

# The Volks-PC

- Power to the Digital Trader

# What is a Volks-PC?

A comprehensive package of OpenSource software and clearly-written manuals that turns a 386-class PC and above into a productivity tool to empower the world's citizens to become active Digital Traders.

The Next Big Thing is a small thing.

# What is OpenSource software

"The basic idea behind open source is very simple. When programmers on the Internet can read, redistribute, and modify the source for a piece of software, it evolves. People improve it, people adapt it, people fix bugs. And this can happen at a speed that, if one is used to the slow pace of conventional software development, seems astonishing."

<http://www.opensource.org/>

# What is a Digital Trader?

Any person, anywhere, whose knowledge and expertise (“intellectual property”) can be turned into a valuable asset when exchanged for income to a worldwide audience by electronic means (digital).

All “knowledge workers” today are, in fact, Digital Traders: they earn an income by trading with “digital goods,” like this file.

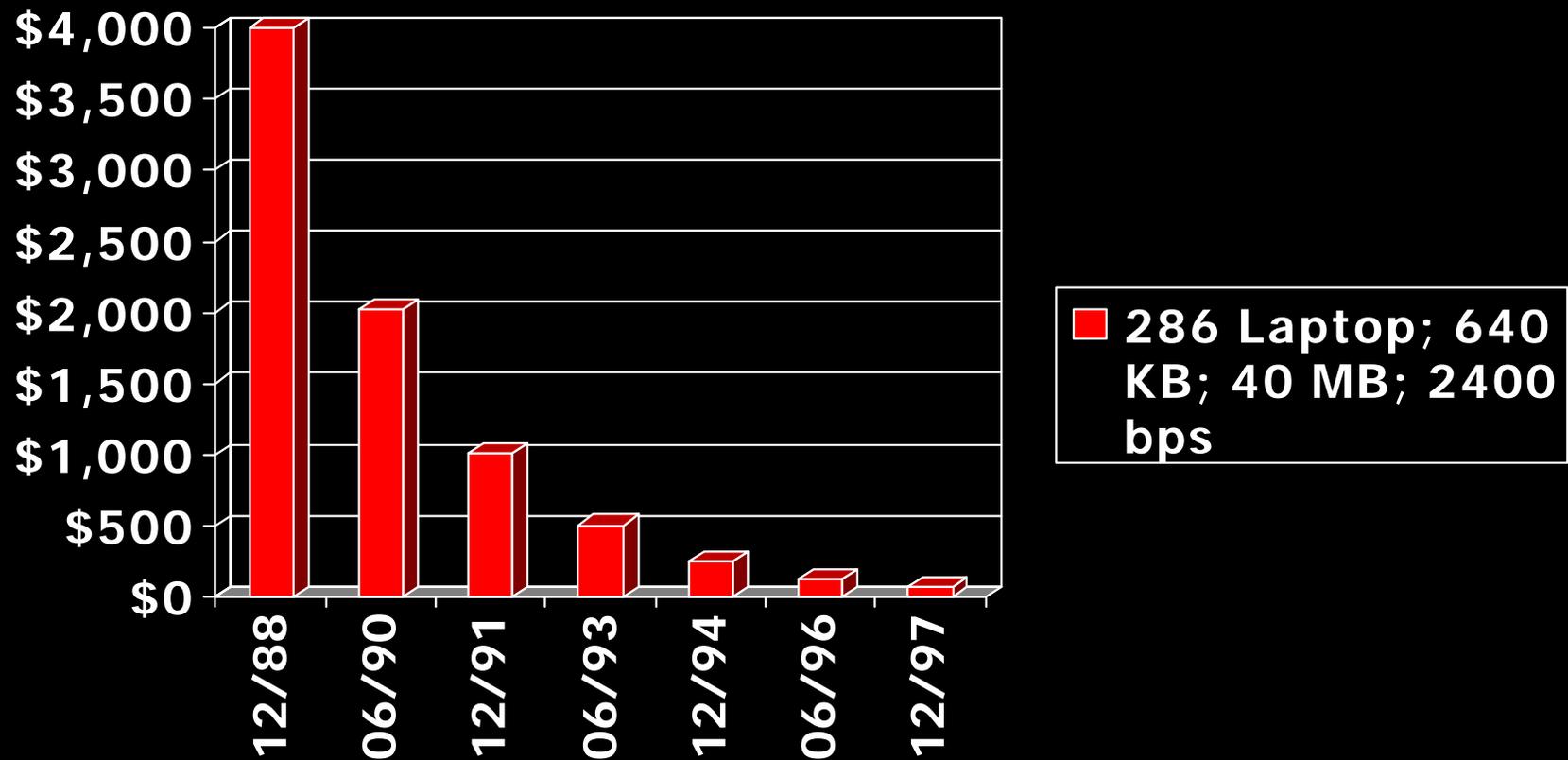
# 100 Million customers waiting.

