

Time running out for M\$

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The commission's competition representative said that if the matter is not resolved within a matter of weeks, it may fine Microsoft a significant sum of money.

"Our patience is in terms of weeks rather than months," said the representative. "They've had over a year now. Microsoft knows that if they don't comply to our satisfaction, we can fine them up to five percent of their (daily global) turnover every day."

He said that Microsoft was aware of the specific date by which it must comply with the ruling, but the EC has decided not to publicize the date as a "negotiation tactic."

The initial antitrust ruling, delivered on March 24, 2004, demanded that Microsoft disclose information to rival server-software makers that would allow them to design products compatible with Windows. The commission also required Microsoft to offer a version of Windows without Windows Media Player, so that other media-software makers could more fairly compete in the market.

The EC rejected Microsoft's proposed solution to the server interoperability in March this year, citing four concerns. One of its main objections was the high level of royalties that Microsoft had proposed, the representative said. "The level of royalties should reflect the degree of innovation in the product, rather than (Microsoft's) monopoly power," the representative said.

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