to sell? I think quite the opposite. Less copies of Flight Simulator or Encarta?

Winer notes this in relation to the news that Microsoft has decided to [shut down Encarta](#), its "encyclopedia" product that was originally on CD-ROM and was supposed to take on Britannica, before it (and, to some extent -- though it's disputed -- Britannica) got steamrolled by Wikipedia online.

However, it's also worth noting that this seems to have happened just months after Microsoft [also shuttered the group that makes Flight Simulator](#). Given that these were the two specific products that Gates called out in his email, it seems amusing that both are being killed by Microsoft months apart from each other.

Of course, both Encarta and Flight Simulator *could* have done better online, but neither did very much to *really* adapt to what the internet allowed. Both could have been much more in an online world, but failed to live up to their potential.

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Failures
by [Mike Masnick](#)
Tue, Mar 31st 2009
5:00am

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1. by [Ima Fish](#) - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 5:25am

First, let's just get this out of the way: Who the frick knew that Encarta was still around?! John Dvorak has written before that Microsoft does not know how to market, apparently he's right.

Second, the reason Flight Simulator died had nothing to do with the doing better online. It's because FS is fricken boring to the vast majority of people. People buy it because they think it's a game, but it's not. Flight Simulator is a simulator. It allows you to simulate flight from take-off to landing. So when you set a course from Detroit to LA, you're flying the entire way in *real time*. Sitting there, in front of your computer, for hours. Yippie! (Btw, [check out](#) a FS parody I wrote for BBSpot!)

I know people who love FS, but I'd rather have a root canal. It's quicker, less painless, and any costs are covered by my insurance.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)
2. **Flight Simulator**
by [Joseph Durnal](#) - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 5:28am

Microsoft Flight Simulator is one of the best, and I bet it will return. I've owned every version since 5, bought at full retail first day of release price, just waiting for the next to be released. Flight simulator didn't need the internet, it was great on its own, in my opinion.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)
3. **Re:**
by [Joseph Durnal](#) - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 5:32am

Detroit to LA, hah, try DC to Singapore, I have! LOL - yeah, its a simulator, but fortunately, you can take care of the children and run few errands while on autopilot!

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4.

Re: Re:

by [Ima Fish](#) - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 5:35am

Now if it allowed you to set the auto-pilot and join the mile-high-club via a hot stewardess in the cargo hold, maybe I'd enjoy it more.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

5.

Re: Flight Simulator

by [Ima Fish](#) - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 5:39am

"Flight simulator didn't need the internet"

Actually, I thought the real time weather feature was pretty cool. Was it needed? Not really. But did it add to the realism? Certainly.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

6.

Flight Sim wasnt bad...

by [Duodave](#) - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 5:44am

Oh come on, it wasn't that bad. Sure you could run Flight Simulator in real time, but it also had a speed-up feature. And the truly cool thing about FS was it was accurate. You could go to your local airport and buy actual flight charts and FS matched the frequencies for every airport in real life. With these you could actually do instrument-only trips in the game, it was incredibly cool.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

7.

Microsoft, why stop there?

by [R. Miles](#) - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 5:44am

In addition to killing off your products, please include:

-Internet Explorer: This browser refuses to be compliant making it difficult for web developers to create **compatible** pages using **standards** set by the W3C.

-Excel: Because people thinks it's a damn database application.

-Windows Media Player: Takes 10 minutes to load, and for what? Visuals? Either streamline it or can it.

-Notepad: It's 3 text limit is damn annoying.

-Microsoft Mail: "ahem", when it comes to free email services, GMail wins. Thunderbird comes in second.

-Paint: This app hasn't been upgraded in over 10 years.

-Windows Vista: Apparently, having an administrator account means noting, rendering damn near every product you make worthless unless "Ran as Administrator". What freakin' genius came up with this security model? Jerks.

Heh.

Just in case someone from Microsoft comes to visit.

Okay, on topic:

I'm sure Microsoft's struggling to find ways to make its software more consumer friendly, but it seems with each new version, it actually becomes more complicated. Office 7 (or whatever the hell it's called now) is a great example.

Good layout, but damn near impossible to find what you're looking for.

Thus, online apps will eventually take their place.

And Flight Simulator? This was still a purchasable software? Crap, I haven't seen this since the very first version.

Encarta. Okay, this is a joke, right?

For kicks, you should have made Microsoft Bob tell people these products are no longer available.

Or at least the paperclip.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

8.

Encarta

by [Dru](#) - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:07am

I agree with Fish. I had no idea this was still alive. Did anyone ever even use it? I know I never did.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

9.