- Users of MS-DOS, Windows 3.x
  - Users of 68K Macintosh computers
  - Users of Atari, Commodore64, Amiga
- NO competitors      NO expectations
- Does anybody want to reach them?

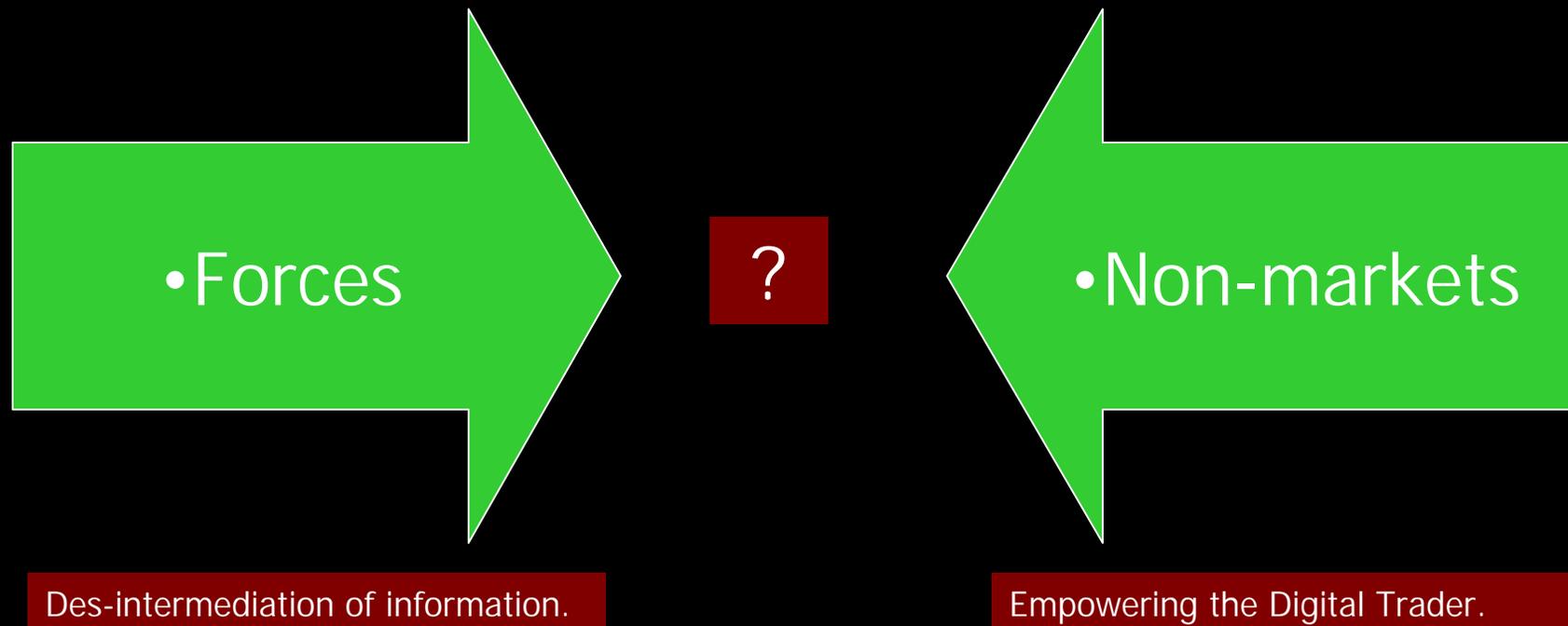
# Moore's Law, in reverse.

