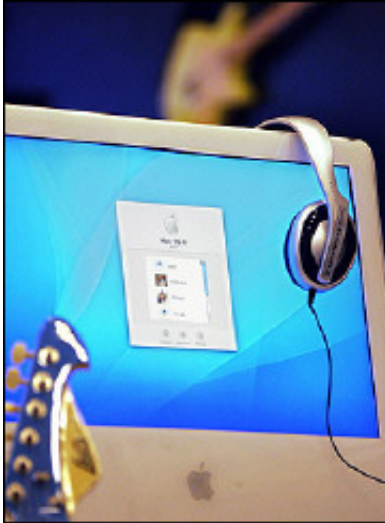


Apple sways potential users with Boot Camp

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Offer a choice and they will come. This appears to be the situation with Apple Computer's Intel-based computer line, released this year as part of the company's conversion to Intel logic boards and processors.

Where once an Apple Computer could only boot Apple's Macintosh operating system and specially configured versions of the Linux operating system, the switch to Intel-based hardware allows the new computers to boot and run Microsoft's Windows operating systems provided the correct software has been installed.

In early April Apple shocked its user base almost overnight by releasing

a public beta version of its Boot Camp software. Centered around the idea of an easy way to create a designated space on the hard drive for a Windows operating system to be installed, Boot Camp allowed users of Apple Computer's recent Intel-based systems to install Windows XP Service Pack 2.

While this was possible via emulation technologies under Apple's pre-Intel hardware line, the resulting operating speeds fell far short of running Windows on an Intel-based PC.

Boot Camp, still in development, is intended to become a significant part of Apple's upcoming Mac OS X 10.5 "Leopard" operating system. The software provides a means of easily installing and configuring a version of Windows XP on an Intel-based Mac but does not provide a version of Windows for the user, who will have to purchase his or her own copy of Windows XP prior to installation.

Apple isn't alone in its drive to bring Windows to its Intel-based line of computers. Parallels Inc., maker of Parallels Workstation, allows users to install and run Windows and Linux operating systems in a window on the Mac without the need to boot into the other operating system to use specialized applications. The software also allows users to run much older versions of Windows, whereas Apple's Boot Camp presently limits the user to running Windows XP Service Pack 2, the current version of the Windows operating system.

"I think Boot Camp and Parallels together did a great service for the Mac community," said Benjamin Rudolph, marketing manager of Parallels Inc. "If you're looking to switch to Mac, this is a good transition."

The introduction of Boot Camp may help lure on-the-fence computer buyers debating whether to buy an Intel-based Mac or a conventional PC

over to the Apple camp.

"I thought it was incredibly cool and gutsy of Apple," said one online user who asked to remain anonymous. "I use a lot of small, specialized applications that don't have a Mac equivalent. Now I can keep using them if I want to switch to Mac OS X. I had been waffling about switching for my next computer, but now I'm definitely going to."

"I thought it was about time that Apple offered something that would allow Mac owners to run Windows on a Mac. I had read about some third-party vendors and some hacks that had been done to get Windows to run on both pre-Intel and Intel-based Macs," said Justin Chan, a Florida-based business analyst. "Boot Camp has made purchasing a Mac even more attractive as an option for my next computer. Previous software that I had bought (for Windows) should be able to run on the machine. This along with the reputation that Apple has for its hardware has largely overcome my price resistance."

Chan then went on to comment that, while pleased with the introduction of Boot Camp, he was disappointed that the company would not provide technical support for the technology, which is still in a beta stage of software development.

"The big unanswered question in the market is whether Apple hardware could successfully sell with Windows on it, and by successful, I mean be competitive to a degree that it could grow Apple's hardware share massively," Rob Enderle, an analyst with the Enderle Group, said in an interview with ZDNet.com.

Although many users have expressed the hope that Apple's introduction of Boot Camp could help the firm gain a stronger foothold in business markets, the consensus still seems to be up in the air. Apple has done something relatively unexpected by allowing its current computers to run

their chief competitor's operating systems, thereby removing some of the exclusivity that surrounded their computers and user base.

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