



MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
INFORMATION PROCESSING SERVICES
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

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APR 29 1975

J. H. SALTZER

28 April 1975

Prof. J. H. Saltzer
NE43-505

Dear Jerry,

This is in response to your letter of April 5, 1975, concerning the Multics operating plan. As I told you during our brief telephone conversation shortly after I received the letter, I feel that the data you present concerning costs, losses, and so forth are essentially correct. The only two bones I have to pick with the points you raise are the following:

1. It clearly is possible to "ruthlessly eliminate all professional programming support for Multics...." and "reduce user support services to a minimum....", however, this has the effect of operating on the MIT campus two systems of radically different support quality. The issue arises of whether or not the Multics users would begin to feel that they were somehow second-class citizens or whether the lack of support for the kinds of applications and assistance necessary to encourage use would in the long run have the same kind of negative effects as high prices do. Our experience with CP/67, which also was undersupported and underutilized, leaves me with this concern.
2. Experience in the Information Processing Center with the encouragement of new external and internal use of our computer systems is that it is hard to find major new users without both expending a good bit of time and effort providing services that we do not now have. In general, we have found that all substantial outside users (for example, Harvard, NERComP, and the University of Illinois) require that we make some investments of effort in order to attract and hold the user. This type of investment, particularly in quantity, is not completely compatible with the proposal to run a completely pared-down service.

Again, thanks for taking the time to outline these ideas. I am very glad, as I am sure you are too, that we have been able to solve the problem in a substantially more positive way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. H. Scott', with a large, sweeping flourish above the name.

Robert H. Scott
Director

RHS:ssw

cc: W. J. Burner
F. J. Corbato
R. C. Daley
M. L. Dertouzos