- Moore's Law:  
CPU power doubles every 18 months
- The Volks-PC's "Reverse Moore's Law:"  
Hardware prices drop by 50% every 18 months.
- Corollary:  
Microsoft lies: software never wears out.

# Moore's Law, in reverse.



# Riding the Forces, Creating the Non-Markets.



# Massive Forces Unleashed, 01

- [IT] The OpenSource / Linux business model:
  - The Cathedral and the Bazaar
- [IT] Microsoft's empire is shaking:
  - US' Department of Justice
  - Ralph Nader
  - Microsoft's own arrogance
  - Windows NT 5.0 coming fiasco
- [Hardware] Collapsing market for new PCs:
  - 50% of all PCs sold cost less than US\$1000.00
  - No "killer app" to motivate people to upgrade
- [Government] Equal access initiatives:
  - US: e-rate
  - EU: different initiatives

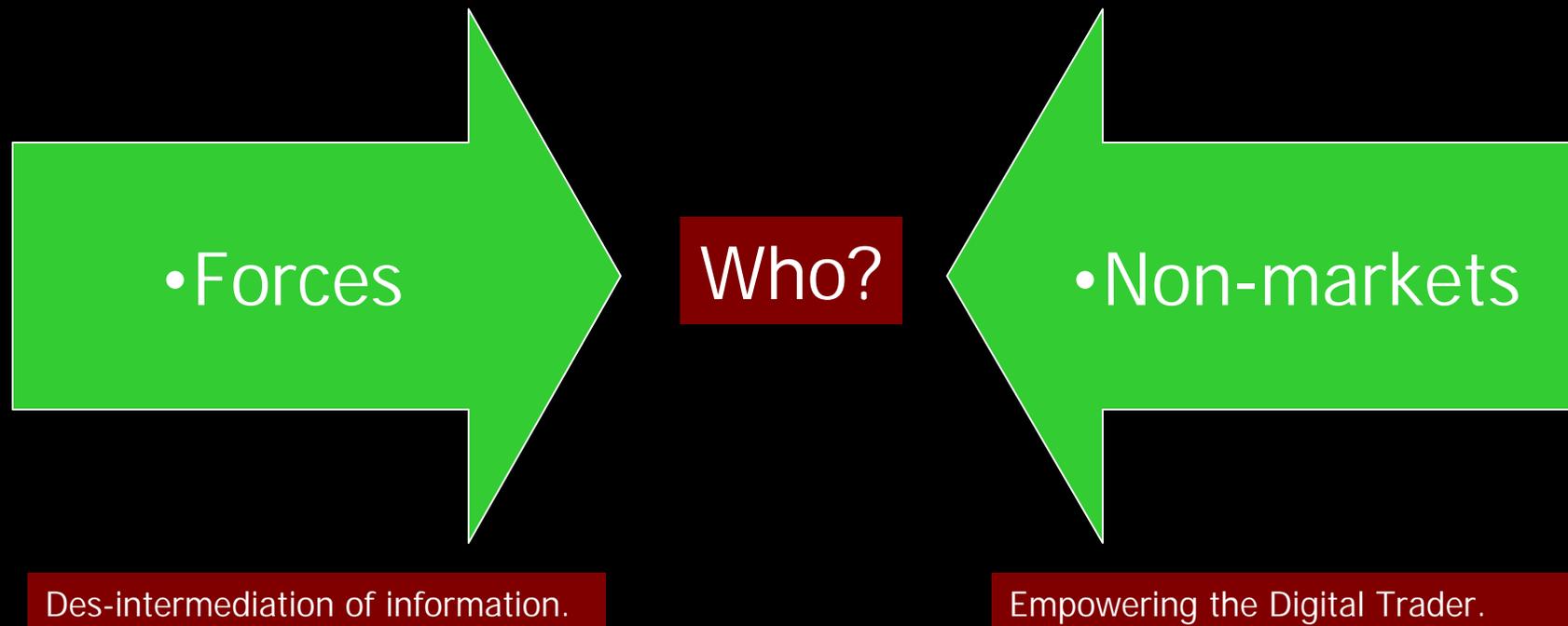
# Massive Forces Unleashed, 02

- [Social] "The Third Wave" Alvin Toffler:
  - The emergence of the Prosumer, the Digital Trader
  - Telecommuting as an acceptable work style
- [Technology] Pervasive e-commerce:
  - 24 by 7
  - Anybody can participate (cheap, simple)
  - From anywhere (Internet, Iridium, Teledesic)
- [Social] Growing worldwide underclass:
  - Tremendous concentration of wealth
  - By countries, by areas, by professions
  - Priests of the Technology Temple

