From inside the Redmond Reality Distortion Field: Why publish documents in PDF?

devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20110104-00

January 4, 2011

Raymond Chen

A few years ago, the Windows 7 team developed a document to introduce technology writers to the features of Windows 7. The document was released in PDF format, which created quite a stir among certain people trapped inside the Redmond Reality Distortion Field, who indignantly complained,

> Why are we releasing this document in PDF format? Shouldn't it be in docx or XPS? I would expect people interested in Windows 7 to be willing to use more Microsoft technology.

Um, hello from the real world. It's the people who are critical of Windows 7 who are *least* likely to use Microsoft technology! "Okay, so Microsoft has this document telling me about their new product, but it's in some Microsoft proprietary file format that requires me to install a custom viewer that works only in Internet Explorer? You've gotta be kidding me." No wonder people hate Microsoft. It's like handing out brochures titled "Gründe, warum du Deutsch lernen solltest."

Bonus plug: Stephen Toulouse bookified his blogerations. (Part 2: The Hardbackening.) I've read the softcopy of his book. Good stuff. And I would've endorsed his book even if he didn't promise me a personalized copy.

Raymond Chen

Follow