



## At a glance

- **Google have launched their own free internet browser called Google Chrome**
- **The browser offers a number of innovations including address bar search functionality**
- **Industry watchers predict this is Google's first step to developing a web based operating system**

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This paper is designed to give the reader a high level overview of Chrome and its implications for the digital landscape.

### What is Google Chrome and why have Google launched it?

*Web based operating systems are seen as the future*

Google Chrome is a free and open source web browser developed by Google. The name is derived from the graphical user interface frame, or "chrome", of web browsers. The open source project behind Google Chrome is known as Chromium and its source code is released under a BSD licence.

A beta version for Microsoft Windows was released on 2 September 2008 in 43 languages. Mac OS X and Linux versions are under development and are scheduled to be released sometime in the future.

Primary design goals were improvements in security, speed and stability compared to existing browsers. There is also new innovation most noticeably the ability to search within the address bar rather than from a web page or a search plug in on the tool bar.

Microsoft have been quoted as saying that the successor to Windows Vista will be a web based operating system. Many industry analysts see this as Google's response. The browser is designed to work in conjunction with web based applications such as Google Docs and Gmail.

### **Potential take up and impact on the marketplace**

*Potential to have a big impact on the browser landscape*

24 Hours after launch Google Chrome had a 1% worldwide market share of browser use.

Whilst this growth is likely to tail off, and many users may return to their previous browser after a trial period the impact of Chrome should not be underestimated.

The success of free browsers such as Mozilla Firefox and Opera combined with the might of Google and their reputation for constant innovation means it is likely that within a short space of time Google will own a significant market share of the global browser landscape.

### **Industry reactions**

*A mixed response from the industry*

Critics have been quick in reviewing the browser, according to Daily Telegraph's Matthew Moore, who summarized the verdict of early reviewers: "Google Chrome is attractive, fast and has some impressive new features, but may not—yet—be a threat to its Microsoft rival."

Peter Svensson of the Associated Press said that Chrome "lacks polish," and although he praises a few of its innovative features such as the Task Manager, Svenson ultimately states that the browser "falls short of Google's goals, and is outdone in an important measure by the latest version of Microsoft Corp.'s Internet Explorer."

Microsoft reportedly "played down the threat from Chrome" and "predicted that most people will embrace Internet Explorer 8."

Opera Software said that "Chrome will strengthen the Web as the biggest application platform in the world."

into the web browser market comes as "no real surprise" and that "Chrome is not aimed at competing with Firefox" — and furthermore should not affect Google's financing of Firefox.

**Further information**

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Mozilla said that  
Chrome's introduction

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