

## Judge's Ruling on Java in Windows Won't Affect the Market

**Microsoft has gained a temporary stay of a court order compelling it to include Java in Windows. But even if the final ruling goes against Microsoft, it won't significantly affect either company's fortunes.**

---

**Event:** On 3 February 2003, a court stayed an order that would have forced Microsoft to include Java in the Windows operating system. The stay was granted several hours after Microsoft announced it had shipped, in compliance with the court order, an updated Windows XP Service Pack 1 without Microsoft's version of Java.

**First Take:** This stay gives Microsoft temporary respite from the original ruling of U.S. District Court Judge J. Frederick Motz, which said Microsoft must include Java in Windows within 120 days. However, even if Motz's decision is overturned on appeal, it won't drastically change Microsoft's or Sun Microsystems' fortunes. Sun's win is too little, too late to help it substantially challenge Microsoft's 90-percent dominance of the desktop operating system market.

If it stands, Motz's ruling will have no impact on about 90 percent of Java users — for example, those who employ Java in server or application server implementations — because the servers themselves provide the latest Java 2 Enterprise Edition environments. The ruling will most affect enterprises that have invested in Java applets. Those considering replacing Java applets with .NET technology should delay that decision until the court rules on Microsoft's appeal.

Although the final ruling will minimally affect market dynamics, it could significantly affect enterprises and Web sites using Java. As with any platform change, a switch from Microsoft's version of Java to Sun's Java Virtual Machine (JVM) carries with it some risk. Whether it is "true" Java or not, at this point Microsoft's JVM is the de facto client Java standard, and most Java applets have been written and tested for it. For the few users who rely on the Microsoft JVM for local PC applications, Microsoft losing the final ruling may affect compatibility between Microsoft's JVM and the standard Java Runtime Environment (JRE). This gap may hurt the performance of applications switched from one to the other. Developers should test each application running on Microsoft's JVM and prepare to recompile and modify these applications to operate with Sun's JRE.

Gartner recommends that enterprises employing Java applet strategies should:

- Secure a copy of the Microsoft JVM in case it is needed at a later date. The virtual machine is no longer available from Microsoft but can be found on other Web sites and in earlier Microsoft development kits.
- Begin testing applications for compatibility with Sun's JVM.

### Gartner

The content herein is often based on late-breaking events whose sources are believed to be reliable. Gartner disclaims all warranties as to the accuracy, completeness or adequacy of the information. Gartner shall have no liability for errors, omissions or inadequacies in the information contained herein or for interpretations thereof. The conclusions, projections and recommendations represent Gartner's initial analysis. As a result, our positions are subject to refinements or major changes as Gartner analysts gather more information and perform further analysis. © 2003 Gartner, Inc. and/or its Affiliates. All Rights Reserved. Reproduction of this publication in any form without prior written permission is forbidden.

**Analytical Sources:** David Smith, Mark Driver and Martin Reynolds, Gartner Research

### **Recommended Reading and Related Research**

- “Microsoft’s Latest Legal Setbacks Won’t Affect Its Business” — In the long term, Microsoft will likely settle the raft of antitrust lawsuits dogging it. **By David Smith**
- “Judge’s Ruling Positions Microsoft for New Markets” — Microsoft faces further legal action, but this shouldn’t prevent the company from going after new markets. **By David Smith**

(You may need to sign in or be a Gartner client to access all of this content.)