# Overlooked Non-Markets:

- [Social] Developing countries:
  - Africa: the forgotten continent
  - Latin America: a young, upcoming area
  - East Europe: highly educated, technically capable
- [Technology] Turn under-class to upper-class:
  - What the printing press was to the Industrial Age..
  - the Volks-PC can be to the Information Age.
  - “Freedom of the press is for those who own one.”
- [Social] The American Challenge:
  - The Information Haves and Have-Nots
  - Spreading the wealth expands the pie: Henry Ford

# Riding the Forces, Creating the Non-Markets.



# Historical Opportunity

- Wide-open space to stake a claim
- Millions of orphaned, needy users
- Thousands of OpenSource developers:
  - Support the best programmers available
- Idle manufacturers ready in SE Asia

***Volks-PC: The Catalyst***

# Action Plan

- What does Volks-PC bring to the table?
- What needs to happen?
- Alliances
- Fund OpenSource ventures
- Activities
- Requirements

# What does Volks-PC bring to the table?

- A comprehensive, coherent package of software and documentation.
- Similar to a Linux "distribution," where the user receives all the necessary, integrated components in one piece.
- As business guide, catalyst agent: out of the coders, and into the masses.

# What needs to happen?

- Generate name recognition.
- Establish credibility in the OpenSource arena.
- Leverage existing customer base.
- Ride the wave of old PCs.

# Alliances (01)

- Red Hat / Caldera / Slackware
- O'Reilly and Associates
- SimTel.net / Walnut Creek / Timo
- Lotus / Harvard Graphics
- WordPerfect / Corel

## Alliances (02)

- Ralph Nader
- DOSzilla (Netscape for DOS)
- Crynwr (packet drivers)
- Why alliances?
  - We'll never make it alone.
  - Let's build upon the existing base.

# Fund OpenSource Developers

- FreeDOS / Monkey Linux
- DJGPP / RHIDE
- Gnome / KDE
- DOSzilla / Arachne / Net-Tamer
- WINE for Win32 / Samba
- Timo, DOS repository

# Fund OpenSource Developers

- Crynwr packet drivers
- Calmira / Desktop2
- SNMP / LDAP
  - Grants to authors to finance their time devoted to writing proper documentation.
  - Align with O'Reilly to edit the materials.

# Activities (01)

- Organize a DOS summit:
  - James Hall, FreeDOS
  - Calmira / Desktop2 developers
  - Ralph Nader (protect consumers' existing PC investment, not just focus on new PCs)
  - Delorie, DJGPP
  - Tim O'Reilly
  - Simtel.Net / Timo

## Activities (02)

- Go public / promote Volks-PC:
  - website (<http://www.volks-pc.org>)
  - webmaster
  - register trademark
  - create mailing list
  - meet with press, interviews

## Activities (03)

- Technical evaluation:
  - software quality and integration
  - create a “reference model”
  - release documentation
- Development of business plan
- Promotion within OpenSource community

# Risks:

- Image: promoting what is widely perceived as “obsolete technology.”
  - We must help change that: from the MS-created “upgrade-or-die hype,” to the reality of software’s perennial utility.
- The traditional PC industry will be against us: we will kill their “upgrade forever” cash cow.
  - We will help give birth to a new industry, with a new focus on serving the customer, not viceversa.
- People lacking the backbone to stand up to MS.
  - Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

# Rewards:

- Image: Volks-PC promoters as forward-looking, customer-centered people. This effort can become an effective global PR campaign.
- Market: we will create a new market with 100 million customer ready to be served.
- Social: empowering people to become productive agents in the Information Age

# Close

- “I have never liked playing with hardware. I would prefer to leave that to the people who do. I just wish somebody would write software that is not for techies. There is a large gap between that and the bloatware that is Windows.”  
e-mail from frustrated PC user