

The End of Patch Tuesday?

On **April 5, 2022, Microsoft announced a new patch management offering to its Enterprise level customers already under contract.** And, yes, it's fair to say that most readers of this blog, and its author, would be correct in saying "Well, It Ain't Me, Babe." Things do tend to trickle down though, eventually.

From Microsoft's viewpoint this move makes perfectly good sense and good business. Patch management has long been a niche industry. If a business is monetizing what is essentially Microsoft's proprietary processes, then Microsoft should making that offering to Windows customers who will pay for patch management. Except, Microsoft intends on simply employing the new feature at no additional cost to its customers. And who better than Microsoft to patch Microsoft's product? **Who indeed?**

Microsoft has another reason for adopting Windows Autopatch. There exists a gap between deployment of a patch and the exploitation of that vulnerability. These "**security gaps**", as Microsoft calls them, are a major factor in the spread of malware.

A security gap forms when quality updates that protect against new threats aren't adopted in a timely fashion. A productivity gap forms when feature updates that enhance users' ability to create and collaborate aren't rolled out. As gaps widen, it can require more effort to catch up.

It has been a recurring theme of this blog that eventually The Network will come to be regulated in ways similar to public utilities. Indeed, most public utilities are public/private partnerships. Moreover, citizen/consumers need not worry if the infrastructure is delivering quality water or electricity to the dwelling because responsible authorities are in charge of all that.

On the other hand, there is no tradition of consumers managing their own power and water. The PC industry, indeed Microsoft itself, was built by, and still pretty much sustained by, a cohort of individual entrepreneurs and other self-starters.

Microsoft is a long way off from employing Autopatch across the entire Windows ecosystem. And it may not have to.

Given the success of the Windows 365 cloud based operating system, it is rumored that the next version of Windows, **Windows 12, will be an operating system totally based in the cloud, er, Microsoft's servers.**

I can think of dozens of pros and cons here. I do believe that the push to simply end the PC as we know it is inevitable. But wide scale adoption of the OS Software as a Service (SaaS) model will unlikely become the de facto standard any time soon.

Historians look for causation of changes that occurred in past societies. It is very possible, but not necessarily likely, that the increasing harsh realities of the cyberwar, could spark the **paradigm shift** that will cause cloud skeptics — like is This Reporter's Opinion — to change their stance. Either join the hive, or get eaten by our enemies. A rather stark choice, but not unimaginable.

Indeed, time will tell.

“Change is the essential process of all existence.”

Spock to Captain Kirk

Gerald Reiff

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