

I. Microsoft's Actions Toward Other Firms

67. Microsoft's monopoly power is also evidenced by the fact that, over the course of several years, Microsoft took actions that could only have been advantageous if they operated to reinforce monopoly power. These actions are described below.

IV. THE MIDDLEWARE THREATS

68. Middleware technologies, as previously noted, have the potential to weaken the applications barrier to entry. Microsoft was apprehensive that the APIs exposed by middleware technologies would attract so much developer interest, and would become so numerous and varied, that there would arise a substantial and growing number of full-featured applications that relied largely, or even wholly, on middleware APIs. The applications relying largely on middleware APIs would potentially be relatively easy to port from one operating system to another. The applications relying exclusively on middleware APIs would run, as written, on any operating system hosting the requisite middleware. So the more popular middleware became and the more APIs it exposed, the more the positive feedback loop that sustains the applications barrier to entry would dissipate. Microsoft was concerned with middleware as a category of software; each type of middleware contributed to the threat posed by the entire category. At the same time, Microsoft focused its antipathy on two incarnations of middleware that, working together, had the potential to weaken the applications barrier severely without the assistance of any other middleware. These were Netscape's Web browser and Sun's implementation of the Java technologies.