

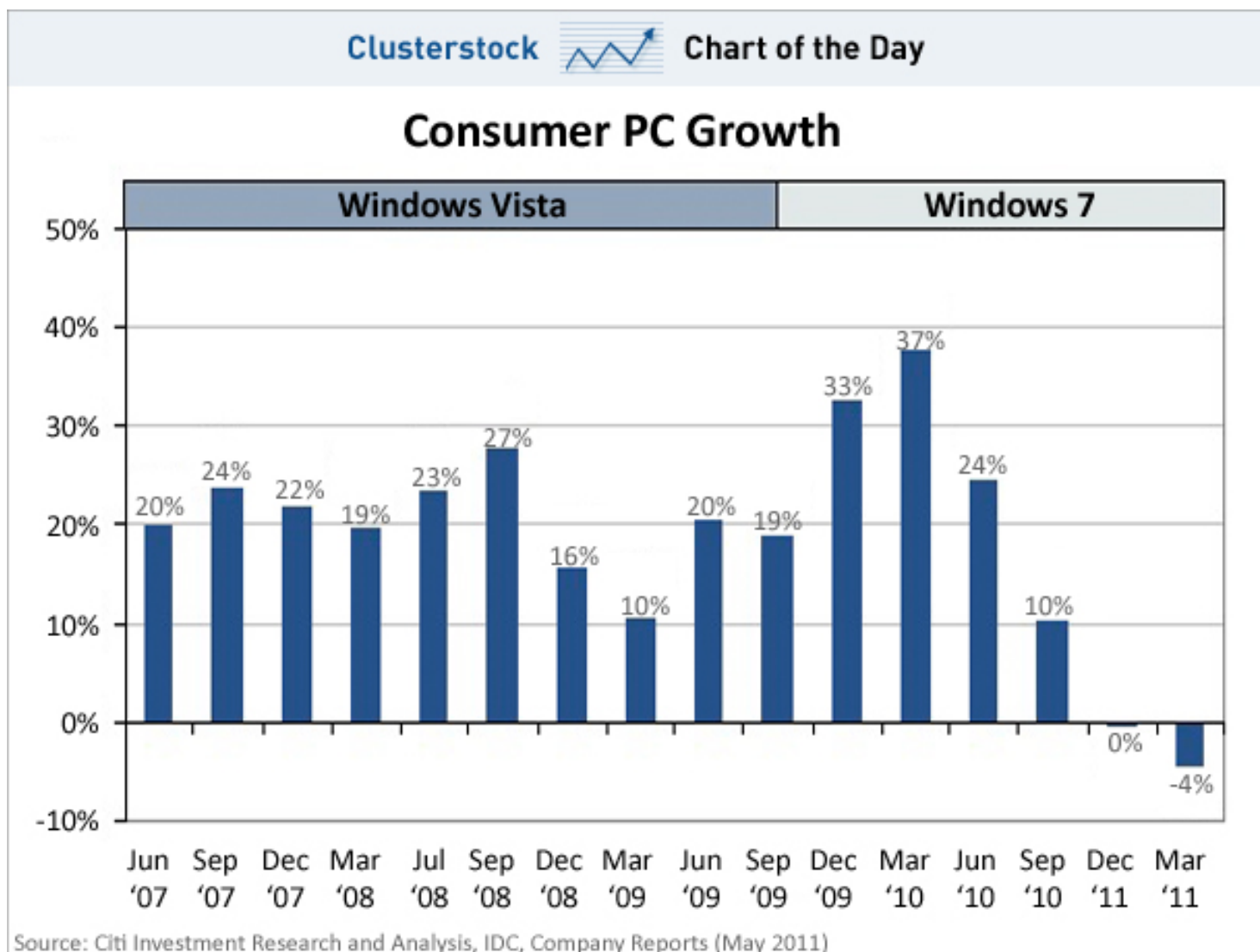
Will Microsoft Manage to Win the Tablet Race?

Written by Marco Attard
03. June 2011

Is Microsoft too late to enter the tablet race? Citigroup suggests otherwise, in a report saying Microsoft still has a chance to take over at least a chunk-- if not the #2 position-- of the market in 2013.

The analyst predicts Microsoft could even release a tablet-optimised version of Windows 8 before a PC version, particularly following the Windows 8 announcement this week.

Fuelling Microsoft's push towards tablet is consumer PC growth-- which, as seen in the chart (also by Citi analysts), is going into the negatives for the first time since, well, ever.



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A Microsoft-powered tablet won't have it easy of course-- competition includes not only Apple and Android, but also RIM, HP and even Intel. However Citi suggests Microsoft won't enter the market until at least 70m tablets will be sold. Why?

One reason is pricing (where it will reach potential customers who find Apple/Android tablets too expensive). Another is Google's current Android-related woes (from legal issues to Android tablets selling poorly compared to the iPad).

Together to that, Microsoft has two strengths of its own-- developers familiar with its .NET platform and Java, and enterprise clients looking to extend their Office-based workflows through portable devices.

In conclusion, Citi's predictions state Microsoft will have "meaningful share" of a 2013 market tablet reaching 75m devices. Too fanciful? One can never tell in this business...

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