Re: Flight Sim wasnt bad...

by **Ima Fish** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:09am

"Oh come on, it wasn't that bad."

Ok, maybe I went a little overboard. But my basic point stands. FS is a fantastic niche product, but a boring mass market product. If you're into flight, real flight, and not just flying around and shooting other planes, FS is fantastic. But if you're not, and most people are not, FS is not for you.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

10.

Re: Microsoft, why stop there?

by **Anonymous Coward** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:13am

Really?

This argument makes hardly any sense. I'll give you IE, but excel is extremely important for a lot of things and definitely more powerful than Open Offices equivalent as far as the power user is concerned.

You dislike notepad because it limits your fonts? Better get rid of vi, vim, emacs, and every other such text editor.

What the hell is microsoft mail anyway? You compare it to an email provider AND an email client, so I don't know if you are talking about microsoft's online mail service, or if you are talking about Outlook. In any case, I suppose a case could be made for killing these, although I think outlook isn't any worse than Thunderbird really.

Paint: being updated in windows 7. And would you rather have absolutely no image editing capability in a base install of windows?

Vista's security model: Apps requiring you to run as administrator is not only not a problem that microsoft created, it's also not that much of a problem. I get prompts very rarely. In fact, it's almost always when I'm doing administrator things. The exception is firefox update, which is annoying, but the same thing requires privileges to be escalated in linux, it's just lumped with other updates so it's less annoying.

As for the the new office, if you can't find what you are looking for, you are an idiot. All the basic formatting stuff is in the home tab. Everything else is really self explanatory. Want to change something about the page layout? Click "Page Layout" and anything you could possibly want is right there.

As for the rest of your post- people love flight simulator, but yeah I have to say encarta has been dead for a while. In any case, turn on the gray matter in the future please.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

11.

the flight sim community

by **chris** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:14am

years ago, i worked with a guy that was a huge flight sim fan, to the point that he didn't just fly on occasion, but served as a virtual air traffic controller as well. he and his team ran a virtual airport and pulled shifts and everything. he had all the controllers and sticks and pedals, including the only working 3 monitor setup i had seen outside of some high end engineering workstations at that time.

i imagine that while a community like that isn't very large, it is pretty dedicated. perhaps if MS worked with/marketed to these communities more (<http://www.vatsim.net>) they could have made more from flight sim.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

12.

Re: Microsoft, why stop there?

by **Ima Fish** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:15am

"GMail wins. Thunderbird comes in second."

While I agree with you, Gmail is an email service while Thunderbird is an email application. I happen to use Gmail via Thunderbird at home.

The best thing about Thunderbird is that it's so fricken easy to back-up. I've changed my OS multiple times, but all I have to do is copy over my Thunderbird data back over and *all* my settings, emails, passwords, contacts, and accounts are back again.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

13.

Re: Re: Re:

by **Anonymous Coward** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:15am

Ima Fish, you're a dude. No, you are gay, right? Your comments are too girly to justify being a dude.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

14.

Re: the flight sim community

by **Ima Fish** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:17am

"i worked with a guy that was a huge flight sim fan..."

Let me guess, he lived either in his parents' basement or in the spare room above the garage.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

15.

Re: Re: Re: Re:

by **Ima Fish** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:21am

"Your comments are too girly to justify being a dude."

That's because to be a "real guy" means you have to be a brainless pile of muscle. While *I'm a pile a fat with a brain.*

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

16.

This just in...

by **Anonymous Coward** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:21am

...Bill Gates is human and cannot accurately predict 15 years into the future.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

17.

by **Anonymous Coward** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:22am

Encarta and Britannica would have been bashing into each other. Wikipedia is an awesome source to look up information and get general ideas, a real encyclopedia it is not. So I can see Encarta getting canned.

MS Flight Simulator was just sad. They should have made that into an MMO flight simulator game where players could take on the role of traffic controllers and whatever and create the entire experience of flying with other humans. Super niche? You betcha! But what the hell is wrong with that!

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

18.

Re:

by **Ima Fish** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:27am

"But what the hell is wrong with that!"

Nothing, other than the fact that Microsoft doesn't do niche.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

19.

Re: This just in...

by **Dave** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:28am

LIAR! Bill Gates is a god and was merely allowing himself to use a bit of sarcasm!

Now if MS FS had become a way of doing dogfights with others on the web using the reality engine it had, now that would have sold.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

20.

Re: the flight sim community

by **Skor Bar** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:30am

I'll bet he was pretty popular with the ladies.

