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Bill Gates at CES 2008 announcing the deal with NBC and Microsoft

[CES 2008: Microsoft Takes the Silverlight - Adobe Flash Race to the 2008 Olympic Games](#)

In Beijing, China

When it comes down to browser plug-ins designed to deliver rich media content and interactivity to websites, Microsoft's Silverlight technology, which debuted in 2007, is the undisputed underdog in comparison to Adobe's Flash. But Silverlight is still a young technology, and Microsoft is struggling to get it off the ground. And even though it was labeled with the Flash-killer moniker from the time it was known as Windows Presentation Foundation/Everywhere, 2008 is synonymous with an immense opportunity for Silverlight to shine. In this context, Microsoft announced at 2008 International CES the inking of an agreement with NBC, whereas the MSN group will become its exclusive partner, serving 2008 Olympics online video footage via Silverlight. "As a part of this, we will provide users with exclusive access to over 3000 hours of live and on-demand video content via Silverlight streaming. This means that viewers can access every minute of every event. Additionally, the amount of meta-data attached to each of the streams will be extensive and include links to player bios, medal counts, shortcuts to particular events (i.e. athlete x's third long-jump attempt), maps of the Olympic facilities, pop-up overlays with real-time event alerts, headlines, video search capabilities, etc.", explained S. "Soma" Somasegar, corporate vice president, of the Developer Division at Microsoft. The Beijing 2008 Olympic Games will debut in August of this year, and Silverlight will be there for the lighting of the Olympic Torch. Microsoft will essentially build a web broadcast hotspot for the games on MSN - NBCOlympics.com - that will be entirely Silverlight 2.0 based. With the help of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, Silverlight will get sufficient playtime to catalyze its transition to a wide mass of users, taking the technology into the mainstream. "With Microsoft's cutting-edge technology and MSN's enormous reach, we will be positioned on NBCOlympics.com to enable Olympic fans to tailor their Olympic online viewing experience - they can watch Olympic sports content when and where they want. An on-demand Olympics means online viewers will be able to return to their favorite Olympic moments over and over or watch a performance they may have missed for the first time", stated Gary Zenkel, president of NBC Olympics.