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[Silverlight 2 Beta 2 Available This Week](#)

Along with [Expression Blend 2.5 June 2008 Preview](#)



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Microsoft is getting to move Silverlight 2 forward with the next development milestone. Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates revealed, at the company's Tech Ed North America 2008 Developers conference in Orlando, that the second Beta for the plug-in would be made available to the general public by the end of this week. Silverlight 2 Beta 2 marks yet another step in the Redmond company's pursuit of Adobe's Flash which is currently the standard for RIA development and for delivering an advanced level of interactivity to websites. "Now available with a commercial Go Live license, Silverlight 2 beta 2 will be used to power the unprecedented online experience NBC Universal is creating for the 2008 Beijing Olympics. To help developers take full advantage of Silverlight, Microsoft also released Expression Blend 2.5 June 2008 Preview and Microsoft Silverlight Tools beta 2 for Visual Studio 2008," Microsoft explained. At the time of writing this article, neither Silverlight 2 Beta 2 nor [Expression Blend 2.5](#) June 2008 Preview are available for download. Microsoft is, of course, pushing Silverlight hard in the territory currently occupied by Flash, and is doing so via its main Internet properties, as well as through various partnerships. Teaming up with NBC Universal for the creation of a Silverlight-based website dedicated exclusively to the 2008 Beijing Olympics is nothing short of a victory for the Redmond company. Another battle won for Microsoft against Adobe is the pre-loading of a Silverlight-based Live Search toolbar on all HP PCs that will ship in 2009 in Canada and the United States. In this manner, the software giant is spreading not only Live Search, but also Silverlight. Silverlight 1.0 was introduced in September 2007. At that time, Microsoft's "cross-browser, cross-platform and cross-device plug-in" was only compatible with Windows and Mac OS X. In mid-May 2008, Mono, an open source project supported by Novell dropped [Moonlight 1.0 and 2.0 Alpha](#) for Linux. [Silverlight 2 Beta 1](#) has been up for grabs since earlier this year.