

30 December 2008

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Internet Explorer
The IE Team

[IE8 Final Looking Like a March 2009 \(or Post-March 2009\) Release](#)

According to new indications from Microsoft

If you are holding your breath while waiting for the successor of IE7, feel free to exhale at any time because Microsoft is by no means in any hurry to deliver the RTW (release to web) version of [Internet Explorer 8](#). In fact, a recent move from the Redmond company reveals that the gold release of IE8 might come as late as over a year after the launch of the Beta 1 build, if not even later. Of course, with no official confirmation, anticipating the final release of IE8 is nothing short of examining chicken entrails. However, the Redmond company does provide indications pointing to the availability of Internet Explorer 8 closer to, or even well into, the second quarter of 2009.

The giant is offering free and unlimited support for issues related to the deployment and usage of pre-released versions of IE8. Although the official help and support is currently focused on Windows Internet Explorer 8 Beta 2 (All Languages), Microsoft does emphasize that pre-released versions of the browser are in fact supported, and not just the second Beta. Up to this point in time the company has promised to support development milestones of IE8 until March 31, 2009.

"Free unlimited installation and usage support is available for Internet Explorer 8 pre-released versions, but only for North America English customers. This support for Internet Explorer 8 pre-released versions is valid until March 31st, 2009. Advanced issues are not supported. Advanced issues include, but are not limited to, problems that are associated with software and hardware development, domain connectivity, server-based technologies, Web site development, and business-critical systems," the message on the [page](#) reads, as you can very well see from the adjacent image.

The initial deadline for the IE8 pre-RTW support cut-off date was November 1, 2008. In mid-November, Microsoft pushed the date forward to [December 31, 2008](#). Furthermore, just ahead of the start of 2009, support for IE8 pre-RTW was extended until the end of March 2009.

Moving onward from IE8 Beta, the software giant delivered the IE8 pre-RCPartner Release and confirmed that it was gearing up for one more public development milestone build at the start of 2009. With IE8 Release Candidate planned for availability early next year, it is clear that the RTW launch is being pushed forward well into 2009. In accordance with the new March 31, 2009 end-of-support date for pre-released versions of the browser, the final version of Internet Explorer 8 is bound to hit by the end of March 2009 at the earliest, but it could slip even later into 2009.

However, one crucial aspect has to be taken into consideration. Between March 18 - 20, 2009, Microsoft will hold its MIX09 web-centric conference in Las Vegas. Last year, at MIX08 the Redmond company introduced [Internet Explorer 8 Beta 1](#). This year, MIX09 could be synonymous with the RTW of Internet Explorer 8. Earlier this month I contacted Microsoft in relation to its plans for IE8.

"In regard to your questions, we will release one more public update of Internet Explorer 8 in the first quarter of 2009, and then follow that up with the final release. Our timeline is driven by the quality of the product. Microsoft is deliberate in our approach to releasing new

products and we feel a strong obligation to our customers to do so in a responsible manner that ensures they are getting the safest, most reliable product possible," a Microsoft spokesperson stated for Softpedia. (Jack - thanks for the heads up on this one)

For the time being, Internet Explorer 8 (IE8) Beta 2 is available for download [here](#).