

Choosing Vendors: The Linux vs. Microsoft Red Herring

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One of the difficulties is that there is so much bad blood between the groups that I often wonder if I'm writing about Israel and Palestine rather than technologies. There are lines that can be crossed that make it incredibly difficult to reach common ground because people just don't forget some things that are said in anger.

Novell and Microsoft seemed to grok that the best course is to cooperate, almost as if they had read my piece and took the course that should be better, long term, for both the firms and their clients. I'm actually becoming more and more convinced that the battle between the companies was largely created by the Open Source side for visibility and Microsoft simply fell, much like I did, into the trap.

If you look at the revenue sources for both efforts, you'll see that Microsoft's revenue largely comes from software and for Linux it is from services. Microsoft's offerings are best when used in large numbers and generically, and Linux is best when used in small numbers and highly customized. The only area where there is tight similarity is in the embedded offerings of both companies but here both sides are under funded, Linux generically so, and Microsoft because of a very real fear of cannibalizing their full-featured products.

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