

4 June 2008

By: Marius Oiaga, Technology News Editor

Internet Explorer
Microsoft

[2 Million IE8 Beta 1 vs. Firefox 3.0](#)

Firefox 3.0 RC2 just around the corner

[Firefox 3.0](#) will not even trip on the approximately two million copies of Internet Explorer 8 Beta 1 that Microsoft revealed as having been downloaded since the browser was introduced on March 5, 2008. After Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates pointed to August for the release of [Internet Explorer 8 Beta 2](#), [Tony Chor](#), IE Group Program Manager, informed that the Redmond company accounted for more than two million downloads of [Beta 1](#) over the past three months. But in this context, with the final version of IE8 not even on the horizon, judging strictly from an evolutionary perspective, there is nothing standing between Firefox 3.0 and the world wide web. "On behalf of the team, I'd like to thank you all for your help with beta 1. Since we released Beta 1 in March we've had over two million downloads so far with lots of good, useful feedback. We've been listening to that feedback and making improvements to our work on an interoperable platform that has full CSS 2.1 support, faster script performance, and significantly more capable developer tools as well as our cool new features like Activities and Web Slices. We've learned a lot from this first," Chor stated. Microsoft plans IE8 Beta 2 for August, but Firefox will drop by mid-June, with the Release Candidate 2 build of the open source browser just around the corner, Mozilla focusing on delivering it ahead of May 6. Firefox 3.0 is aiming straight for the record books attempting to become the most downloaded piece of software in the first 24 hours since the launch, an initiative spearheaded by the Download Day [website](#). Mozilla is reportedly looking for no less than five million downloads of Firefox 3.0 in the first day following the official release. By all means, Microsoft's two million copies of IE8 Beta 1 will not be able to stop the flood of Firefox 3.0. Back in 2006, the Redmond company and Mozilla released Internet Explorer 7 and respectively Firefox 2.0 at a distance of a few weeks. Almost two years later, Firefox 2.0 is up to 17.17% of the browser market according to Net Applications, while IE7 accounts for 46.03%. Internet Explorer 8 Beta 1 is also in the statistics with a share of 0.3%, 20 times smaller than Firefox 3.0's 0.62%. While Firefox 2.0 and IE7 went head to head against one another a couple of years ago, Firefox 3.0 will have a consistent start ahead of Internet Explorer 8. It will beat IE8 Beta 2 to the market by almost two months, and by a few million downloads. Currently at 18.41%, up from 17.76% in April, it is not excluded that Firefox 3.0 will push Mozilla's share of the browser market over 20%. By contrast, IE's share is down almost 1% between April and May, dropping from 74.83% to just 73.75%. Still, Microsoft is mute on what comes after IE8 Beta 2, or on the availability deadline for the successor of [IE7](#). "Our final release date will depend highly on what the feedback on beta 2 is," Chor stated.