

MEMORANDUM

TO: U.K. - Glenn Stephens, John Constant, Michael
Greenwood, Ian Turnbull, John Linnay
U.S. - Chuck Brewer, Jody Chilton

CC: Bradley Karth

FROM: Elizabeth Mitchell

DATE: June 18, 1992

SUBJ: PANTHER ISSUES:
I-III. Addressing outstanding problems from DR DOS 6.0
IV. Documentation

There are several ongoing problems with DR DOS 6.0 which I would like to see resolved. Since engineering concentration is with Panther, it is doubtful that patches for these problems will be issued before next release. Therefore, I feel that Panther should address the following technical and documentation issues.

Issue I.

While DR DOS 6.0 has many benefits over MS-DOS 5, it fails to match the available conventional memory when running expanded applications such as WordPerfect Office v3.0 and most every TSR that is included with Novell Netware. MS DOS somehow loads such applications at the first available address. DR DOS 6.0 fails to 1000h automatically, or if Netware is loaded, you must type 'MEMMAX -L' then load the program.

Although expanding technology is improving, such as in WP Office 3.1, it still fails to load at the first available address under the current DR DOS 6.0 command processor. WP Office v3.1 actually behaves better if Netware shell is loaded. With the Netware command environment it will load at the first available address. If Netware is not loaded, DR DOS 6.0 still pads to 1000h.

Patch 326 (still provisional) allows WP Office v3.1 to load at the first available address. That's great, but few programs are using the new packing linker. Using patch 326, WP Office v3.0 returns 'packed file corrupt', as does Fable (netware hypertext). The only other TSR that I tested (I don't have many) which will respond positively to Patch 326 is VSHIELD by McAfee. It seems that for the majority of existing applications Patch 326 would be useless and cause more frustration, since you get the 'packed file corrupt' message.

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Plaintiff's Exhibit

5486

Comes V. Microsoft

MS-CCP-MDL 5010774

MS-CCPMDL 000005010774

In booting with MS-DOS 6, I found that the same applications which DR DOS cannot load below 1000h, were loading at the first available address below 1000h. I tested both in and out of Netware. With all of the network drivers in upper memory and 615k available under MS-DOS, I was able to load NFOLIO from the server below 1000h. Clearly, Microsoft is handling unpacking different.

For our corporate customer LA GEAR the problem is particularly frustrating. They are installing 1000 units of DR DOS 6.0, which were contracted before Lanpack was released. They are a 1000 user Netware 3.11 site. They run WordPerfect Office 3.0 on 17 Netware servers. Upgrading to WP Office 3.1 is a financial concern. Since LA GEAR is a very high profile customer, whom I would like to propose as a Novell Success Story, it would be good relations to provide them with a patch if possible.

Beyond the immediate concerns of LA GEAR, I feel that Panther has to address the memory issue. I have tested WP Office with Vladiver and see no difference between it and DR DOS 6.0. Vladiver does not contain Patch J26, though I don't expect it too, as that would cause a stream of complaints to tech support. Brad feels that it should be user definable where the application loads, and I agree. This seems to be MS philosophy also.

I feel that this issue will hamper our marketing efforts for Panther. If benchmark tests compare our next release with MS DOS 6.0, and happen to use an unexpected TSR, we will not match the available memory of MS-DOS. Corporate evaluators will continue to find more memory with MS-DOS, and choose not to standardize on DR DOS. Microsoft is somehow handling the unpack issue better, and we need to check their technology.

Issue II.

The complaints from customers about slow floppy access never stop. I recently took a survey of the tech analysts in Monterey and Provo. They returned many records of callers who have extremely slow floppy access. Some of the systems became intolerable with the April '92 Update, and they had to reinstall Dec '91 Update. Sometimes the tech analysts are able to talk them thru reopy to get just the Dec '91 IBMIBIO.COM to solve the problem. Some customers found that MEMMAX +V was the culprit. (I tried to duplicate MEMMAX +V, but found no slowdown on my system.) Some systems who were running slowly with the December Update improved floppy access time when they installed the April Update. There does not seem to be a pattern, but it is definitely a major complaint.

FYI - The changes that were made to the April IBMIBIO.COM cause PCNFS network drivers to hang in the config.sys. By reverting to Dec IBMIBIO.COM they were able to get the network running once again. We submitted an SPR, would you like us to get a PCNFS beta site for Panther?

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Issue III.

FORMAT /B - makes a bootable floppy, but **IBM*.COM** and **COMMAND.COM** are **TOUCHED** with the current date/time stamp. I tested this with Vladivar and it still happens.

FORMAT /X - full transfers the system files, but the hard drive will not boot until **SYS.COM** is run. I don't have a spare drive to test this with Vladivar.

Issue IV.

DOCUMENTATION - With the addition of multitasking we are creating a product that will require even more technical support than currently is necessary for DR DOS 6.0. While this is good for my job security, it doesn't do much to generate revenue! It seems practical to alleviate the amount of support as much as possible.

Making some options unavailable during installation is great. I would also like to see the documentation break the advanced modules into a second manual. Currently the Superator and Superpck information is buried in the back of the manual. The "Advanced Module Guide" should include the following: Security, Superator, SuperPck, MultiMax, Netware, Windows, and all information currently in the Optimization Guide.

What will Advanced Module Guide do besides cost more money to produce? It will eliminate many technical support calls, which would make more satisfied customers, and more than recover the additional documentation expenses.

Psychologically, the customer will be hesitant to implement the advanced modules until they feel confident with the basics. This gives the user time to get become familiar with the product. When they feel comfortable with the product, they can open the second manual. I know this from my own experience as a neophyte with new software packages.

Practically, it will provide a more stable product in the eyes of our distributors and resellers, since they will have fewer returns. The documentation would clearly recommend that the advanced modules are to be setup after the product is installed and running normally.

I would like you to consider a training program for distributors and resellers in Advanced Module Support to help them make the sale and support the customer. Once the \$80 per incident technical support level is reached, the customer will depend more on the reseller for help. I would sooner train the reseller than have them destroy the customer's data by misconfiguring the product, and then decide not to sell DR DOS in frustration. It seems to me that training resellers in DR DOS would fit into the Novell plan for authorized Netware resellers.

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