

IE8 goes mainstream

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This week, one of my machines installed Internet Explorer 8 via Windows Update. Unless Microsoft have put me into a trial group without me realising, it seems that IE8 is now a reality.

IE7 took an age to come out, so I was surprised to see IE8 released so soon. I've heard about it for a while now, but never got around to downloading the beta. To be honest, I, like many other developers had hoped Microsoft would give up on the browser market. It can't be a big revenue stream for them, and there are so many other **good** browsers out there.

Bad - set itself as default

Without asking, IE8 set itself as my default browser. That's a bit sneaky, and I thought microsoft would know better than to try this.

Good - it didn't break all my sites

I haven't done thorough checking, but most of my sites seem to be okay so far. There had been a lot of talk about IE8 finally becoming standards compliant, and breaking older sites in the process. Only my iGoogle homepage seems to have problems so far.

Bad - it didn't break all my sites

Some of my clients are happy with their old sites, written back when IE was the only browser. These sites don't work on Firefox etc, but the clients won't update them because it works on *their* browser. Some clients still use IE5 despite our recommendations! I had hoped IE8 would break these sites, so we can redo them properly.

Good - Accelerators

IE8 has copied a lot of features from other browsers, but Accelerators is their own idea. Give them their due, they're quite handy. Just highlight text, and you can go do stuff like search it or map it with a click. It saves copy+pasting into a new tab.

Indifferent - Web Slices

Web Slices are the other new feature. I can't see the need for them myself yet. They seem to allow you top bookmark part of a page, and get updates when it changes.

Conclusion

I can't see myself moving from Chrome. Chrome's great for everyday browsing, and there's FireFox for development. IE8's an improvement, but I can't get excited about it yet. It's just another browser version I need to test.