He pulled shifts and everything? Sounds like a real humdinger of a time.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

21.

by **Anonymous Coward** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:32am

Of course FS was a simulator, not a game. Someone gave me their copy along with the flight manual (instructions on how to play the game).

You ever see that manual? It's huge. I figured after that I would have a real shot at being able to actually fly a plane. Course, I never bothered.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

22.

Re: Re: Re: Re:

by **Ima Fish** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:32am

I just had a flashback to the movie Idiocracy, where our future planet was populated by retards. Everyone thought the main character (from the past) was gay merely because he could speak in complete sentences. Apparently, the future is now.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

23.

Re: Microsoft, why stop there?

by [Weird Harold](#) - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:39am

IE is an issue for various reasons, mostly to do with security and it's wide scope inside the OS. The biggest issue with IE and standards is people who don't upgrade, running versions that are far out of date.

Excel works fine.

WMP: Doesn't take 10 minutes to load on my machine. Have you considered upgrading from your PII?

Notepad: A tool that many programmers and designers use every day of their lives. It isn't a text editor in any big sense, if you want fonts and whatnot, use word.

Paint: It does what it does, nothing more. You want something fancy, use abobe.

Vista: A step in the right direction, but also two steps to the side. Hopefully Windows 7 will resolve these issues.

As for flight simulator, it is a very good product, and many users enjoy it day in and day out. I know certain airport authorities that use it to teach traffic patterns and such.

However, there are better products out there, like X-plane, which is a really nice simulator.

Encarta was a very good product - but times have swept it away. But it would be like taking the first web browser and comparing it to the current firefox, and calling it crap because it doesn't have tabs. It was a good product for it's day, and the day is over.

Miles, seriously, is there anything you like in life?

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

24.

Re: Re: Flight Sim wasnt bad...

by [Vidiot](#) - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:41am

"FS is a fantastic niche product, but a boring mass market product."

Exactly correct... surprising that a boutique product lasted this long in a megacorporation's catalog. Then again, they bought a boutique product(FS) from subLogic... I owned the pre-MS version. Back in the day, flight simulation was the crown jewel of computing; Silicon Graphics has almost always included a rudimentary-but-gorgeous one in IRIX, its version of UNIX, and Microsoft may well have bought FS to show off its computing prowess, too.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

25.

Re: Re: Microsoft, why stop there?

by [R. Miles](#) - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:43am

but excel is extremely important for a lot of things

I don't discount this, only when people turn a spreadsheet into a database. Some of the Excel files I've seen make me wonder if people know the difference. So, with that, I'll retract Excel from the list.
:)

You dislike notepad because it limits your fonts?

No, I dislike it because it limits text amounts. I see no reason why wordpad and notepad need to exist together. Notepad is no longer a useful tool, especially with large XML files.

What the hell is microsoft mail anyway?

Haha! Precisely! It replaced Outlook Express.

Paint: being updated in windows 7. And would you rather have absolutely no image editing capability in a base install of windows?

I use Fireworks because Paint *hasn't* been updated in over 10 years. Windows 7??? Come on. Paint's been around since 3.1. It takes this long to upgrade it? I seriously doubt anyone would call Paint an image editing application. Sure, you can do some things, but beyond adding text - worthless.

Apps requiring you to run as administrator is not that much of a problem.

Sorry, but you're incorrect here. It is troublesome when some apps require Run As Administrator to properly work within the bounds of the UAC. Worse when this option is not available on some applications, forcing a RegEdit fix to add it.

It seems you don't do web work. Work with IIS and a remote server and try getting FTP software to transfer files without running the app as an admin IN an admin account.

Fails every time.

It's just annoying to have to remember to select this option, making the Quick Links pretty damn useless under the heading of "quick".

Also, Fireworks will not save files in IIS directories, again, unless run as admin.

Erg. This is why I will be front in line for Windows 7, as this feature, thank goodness, has been removed from Admin accounts.
:)

All the basic formatting stuff

First, I don't like being called an idiot just because I dispute Excel's new layout. I'm not alone in this. There are plenty of people frustrated with the fact **non-basic** features aren't easy to find. Please quit assuming everyone uses these apps in "dumb mode". There are plenty of us out there who take full advantage of these applications, if we can find the damn menu option to do it.

Besides, all this was personal opinion. I'm sure someone out there still uses notepad.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

26.

Re: the flight sim community

by **Tom Allensworth** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:43am

"i imagine that while a community like that isn't very large, it is pretty dedicated. perhaps if MS worked with/marketed to these communities more (<http://www.vatsim.net>) they could have made more from flight sim."

