

Valuing Real Estate used to be so easy in the tech world. The PC was the first Trojan Horse. If you could get your application pre loaded on a major brands PC, then your software was a player. You would get an icon on the desktop, it would be available under Windows. Sometimes you would even get paid to bundle in your software. Quicken is the perfect example of a company who rode the PC Trojan Horse to success. Millions of users found their way to Quicken simply because it was there when they turned on their PC.

Once real estate on the PC became scarce and expensive, there was a period of time, call it the analog period of the late 80s and early 90s, when the search was on for a new Trojan Horse. Microsoft would never sell space in Windows. The big PC OEMs had finally realized what they had, and turned it into a profit source. The search was on for another way to get in front of consumers while they sat in front of their PCs.

Desperation ran so high that network clients , like Netware tried to increase their value to Wall Street by talking about the “installed base” of clients as a means to reach end users. Unfortunately for Novell, a genned image of Netware didnt do the trick.

Then along came the Internet and the race was on. Mozilla begat Netscape and Netscape begat the site of the day among other links and financial freedom was just a Netscape preconfigured link away. Netscape became the new trojan horse. if you could get your site linked or become a default, boom, you were a site or application that was a player. Netscape got paid. Websites got their shots at glory.

Of course, then Redmond came to the party and IE was spawned. It took some years, but it was a Trojan Horse in the making. From “channels” that were launched with IE 4.0 on, Netscape withered, Internet Explorer expanded and expanded.

In fact, it played its role so well, it begat other Trojan Horses like Yahoo, Excite, Lycos among other search sites, and baby trojan horses like Real networks and Windows Media Players.

A 2nd trojan horse emerged during the same period as AOL began to prosper and pick up subs.

Rather than going through a detailed history, Im going to pull one from Sunday morning Notre Dame replays and jump forward in the action to where we find ourselves today.

We are back at an inflection point

flash drive  
PDA  
Phone  
Medai PC/Game box  
Desktop PC  
Laptop  
Browser  
Media Player