Why was Windows for Workgroups pejoratively nicknamed Windows for Warehouses?

devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20190625-00

June 25, 2019

Raymond Chen

The first version of Windows with networking support built in was Windows for Workgroups 3.10. The intended audience for this was small businesses who wanted to network their computers together into units known as *workgroups*. (The term persists in Windows NT as well, referring to an unmanaged collection of computers operating in a peer-to-peer manner.)

Windows for Workgroups came with a network card, instructions for installing it, and even a screwdriver to assist with the installation. Now, there were two network cable standards at the time: BNC and 10Base-T. The network card that came with Windows for Workgroups 3.10 used BNC, which turned out to be the loser in the standards battle.

As a result, there was not a lot of interest in a network card that used an unpopular cable standard. Sales for Windows for Workgroups 3.10 were weak, which led many in the Windows division to bestow upon it the pejorative nickname of *Windows for Warehouses*, referring to the presumption that most copies of Windows for Workgroups 3.10 existed in the form of unsold inventory in warehouses.

Windows for Workgroups 3.11 solved this problem by omitting the network card entirely. People could choose their own network card, presumably one that used a popular cable standard. It also added significant performance improvements, including an early version of the 32-bit file system that also shipped in Windows 95. This version of Windows for Workgroups was a smashing success.

But the nickname stuck. Once you get a nickname, it's hard to shake it off.

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