MS tried to market to the online community, but really only half heartedly. The pressure was and continued to be on the masses to the very end. As one of the primary flight simulator sights on the net, AVSIM's user numbers substantiate this; ~60,000 members in our forums and over 700,000 members of our file library system. It is a strong and vibrant community, but it certainly does not address the millions of users who have purchased Flight Simulator since the Bruce Artwick's FS of the early '80's.

Flight Simulator is not dead... Not by any measure. Just have a stroll through our forums and you will see that clearly. FSX will live on for quite awhile and there are alternatives and other efforts in the works for a possible next generation simulator.

Tom Allensworth
AVSIM Online
www.avsim.com

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

27.

Re: Re: Microsoft, why stop there?

by **R. Miles** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:45am

While I agree with you, Gmail is an email service while Thunderbird is an email application. I happen to use Gmail via Thunderbird at home.

Gmail is both an app and a service. The email app is web based.
:)

And for Thunderbird, you're spot on! I tried this out last year and haven't looked back since.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

28.

Mail Clarification

by **WisconsinGod** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:49am

Ok Folks, let me clarify the whole mail discussion so people get on the same page

Windows Mail - Default mail client delivered with windows operating systems. Formerly Outlook Express, recently updated with Windows Live Mail. It is a stripped down mail client that utilizes windows contacts, windows calendar and a news feed.

Gmail - Also can be classified as a mail client, when referring to the web based e-mail interface; is a service when you speak of a Gmail Account. You can enable pop3 download of your other email accounts, so it is acting as a client. to review Gmail = Client; Gmail Account = Service

Thunderbird - Another wonderful alternative e-mail client, you all agree on what it is and how it works. However, it does not integrate easily with other tools (Palm, Windows Mobile, etc)

I hope that clears a few things up, back to your rants.

ON Topic:

I still have my Encarta '94 CD that shipped with my first Acer computer (came with windows 3.1). Its best part were the games they developed to encourage learnign and browsing of the encyclopedia.

Flight sim I never got into, Flight simulators are awesome, but if you can't shoot anything, or fly into a flock of birds and land in the hudson river, what's the point?

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

29.

Re: Re: Microsoft, why stop there?

by **R. Miles** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 6:52am

Ah, there you are. I was wondering when you'd show up.

In reading your reply, I must say kudos. I think this is the first time you actually replied back without being ignorant!

applause

I knew you could do it!

Miles, seriously, is there anything you like in life?

I like you, Weird Harold.

So, yes, there are things I like in life.

Pretty hard to tell when a site is dedicated to showing the dislikes in the business world, eh?

Strawberries. Like those too.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

30.

Re: Re: Re: Microsoft, why stop there?

by **Ima Fish** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 7:05am

"Gmail is both an app and a service."

Yeah, I guess its web interface is an app. But compared to Thunderbird it sucks. Other than for searching through my emails, I only use Gmail's interface when I'm away from my computer. I'm going to speak a geek sin, but I actually think Hotmail's interface is better than Google's.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

31.

Re:

by **Yeah sure** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 7:13am

Yeah, that's a great idea. Get a bunch of FS nerds together to play online, and then jackass from the internet decides he wants to be a "terrorist" and starts crashing planes left and right, ruining the fun for everyone.

Microsoft, get on that, pronto.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

32.

by **Argonel** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 7:18am

Flight simulator fell between 2 product niches and therefore lost out. It was too accurate for someone who just wants to jump in a plane and fly around, but not accurate enough for a pilot who wants to sit at a computer to log simulated flight hours. If you want to fly a simulated cessna around you are probably better off with x-plane where your sim cessna will encounter sim weather and have sim component failures.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

33.

encarta - multi-disc?

by **amalyn** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 7:23am

I used to love Encarta, personally.

The last version I had bought (I forget when), had been 4 discs, and did not have an install to hard-drive option. Where I loved Encarta, was as an offline resource, to be used similar to how one would randomly look stuff up on Wikipedia - having to put in a different disc, and carry around the discs, was definitely not appealing or useful.

I do see on their site they have a downloadable version, which I may check out before it disappears, with selling points for me being whether it still includes Mindmaze (I loved that game!), and whether it installs the actual information on the local machine or needs internet connectivity to retrieve articles. I have a lot of time when I cannot be online, due to physical geography, so offline functionality is a large factor for me.

As for Flight Simulator - had always seemed a niche market to me. I would imagine that having a development team working on it versus a title to ship for the 360 may not have been seen as profitable by the higher-ups :/

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

34.

