

Slashdot

News for nerds, stuff that matters

- [Log In](#)
- [Create Account](#)
- [Help](#)
- [Subscribe](#)
- [Firehose](#)
- [Why Log In?](#)
- [Why Subscribe?](#)

Log In

Nickname Password Public Terminal

[[Create a new account](#)]



Firefox Users Stay Ahead On the Update Curve

Posted by [timothy](#) on Monday July 07, @01:18AM
from the not-altogether-surprising dept.

Reader [Alex](#) links to news of a study comparing the [currency and patch level of various Web browsers](#), excerpting: *"Firefox users were far and away the most likely to use the latest version, with an overwhelming 83.3 percent running an updated browser on any given day. However, despite Firefox's single click integrate auto-update functionality, 16.7 percent of Firefox users still continue access the Web with an outdated version of the browser, researchers said. The study also revealed that the majority of Safari users (65.3) percent were likely to use the latest version of the browser between December 2007 and June 2008, after Safari version 3 became available. Meanwhile, Microsoft (NSDQ:MSFT)'s Internet Explorer users ranked last in terms of safe browsing. Between January 2007 and June 2008, less than half of IE users — 47.6 percent — were running the most secure browser version during the same time period."*



[+] [internet](#), [mozilla](#), [msie](#), [security](#), [software](#) ([tagging beta](#))

Related Stories

[Firehose:Study finds Firefox the safest browser](#) by Anonymous Coward

- 47% ([Score:5](#), Funny)

by [Geak \(790376\)](#) on Monday July 07, @01:23AM ([#24080479](#))
47% are still using Mosaic????

Reply to This

- [Re:47%](#) by rootphreak (Score:2) Monday July 07, @02:27AM
- [Re:47%](#) by Nathonix (Score:1) Monday July 07, @03:48AM

- [1 reply](#) beneath your current threshold.
- ***shrug*** ([Score:1](#))

by [grim4593 \(947789\)](#) on Monday July 07, @01:24AM ([#24080485](#))
No reason to fix what isn't broke.

[Reply to This](#)

- **Re:*shrug*** ([Score:5](#), Funny)

by [arotenbe \(1203922\)](#) on Monday July 07, @01:43AM ([#24080587](#))

No reason to fix what isn't broke.

What the hell are you doing on Slashdot?

[Reply to This](#)

[Parent](#)

- [Re:*shrug*](#) by [ngth82](#) (Score:1) Monday July 07, @02:43AM
- [Re:*shrug*](#) by [Raul Acevedo](#) (Score:2) Monday July 07, @02:45AM
- **Trust** ([Score:5](#), Informative)

by [DigitA156K \(805623\)](#) * on Monday July 07, @01:25AM ([#24080489](#))

I leave the auto-update feature on in Firefox because I trust that when Mozilla pushes updates they are valuable to me in terms of security or features and that they've been well tested. This has generally held to be true.

On the other hand, on any system I administer I immediately disable automatic updates because Microsoft sometimes pushes patches that only partially address a problem, creating a false sense of security, and then later re-issue them, push things like updates to Windows Media DRM as critical updates (it's not critical to me, Microsoft!), and release updates that go on to cause problems with other software or system stability in general.

When I can trust Microsoft to apply only security updates to IE (or other components of my choosing), maybe I'll consider turning automatic updates back on. Maybe.

[Reply to This](#)

- [Re:Trust](#) by [martin-boundary](#) (Score:3) Monday July 07, @02:32AM
 - [Re:Trust](#) by [setaglib](#) (Score:2) Monday July 07, @03:01AM
- [Re:Trust](#) by [quantumphaze](#) (Score:3) Monday July 07, @02:33AM
 - [Re:Trust](#) by [setaglib](#) (Score:2) Monday July 07, @03:02AM
 - [Re:Trust](#) by [quantumphaze](#) (Score:3) Monday July 07, @03:23AM
- [Re:Trust](#) by [antdude](#) (Score:2) Monday July 07, @03:07AM
- [Portable Firefox](#) by [rvw](#) (Score:2) Monday July 07, @03:52AM
- **Understandable** ([Score:5](#), Insightful)

by [Morgor \(542294\)](#) on Monday July 07, @01:26AM ([#24080495](#)) [Homepage](#)

This is understandable, considering the level of obnoxiousness. Firefox gives you a discrete notice that it has downloaded an update, and you can choose not to install it right away, but instead having it installed next time you start firefox. Windows Updates are so damn obnoxious that I always consider turning it off

and doing my updates manually. I know how to update my computer manually, but I suspect the bulk of users out there, just get frustrated about the constant bells and whistles of Windows Update, that they turn it off and leave it like that.

