Mac to Windows: "Can't we all just get along?"
Innovative technology marries warring technologies; consumers and enterprises win

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Glenn Kesselman
Senior Editor

M. R. Pamidi, Ph. D.
Editor-in-Chief
IT Newswire

The battle of the platforms has finally reached détente, thanks to a new technology developed by MokaFive, a small Redwood City, CA, startup founded in 2005. The technology is based on virtualization, wherein the desktop and network environment is abstracted from the computer hardware itself. The result is a secure, manageable virtual machine that can run on any computer…including a Mac.

To the end user, a virtual machine feels like a computer within a computer (specifically in this case, a Windows machine within a Mac). It runs like any other application, booting up to open up a Windows logon screen. Users can toggle between their physical machines (hosts) and their virtual machines (guests) with a keystroke. The advantage of a virtual machine – besides offering the ability to run Windows on a Mac – is that IT departments can maintain and secure the guest environment, protecting it from any threats (like viruses or malware) that might inadvertently be introduced by a user's personal Mac. This way, Mac aficionados can bring their own computers to work, and still satisfy any IT requirements to use the standard corporate desktop. Furthermore, IT does not have to manage the Macs in a different way than the Windows machines in their companies. They can update every computer in the company at once, regardless of whether it is a Mac or a PC.

Why support Macs? Apple products, including computers and tablets, have become the *de rigueur* status symbol for today's executive. Once known as a tool best suited to "creative types," the Mac has gotten serious about business. Mac sales are now estimated to be 5.2 percent of the worldwide PC market total PC business sales in the quarter ending September 2011, according to Needham & Co. Apple saw gains of 43.8 percent in the enterprise, compared to the 4.8 percent increase in the rest of the PC industry. This may be attributed to the increasing popularity of its iPad and iPhone products.

The most interesting part of bringing Mac into the enterprise is how it benefits every stakeholder. It builds the market for Mac hardware, while increasing the distribution for Microsoft Windows. Since consumers benefit, too, it's a win-win-win.

This discussion is incomplete without citing Linux desktops. Unfortunately, despite all the marketing hype by the vendors, its market share is less than 1 percent. Readers may recall Walmart introduced a Linux desktop preloaded with OpenOffice a couple of years ago for $199, but pulled it off the shelves in less than a year since there were no buyers. We believe Linux will play only a minor role in the consumer market, with the growing of adoption of tablets and smartphones, unless one counts iOS and Android tablets as Linux variants.