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Microsoft

December 11, 1989

Mr. Alan C. Ashton
President
WordPerfect Corporation
1555 North Technology Way
Orem, Utah 84057

Dear Alan:

I am writing to see if I can understand your plans for working with Microsoft systems software and applications. The recent LOTUS-WordPerfect announcement has increased the number of customer questions I get in this area. Customers are interested in knowing if spreadsheets and word processors should be considered independent buying decisions or because of special ties between products that the decisions are tied. Microsoft EXCEL uses only clipboard formats that are published and available to everyone. DDE is a system level protocol. The LOTUS-WordPerfect announcement said that DDE was so low-level that only special work by LOTUS and WordPerfect allowed text to move across it. This misrepresentation of DDE has caused some EXCEL customers to wonder whether WordPerfect will discriminate against EXCEL and that our WORD product may be a better choice. If possible, I would like to set the record straight on this. Any of the questions below that you can answer would be helpful to me.

1. Will WordPerfect use standard DDE protocols?
2. Will it support all of the standard clipboard formats, including RTF and Links?
3. What additional formats will it support?
4. Does WordPerfect have suggestions for new formats or enhancements Microsoft should support?
5. Will WordPerfect allow us to do everything to integrate EXCEL with your product as you allow 1-2-3G to? What areas should we be working on? Will we be at a time disadvantage?

I believe application interoperability should be at the systems level and shared between all applications as much as possible. There are no proprietary ties between EXCEL and WORD - we have simply worked hard to exploit the systems standards that exist. I would like WordPerfect to take a more active role in these standards. Perhaps I misinterpreted your recent announcement.

Plaintiff's Exhibit

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I am curious to know your thinking on these subjects.

Best regards,

Bill
Bill Gates
Chairman

WHG/jg

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