[Reply to This](#)

- [Re:Understandable](#) by ET3D (Score:1) Monday July 07, @03:25AM
 - [Re:Understandable](#) by Hal_Porter (Score:1) Monday July 07, @03:54AM
- **Usual drivel (Score:5, Funny)**

by [taustin \(171655\)](#) on Monday July 07, @01:27AM ([#24080501](#)) [Homepage Journal](#)

When Microsoft has shit flashing on the screen automatically to remind you to do updates, it's evil intrusion in to one's privacy. But when Firefox does *exactaly the same thing*, they're God's gift to enlightenment.

The reason most Firefox users use the most up to date version is that it's the only way to get rid of the annoying pop-ups.

[Reply to This](#)

- [Re:Usual drivel](#) by Anonymous Coward (Score:3) Monday July 07, @01:38AM
 - [Re:Usual drivel](#) by Hal_Porter (Score:1) Monday July 07, @03:34AM
- **Re:Usual drivel (Score:5, Funny)**

by [arotenbe \(1203922\)](#) on Monday July 07, @01:52AM ([#24080621](#))

When Microsoft has shit flashing on the screen automatically to remind you to do updates, it's evil intrusion in to one's privacy. But when Firefox does exactaly the same thing, they're God's gift to enlightenment.

Firefox requires you to restart your browser, but Windows requires you to restart your whole computer.

Then again, with Firefox it takes just as long...

[Reply to This](#)

[Parent](#)

- [Re:Usual drivel](#) by HJED (Score:1) Monday July 07, @02:05AM
 - **1 reply beneath your current threshold.**
- **Re:Usual drivel (Score:5, Funny)**

by [Artuir \(1226648\)](#) on Monday July 07, @02:11AM ([#24080719](#))

What computer are you using, Babbage's Difference Engine?

[Reply to This](#)

[Parent](#)

- **Re:Usual drivel (Score:4, Funny)**

by [SpaceLifeForm \(228190\)](#) on Monday July 07, @01:54AM ([#24080629](#))
The difference is that when Firefox has an update, it is for the browser. When Microsoft has an update, it is for the

Oh, wait.

[Reply to This](#)

[Parent](#)

- **1 reply beneath your current threshold.**
- [Re:Usual drivel](#) by ya really (Score:2) Monday July 07, @02:03AM
 - **Re:Usual drivel (Score:4, Informative)**

by [beelsebob \(529313\)](#) on Monday July 07, @02:16AM ([#24080737](#))

Safari uses the same update method as all apple's software -- in OS X it uses the built in software update mechanism, and in Windows, it uses a port of that mechanism. It's about as annoying as all the others (except windows update, because it doesn't pop up every 5 minutes, and it doesn't have a death clock before destroying all your work by restarting).

[Reply to This](#)

[Parent](#)

- [Re:Usual drivel](#) by neonmonk (Score:1) Monday July 07, @03:15AM
- [Re:Usual drivel](#) by jimicus (Score:2) Monday July 07, @03:57AM
- [Re:Usual drivel](#) by Gnavpot (Score:2) Monday July 07, @03:41AM
- [Re:Usual drivel](#) by Nikademus (Score:2) Monday July 07, @03:49AM
- [Re:Usual drivel](#) by Hal_Porter (Score:1) Monday July 07, @03:58AM
- **1 reply beneath your current threshold.**
- **This makes sense (Score:2, Troll)**

by [The Ancients \(626689\)](#) on Monday July 07, @01:28AM ([#24080509](#)) [Homepage](#)

It's rational fear of the unknown.

I've never had a Firefox or Safari issue toast my machine. I've had IE updates do it twice before (on different machines).

I just don't see how a browser can cause such mayhem to the OS - considering it's the browser that supposedly runs inside the OS, and not the other way around.

Well ok, I can. To rephrase: I don't see how a browser *should* cause such mayhem to the OS.

