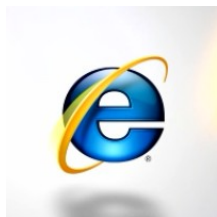


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By: Marius Oiaga, Technology News Editor

Internet Explorer 8
Microsoft

Microsoft: Standards-Complete IE8 Impossible

But the browser is the most standards-compliant IE

Microsoft is applauding the recently launched [Internet Explorer 8](#) as the most standards-compliant IE browser to date. And in comparing IE8 only with past releases of IE the Redmond company is right, however, critics and rival browser makers have made sure to point out that Internet Explorer 8 falls short of offering the same level of standard support as Firefox, Chrome or Opera. Microsoft has a good explanation for this; the Redmond company has only focused on delivering support for the standards that have already been finalized. During his keynote address at MIX09, Dean Hachamovitch, general manager, Internet Explorer, labeled the scenario of a standards-complete browser nothing short of impossible.

"Standards are incredibly complex," Hachamovitch said. "Every major browser is trying to be a great browser for Web standards. Now, there may be other tests and sites that show other problems across implementation. And because many standards aren't yet capital-R recommendations yet, it's impossible to be truly complete on many standards today."

Still, Hachamovitch indicated that Microsoft was committed to standards, and touted the browser's superiority over rivals when it came down to CSS 2.1. "IE8 passes more CSS 2.1 tests than other browsers. And these sample sites show our motivation. You need consistent behavior across browsers. We focused on the test suite and delivering as complete an implementation as possible so that you can spend more of your time making great sites, not dealing with issues," he said.

Tim Sneath, Microsoft Client Platform evangelist, explained that 100% standards-compliance is impossible simply because the standards themselves are yet to be finalized. "For IE8, we focused on the test suite and delivering as complete an implementation as possible so that we can help you build sites that work across multiple browsers," Sneath said.

Microsoft has put together a consistent collection of CSS 2.1 test cases featuring more than 7,000 items all submitted to the W3C. In this regard, the company indicated that, while the vast majority of CSS standards are implemented right by all browsers, there are hundreds of cases in which IE8 rivals that pass Acid2 Test do not actually achieve full implementation.

Stressing that IE8 was built for developers, Hachamovitch emphasized that IE8 "defaults to the most standards-compliant mode." At the same time, in an effort not to break the web, Microsoft has built IE8 to be compatible with IE7- and IE6-tailored content, maintaining compatibility with previous releases of Internet Explorer.

Internet Explorer 8 (IE8) RTW is available for download [here](#) (for 32-bit and 64-bit flavors of Windows XP, Windows Vista, Windows Server 2003 and Windows Server 2008).