

Google to challenge Micro\$haft?

Source: <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/alt.linux/2004-04/0315.html>

From: Happy Thoughts (*BogusAddress_at_no.spam.com*)

Date: 04/14/04

Date: Wed, 14 Apr 2004 18:08:59 GMT

Here's a very interesting article from the LA Times that I think is worth reading:

<http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-google14apr14.1.784097.story?coll=la-home-business>

Some See a Challenge to Microsoft in Google's Sites

By Chris Gaither

Times Staff Writer

April 14, 2004

Is Google Inc. arming itself to challenge Microsoft Corp.'s Windows software by developing an operating system that lives on the Internet?

The closely held search-engine company has been clear that its goal is to organize the world's information. But its followers have been seeing that lofty mission statement in a whole new light since Google unveiled plans this month for a free e-mail service — with enough storage space for every user to hoard nearly 500,000 pages of messages.

The Gmail service, combined with the enormous cluster of computers that processes the hundreds of millions of search queries that go through Google each day, has some technologists salivating over what the ambitious company may do next.

"Who needs Windows when anyone can have free unlimited access to the world's fastest computer running the smartest operating system?" Jason Kottke, a website designer in New York, wrote in his Web log at Kottke.org.

Google executives declined to comment on their plans. "We don't speculate about what we may or may not be thinking about in terms of projects," said Craig Silverstein, the company's director of technology.

By all accounts, the Mountain View, Calif., company isn't openly gunning for Microsoft. Netscape Communications Corp., whose Web browser threatened Windows, made that mistake in the late 1990s and got smothered by Microsoft tactics that a federal judge later found violated antitrust laws.

alt.linux: Google to challenge Micro\$haft?

But Google has been quietly building one of the world's largest supercomputers, reportedly made of more than 100,000 servers. The computing system — running on the free operating system called Linux — is becoming a powerful platform that could be put to uses beyond simply powering the most popular search engine on the Web.

"I wouldn't underestimate the audacity of any of the goals the Google guys have," said Rich Skrenta, chief executive of a search engine for news called Topix.net. "They're big thinkers."

Google has expanded its early offerings to include searchable news feeds, comparison shopping, software for publishing Web logs, a social networking service and, now, Gmail.

Many believe Google's next