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## [Firefox vs. Internet Explorer, Ahead of IE8 and Firefox 3.1](#)

### *Market share comparison*

Internet Explorer -  
Firefox  
Microsoft

For the past couple of years Internet Explorer has been on a downward spiral, albeit slow, but inching down with every passing month, with only Firefox to blame. In the race to produce [Internet Explorer 8](#) and [Firefox 3.1](#), Microsoft and Mozilla are also going head to head in an audience-measuring contest, a constant comparison of market share that is continually giving the edge to the open source browser over its proprietary rival. At the start of December, for the first time in its history, Firefox's market share climbed over 20%. At the same time, Internet Explorer's trajectory dipped below the 70% mark.

"Reaching 20 percent worldwide market share is a significant milestone for Firefox and Mozilla," revealed Mozilla's CEO, John Lilly. "It's a huge achievement by the global Mozilla community, one that just a few years ago most would have considered impossible. The open web is more vibrant than ever, and the thousands of Mozilla contributors around the world have played a major role in making it that way."

According to statistics provided by [Net Applications](#), at the end of October 2008, Firefox accounted for a market share of 19.97%, and managed to jump almost one percent to 20.78% in November. During the same period, [Internet Explorer](#) dropped from 71.27% to just 69.77%. At the end of November 2008, Net Applications credited IE7 with 40.61%, IE6 with 35.18%, Firefox 3.0 with 15.57%, Firefox 2.0 with 4.80%.

"NetApplications has just released their monthly report Browser Market Share, which shows Firefox hitting 20.72% of the global market in November," stated [Asa Dotzler](#), Mozilla's director of community development. "IE is falling at a slightly faster rate than Firefox is growing. Pretty much all of the difference can be accounted for in the slow decline of the Windows desktop, which has this month fallen under the 70% mark for the first time."

In the first half of 2009, Microsoft and Mozilla plan to release the gold versions of Internet Explorer 8 and Firefox 3.1. IE8 is available for download as a Beta 2 milestone with the Release Candidate Build aimed for early 2009, and Firefox 3.1 is on the brink of Beta 2, with yet another Beta scheduled ahead of RC stage. Considering the amount of damage that Internet Explorer has been taking in terms of its depreciating market share, Firefox 3.1 is bound only to accentuate the pain of Microsoft's browser. It remains to be seen whether IE8 will gain sufficient traction, and have the necessary pull to convert IE stray-aways back from Firefox.

Internet Explorer 8 Beta 2 is available for download [here](#).

Firefox 3.1 Beta 1 can be downloaded from [here](#).