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Surf with the Finest!

It's a whole World Wide Web out there

A friend of mine once said that the result of your work is strictly related to the tools you use. And he was right. You cannot catch a whale or a shark with a fishing rod. Things are pretty much the same in the virtual world. In order to make a nifty website, you need special softwares (creativity and good taste are also needed). If you want to slalom through the websites, you need a fast web browser that will do the trick. I present you Slim Browser, a software developed by Flash Peak. The version I am testing is 4.08.004 Beta (so it is still under development). The software is free so you can use it anywhere you want. The size of the installation file is almost 1.80MB. The interface of the software is something you have never seen before (apart from the fact that it is tab-paged) and if you have, you can satisfy your desire for uniqueness by downloading one of the 144 skins available on the software's home page. The toolbars available will allow the user to quickly search for, access and save your favorite URLs as well as configuring the browser so that it will promptly respond to your actions. The toolbars include a utility section, a quick search bar, links, favorites, site tabs, the standard toolbar (the most used in any browser), My search bar that will permit searching for the desired information using four different search engines (Google, Yahoo, Jeeves and LookSmart). The plugins suite available for download contains tools like Roboform (password manager), My Voice Email (record and send audio messages), Privacy Inspector (inspect the trace of your personal info left on the computer), InstantGet (download manager), etc. Compared to the anterior versions, the software brings changes that are neither important nor major. Some bugs were fixed (middle click to close tab for multiline tabs) and it will now provide full unicode support on WinNT-based systems. Let's browse a little through the software's goodies and see what it has and how helpful are the features and options it makes available. The tabbed interface is one point that any user will consider useful, no matter of his/her Internet browsing skills. The browser will not open a new page in another instance of the software. Resuming the session is also supported by the software, although you will have to configure it from the options menu (in StartUp). If you activate this feature, when closing and re-opening, the application will resume the last session. The Alias feature will enable you to type in a short alias instead of the whole URL. This feature is useful when you want to open fast a deep section inside a website. Make the necessary settings and SlimBrowser will replace the user-defined alias with the full URL. The configuration options can be found in the Options menu. To give you an example I configured the software to open www.softpedia.com whenever I type in the address bar "sft". The AutoLogin feature will log you into a website by automatically filling and submitting the web forms with the pre-defined login information. Thus, all you have to do is access the option Add AutoLogin From Page and save the file. The ActiveX filter will protect the user from installing useless or spyware filled ActiveX Control. Its main function is to save you the trouble of saying "no" to those annoying ActiveX control dialogs. SlimBrowser will stop the unsafe and obtrusive ActiveX control by keeping a black list. The software comes with a very interesting solution for counterattacking pop-ups: when the popup killer detects a popup window, it will temporarily hide the site and then it will close it permanently. Be careful with the buttons in the toolbar as the last one is a bit dangerous for the users that depend on cookies. Its name is Clean All Trace so you can imagine what it is for. It will do a very thorough cleaning and will erase all the address bar history, quick search history and it will clean all your cookies and cached files. **The Good** The software comes with features that you used to encounter in several different web browsers. The plugin suite is free and I am sure that it will come in handy at some point (especially when we're talking about

Roboform).The interface has a new, fresh look that can be changed with one of the 144 skins available online. **The Bad** Compared to my default browser, Slim Browser eats up more memory than I expected (three regular web pages opened took about 25MB of computer memory while Maxthon ate about 12MB with seven regular webpages opened).I particularly enjoyed the customizing of the site tabs (you can set them to be displayed at the top or at the bottom) because it will make the window more airy. The pages can be edited with a built-in script-pad.Showing the close button on tabs was not such a good idea as the user can accidentally close the web page when in fact, s/he is trying to access it. **The Truth** Slim Browser is definitely worth trying even if it needs more memory. If you come to think of it, with all the memory requirements of today, Slim Browser is really shy.Good-looking, extremely featured, Slim Browser is a web browser that every user should have among his/her kits. Although the version I tested is beta, I had absolutely no problems and it ran just fine.The creative look and the customizing it allows make Slim Browser a flexible, easy to use web surfing tool.*Here are some snapshots of the application in action:*