[Reply to This](#)

- [Re:This makes sense](#) by techno-vampire (Score:3) Monday July 07, @02:26AM
 - **1 reply beneath your current threshold.**
- **Makes sense to me. (Score:1)**

by [ejg930 \(1320903\)](#) on Monday July 07, @01:30AM ([#24080517](#))

I like that Firefox isn't pushy about installing your updates, but rather it lets you do it at your convenience. Safari I can understand too, because that's integrated into Apple's update program, and most people leave

that on automatically.

[Reply to This](#)

- **You happy now? (Score:1, Offtopic)**

by [kramulous \(977841\)](#) * on Monday July 07, @01:34AM ([#24080543](#))
There, I finally upgraded to FF3 on my FC8 box. You happy now?

[Reply to This](#)

- [Re:You happy now?](#) by Rhapsody Scarlet (Score:2) Monday July 07, @02:39AM
 - [Re:You happy now?](#) by Rhapsody Scarlet (Score:2) Monday July 07, @04:07AM
 - **1 reply beneath your current threshold.**
- **the reason (Score:4, Insightful)**

by Anonymous Coward on Monday July 07, @01:35AM ([#24080545](#))

The majority of IE users use IE "because it's there." These people see no reason to download a different browser because one is already provided for them. These are the same people that usually end up relying on Automatic Updates to secure their browser, in most cases not even aware that these updates were taking place to begin with. Chances are that these people don't know that their browser even has updates, much less that they are running an insecure, outdated browser.

Users of alternative browsers, by contrast, use their browser deliberately. They know that IE is there, but they blatantly decide to go against the tide and use something else. Whatever the reason for this depends on the user, but most of them share this common trait. Said browsers can't use Automatic Updates, so they must have their own update checking mechanisms in place. Every alternative browser I've used will check every so often for an update and display a pop-up for the user. The user then knows that their browser is out-of-date. Such users also tend to want the latest version, again for various reasons. Firefox is a bit more aggressive than most, downloading the update by default and installing it regardless of whether the user chooses to have it done now or later, which better explains its higher percentage.

[Reply to This](#)

- **Likely business users skew the results. (Score:4, Informative)**

by [eccenthink \(1312043\)](#) on Monday July 07, @01:36AM ([#24080555](#))
Where I work we had IE 7 a couple years ago but the corporate intranet didn't work properly or IT didn't want to support it or something so I'm forced to use IE 6. I couldn't update IE if I wanted to on the computer where I work. I use firefox at home but I go to quite a few websites during my lunch break. Unless they're filtering out IP's from corporate domains I suspect the results of the study are skewed by users surfing while at work.

[Reply to This](#)

- [Re:Likely business users skew the results.](#) by ben2umbc (Score:1) Monday July 07, @01:42AM
- [Re:Likely business users skew the results.](#) by barista (Score:3) Monday July 07, @01:58AM
- **Well jeeze, you guys! (Score:1)**

by [iminplaya \(723125\)](#) on Monday July 07, @01:38AM ([#24080565](#)) [Journal](#)

If I spend all my time keeping up with upgrades, I won't have any time left to actually *use* my damn computer. And sometimes an older version works better for me. All that automatic crap is turned off. My

disks are backed up...I think... I'll upgrade if something breaks. I hope you're ok with that.

[Reply to This](#)

- [Re:Well jeeze, you guys!](#) by Zencyde (Score:1) Monday July 07, @03:06AM
- **"Most secure" (Score:4, Funny)**

by [Legion_SB \(1300215\)](#) on Monday July 07, @01:47AM ([#24080605](#)) [Homepage](#)

Between January 2007 and June 2008, less than half of IE users - 47.6 percent - were running the **most secure browser version** during the same time period.

That many people still run IE 2.0?

[Reply to This](#)

- **What has single click got to do with it? (Score:2, Interesting)**

by [LesFerg \(452838\)](#) on Monday July 07, @01:54AM ([#24080633](#))

I'm not sure why they couldn't have the update option for version 2.xx at least offer the option to update to version 3. It just kept telling me there were no new updates available. I wouldn't call it 'single click' at all.

[Reply to This](#)

- **Re:What has single click got to do with it? (Score:4, Informative)**

by Anonymous Coward on Monday July 07, @02:22AM ([#24080759](#))

I'm not sure why they couldn't have the .update option for version 2.xx at least offer the option to update to version 3. It just kept telling me there were no new updates available. I wouldn't call it 'single click' at all.

