



Ralph Scott

Browsers

Many people thought that apps would kill web browsers. Instead of generic search tools, these apps would take the user directly to whatever they wanted to do. Apps do serve a purpose, for example my fitness tracker uploads data using an app. Some software vendors however have actually discontinued apps. For example the special collections web based registration and item tracking system Aeon, had an app in an earlier software version, but recent versions lack this handy tool. Yet according to some studies over 40% of web based users still use Microsoft's Internet Explorer. So clearly browsers are here to stay, at least for the near future.

For Microsoft Windows users there are better browsers than Internet Explorer (IE). IE is slow and since updates are no longer issued, about as secure as an unattended backpack. What would I want in a better browser? Speed would be nice, as would security and safety. The ability to connect seamlessly between devices would be nice, use less power (while on Netflix) and oh, I'd like it to be easy to use. It would also be nice if it would not crash or give me those "404 file not found" errors. In fact Microsoft's newest browsers, Edge is considerable faster and uses less computer resources than IE. Edge only comes currently with the Windows 10 operating system and there are no plans by Microsoft to make

Edge versions for Windows 7 or Windows 8. While Edge still has a rough "edge" to it, developers are planning to add new applications for the browser. Many users prefer Google's Chrome browser, which runs much faster than IE and even Edge (unless you have an under-powered laptop in which case Edge uses less power). Some users prefer Firefox or Opera, but these two browsers are getting increasingly old and clunky. Opera works sometimes on machines that have limited memory, but most newer computers will run the much better Chrome browsers.

Mac Computer users have a choice of Safari or Chrome. Most Mac users select Apple's proprietary browser Safari because it is faster and uses less power. Many Mac users prefer the more popular Chrome because it makes fighting with and selecting tabs easier. Chrome developers are trying to make new releases run faster and use less power, but so far Safari has won the race. If you have lots of extra power you might try Chrome on your Mac.

Android users have a number of browsers to select from: Chrome, Flynx, Ghosty, Mercury, Naked (yes Naked Browser!), Opera, Firefox, Puffin and Dolphin (all are free downloads). Opera, Firefox and Puffin beat Chrome in terms of speed, however again many users prefer the Chrome interface. Puffin has an odd feature (enhancement?)

that allows you to only use Adobe Flash for 12 hours each day however. The "Android Authority" rates these browsers in this order: Dolphin, Firefox, Flynx, Ghosty, Chrome, Mercury, Naked, Opera, and Puffin. With all this selection, it's no wonder that the Android operating system is now making inroads into low cost laptops and tablets. Microsoft watch out!

Clearly there is an interesting array of browsers to choice from currently. Many users will stay with the old familiar standbys: Chrome, Safari, Firefox, and Microsoft's new Edge. Others will enjoy browsing with Naked or Opera. Undoubtedly the various features that you like about your current browser will change over time and you will need to re-visit the vast array of new choices again.



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