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I N T E R O F F I C E M E M O R A N D U M

Date: 02-Mar-1992 01:10pm MST
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TO: See Below

Subject: THE CASE AGAINST BASE PRODUCT MARKETING

The idea of Base Product Marketing is based on the tradition that engineering managers, because of their status, build what they want, and it therefore takes someone else to try to make a product out of it and something the sales person can configure and sell.

We should get back to the old way where the engineering team first defined and characterized the problem they wanted to solve. They clearly committed to the need they were going to fulfill and they carefully characterized the product, whether it was software or hardware, to accomplish this.

This first step is key to Base Product Marketing and also key to the design of a useful product.

The next step is by simulation, analysis, or by breadboard or skunkworks products, and to demonstrate the product, measure its characteristics and try it on the customer's problem. This also means little details such as hooking up cables, modems, and windows to ensure it is user friendly and lovable, and not terrifying.

The third step, which then should be relatively easy, is to finish the physical packaging or the coding, and then do the actual testing and quickly get beta sites for the product.

This approach will be efficient and filled with enthusiasm because of the fast results and the clarity of purpose. We should not commit to products without a base product marketing plan, and we should not commit to tooling until there is a demonstration that it accomplishes everything in the plan. We should not make commitments unless we are going to have very fast results, and we should be sure that the engineers who do the work feel responsible for the resulting customer's happiness.

KHO:eh
KO:6699

(DICTATED ON 3/2/92, BUT NOT READ)

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