Encarta

by **spagg** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 7:26am

I use Encarta almost every week. Its nice having an encyclopedia on my laptop that i don't actually have to connect to the internet for. Plus i use Microsoft Math that comes with Encarta religiously. These tools are a must for college. -spagg

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

35.

Re:

by **josh** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 7:31am

It is very true that FS is not useful as entertainment. I found that because FS simulates everything so well, including the boredom, it can save a person a lot of money when pursuing a pilot's license. Some homework with a used copy of FS can replace instructor time for some things. At the very least the FS user won't be paying \$100 to learn how to use the instruments.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

36.

Re: Re:

by **josh** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 7:33am

\$100 an hour i mean

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

37.

Encarta

by **Carolyn Wood** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 8:07am

Encarta still holds a sweet spot in my heart.

I was working in an elementary school computer lab when the product came out and I attribute early teacher technology adoption in part to Encarta. In the old days, when Internet connections were slow and PCs were new on the block, Encarta provided students with valuable topical content.

Teachers jumped on board the tech train with computer lab classes dedicated to virtual tour experiences. Virtual tours of Pompeii and the White House were favorites. Content driven lessons relied on Encarta when the "Internet was down."

I miss the early immersive yet concrete experience the product offered.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

38.

Re: Re: the flight sim community

by **chris** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 8:09am

He pulled shifts and everything? Sounds like a real humdinger of a time.

yeah, it's pretty lame, not like a 40 man raid on molten core which is totally different and way cooler.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

39.

Re: Re: Re: Re: Re:

by **chris** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 8:10am

lol, fag.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

40.

Re: Re: Re: Microsoft, why stop there?

by **chris** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 8:13am

It seems you don't do web work. Work with IIS and a remote server and try getting FTP software to transfer files without running the app as an admin IN an admin account. Fails every time.

FTP? what is this, 1995? scp all the way.

there's even a cool windows version: <http://www.winscp.com>

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

41.

Re: Re: Re: Microsoft, why stop there?

by **chris** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 8:14am

Gmail is both an app and a service.

it's also a floor wax and a tasty desert topping.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

42.

Re: Re: Re: Re: Microsoft, why stop there?

by **R. Miles** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 8:18am

WS_FTP Pro, actually. What can I say, I'm a dinosaur.

Thanks for the link. I'll look into the app a bit more.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

43.

Re: Re: Re: Re: Microsoft, why stop there?

by **Your Gawd and Master** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 9:01am

What are you trying to be, a Neo-nerd? I can name 3 instances where I might want to use scp but I can name countless instances where FTP is still standard, and required if you want files on your installation. I know you think you're being new and trendy but you're actually just being a pompous ass.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

44.

Re: Re: Re: Flight Sim wasnt bad...

by **Anonymous Coward** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 9:04am

Now FS might be construed as a means for terrorists to train and plan attacks.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

45.

Re: Re: Re: Re: Microsoft, why stop there?

by **ryan** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 10:49am

It's a dessert topping you cow!!

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

46.

It's symbolic.

by **Anonymous Coward** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 11:01am

I thought Encarta was one of the products Melinda worked on way back in the day...

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

47.

by **AMusingFool** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 12:23pm

The only reason I knew FS had been around in the recent past was because a friend of mine uses it for planning photography trips (ie: "when do I need to be in this canyon to get the light I want" types of things).

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

48.

by **Crimson** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 12:42pm

Maybe my reading comprehension is the pits, but I don't see how Bill Gates memo can be an interpretation for how "Encarta" or "Flight Simulator" would be enhanced by the Internet. It seems to be more of an open question than anything else.

[\(reply to this comment\)](#) [\(link to this comment\)](#)

49.

by **Steve** - Mar 31st, 2009 @ 1:56pm

I think over the long run the Internet will probably spell the end of Microsoft (if it cannot reinvent itself, which it has not so far). I think the only program that sets it apart from others is actually Office (and all you need is the 2003 version) and OpenOffice is improving at light speed (compared to how long it took MS) but it just isn't as good as MS yet. However, I still use OpenOffice because it runs on Ubuntu Linux which I think is a better OS (I like it more the longer I use it). The only problem with Ubuntu is that due to MS dominance a lot of software does not run on it because it was written for MS (unless you use expensive emulators). Back to my point: I think the future is the Internet and online services. While MS was the great player in the desktop age, so far Google seems to be the biggest player in this new age. I am waiting for MS to stop their search service next (who is really using MSN search?)

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