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Dave McClure • Jan. 14, 2014

From Dave McClure's Bleeding Edge Blog

Microsoft is furiously at work on its next operating system, which it plans to introduce in 2015.

That won't be a moment too soon, given the disaster of Windows 8 and its update, Windows 8.1, also known as NMI, or "no major improvement." (See [Dave's previous post](#) about Windows 8.1.)

I won't recap on the Windows 8 disaster, but to make three comments:

- Windows 8 was an ambitious project in which Microsoft completely ignored the feedback of its testers and consumers in order to try to stake a claim in the smartphone and tablet markets. Instead, it gave Google an unparalleled opportunity to take market share in the PC space and cost Microsoft nearly all of the good will it had built with consumers with the introduction of Windows 7.
- Windows 8.1 made the situation worse, not better. This reputed update did not restore any of the loved features of Windows 7, but essentially doubled down on the company's investment in the desktop/tablet/cell phone interface.
- Critics refer to this as the worst fiasco since Windows Vista, but in truth Vista was not all that bad. This is the worst fiasco for the company since Windows ME, which we affectionately call Windows 98 Massive Error.

In the midst of all of this, Microsoft has three major challenges. First, they can't seem to find a new CEO to lead the company in the post-Ballmer era. Ballmer has led Microsoft for the past 14 years, but has announced he will leave any minute now. And they can't seem to find anyone else who wants the job.

That's kind of funny, given that Microsoft famously gave a test to potential

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Third, for the first time in decades, they have competition. Sure, there was Apple in the nineties, but let's be honest. Apple never did have more than a 12 percent market share, and when that company was in danger of going belly-up, Microsoft had to pour money into it to keep it alive. Mostly to convince legislators that there was competition in the PC marketplace. Now they have Google breathing down their necks, and both Google and Apple offer their operating systems for free. Ouch!

So what does that mean for us? First, expect yet another update to Windows 8 in May of this year. Curiously, this will not be called Windows 8.2, but rather the Windows 8.1 Update.

And Windows 9 sometime in 2015. It remains to be seen whether this will be the system that restores Microsoft, or the swan song of a dying company.

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