

Apple's Boot Camp Might End Chaos

By Steve Hewitt

MORE THAN 17 YEARS AGO (January 1989), I started publishing *Christian Computing Magazine*. When we started the magazine, no one had heard of Windows or the Internet. A lot has changed over the years, but one thing has been constant for as long as I can remember: should a person purchase a computer from Apple with the Macintosh Operating System (Mac OS), or a Windows computer?

Mac OS fans point out that as the use of the Internet has grown, so have security concerns if you use Microsoft's Internet Explorer to browse the Web, or use Outlook to access your email. However, Windows fans stay strong because of specific programs they love which will only run on Windows.

In January, Apple announced that its new Macintosh models would start using Intel chips instead of the chips from IBM. Apple claimed the decision was made because Intel was making better advancements in the area of dual-processor chips with faster speeds. This immediately opened the question about running Windows on Apple's new Intel chip machines! After all, Windows and Apple OS-based machines could now use the same chips.

Apple's initial response was that people could indeed remove the Mac OS and install Windows, but that was not the basis for its change to Intel chips. However, it certainly began to get people to think about new possibilities. In addition, many began to speculate on which methods to employ to install both operating systems on the new Apple computers.

Just three months later, Apple announced the beta release of "Boot Camp." Boot Camp, once installed, would allow users to also install a complete version of Windows XP on their Mac computer, while retaining the Mac OS. In theory, when they booted up their computer, they'd be given a choice as to the OS they wished to run.

Apple made it clear that while they were soon going to offer Boot Camp (expect the release of the final version this month), they have no intention of either selling Windows or offering support.

Is this a good idea? You bet it is. Apple's stock went up

seven percent almost immediately after making the announcement.

For decades, offices have had to deal with making a choice between the Mac and Windows operating systems. In addition, offices with multiple staff members generally heard some heated debates whenever people voiced their preferences over new computer purchases. Of course, Apple has offered the ability to emulate Windows in the past, but many Windows programs have had problems running under emulation successfully.

If Boot Camp can work as intended, this will really be a godsend for many who wish to purchase a single computer and satisfy the needs of using both operating systems.

However, be cautious. Boot Camp is still in beta, and I've been hearing reports that using the beta can be dangerous. In many cases, after installing Boot Camp and then purchasing and installing Windows, users can no longer get their Mac OS to work. It's somewhat ironic that this first release of Boot Camp locks the user out of using the Apple OS and allows the Windows version to work correctly.

Each operating system requires a dedicated hard drive partition, which the application is supposed to set up. However, the first versions of Boot Camp have a bug in this area.

Beta versions are just that, beta. Wait and watch for reports on the success of the final version. If Apple can get this working correctly, I think many offices which have never purchased a Mac in the past will give it serious consideration. Now an Apple Macintosh with the ability to run both operating systems on the same computer could make everyone happy.

With the new Intel Macs and Boot Camp, users could boot in the Mac OS whenever they wished to surf the Web, access email, or run one of the many programs that run best on a Mac. However, they could return to Windows whenever they wished to run programs that only run in the Windows format.

There would be some additional cost, of course, to obtain Boot Camp and then purchase a new copy of Windows to install, but this solution would certainly be much cheaper than purchasing two computers.

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