The option to update to Firefox 3 instead of another security minor version of Firefox 2 (which will still get security updates till the end of the year) hasn't been turned on at the server end yet, and will likely only be done at the next minor version update, like Firefox 3.0.1 or later. THEN, you'll have a single click.

[Reply to This](#)

[Parent](#)

- **IE7 is not installed with automatic updates (Score:1)**

by [ZeroSerenity \(923363\)](#) <gormac05NO@SPAMyahoo.com> on Monday July 07, @02:05AM ([#24080677](#)) [Homepage Journal](#)

And therefore the general populace of computer users who don't tell it to install are obviously not going to have it. Not to mention it requires clicks to install unlike all other updates that happen on their own and just tell you to reboot every 20 minutes. So I guess we could say Microsoft really needs to push 7 if they want everyone secure.

[Reply to This](#)

- [Re:IE7 is not installed with automatic updates](#) by Repossessed (Score:2) Monday July 07,

@03:35AM

- **Aren't I the living satan (Score:3, Insightful)**

by [heroine \(1220\)](#) on Monday July 07, @02:08AM ([#24080701](#)) [Homepage](#)

Well I still use version 1.5.0.12. Just minimize those annoying upgrade popups every time they pop up. 10 clicks & they just give an error & next day it's another popup for another upgrade. You mean those weren't advertizements? Well, probably just destroyed someone's TimeWarner stock.

[Reply to This](#)

- **easiest to update means it gets updated (Score:2, Insightful)**

by [suck burners_rice \(1258684\)](#) on Monday July 07, @02:12AM ([#24080725](#))

Now that it's mentioned, there really is something about Firefox's update feature that gets you to install and use the latest version. Maybe it's that it's so easy and doesn't mess up anything, e.g., by making drastic changes to the appearance of the browser, etc. I would say that most of the nearly 20% who are running outdated versions are probably the paranoid type who think that updating their software will mean introducing problems, you know, the "if ain't broke, don't fix it." But this study is totally correct: Of all the browsers, Firefox makes updating the easiest.

[Reply to This](#)

- **1 reply beneath your current threshold.**
- **Types of users of different browsers (Score:4, Informative)**

by [Chambers81 \(613839\)](#) on Monday July 07, @02:16AM ([#24080733](#))

It seems that corporate/government users don't have as much of a choice in when to update their browsers and a good number don't have the choice to switch to firefox and are forced to use IE. I know that at my job (government) we can't update on our own and are forced to wait for the IT staff to push the updates through, sometimes days or weeks after they become available.

[Reply to This](#)

- [Re:Types of users of different browsers](#) by Bogtha (Score:2) Monday July 07, @02:45AM
- **Corporate policy (Score:1)**

by [NastyGnat \(515785\)](#) on Monday July 07, @02:29AM ([#24080801](#))

I'd reckon some of the lag is due to corporate policy. FF3 still hasn't been pushed to my work PC and I doubt they are in any hurry to push the update either. Lots of other corps are no doubt waiting for something big to justify the man hours for the update.

[Reply to This](#)

- **Live CD ? (Score:2)**

by [aepervius \(535155\)](#) on Monday July 07, @02:39AM ([#24080853](#))

Were live-CD browser like firefox taken into account ? I have been using Gutsy Gibbon live CD for a long time, and it is naturally not an updated version, which anyway I would not care for since there is nothing to exploit on my CD. Same for all people browsing from a VM.

[Reply to This](#)

- **Stop making it optional (Score:2, Interesting)**

by [linzeal \(197905\)](#) on Monday July 07, @02:45AM ([#24080869](#)) [Journal](#)

Firefox developers heed my call. Stop making security updates optional past a certain version.

Web developers heed my call. Stop making websites accept security corrupting browsers because half the time they are pry zombies. Look at your logs and see the rate at which these computers increase revenue. Drop them at whatever delta you think prudent.

[Reply to This](#)

o [Re:Stop making it optional](#) by Hannes2000 (Score:1) Monday July 07, @03:30AM

- **Corporations (Score:1)**

by [Unfocused \(723787\)](#) on Monday July 07, @02:45AM ([#24080877](#))

Out of the out-dated versions of the various browsers, I wonder how many of those can't be updated by the user due to OS restrictions out of the user's control? ie, a locked down computer in a corporate environment. That type of thing is likely to skew the results a bit. More for some browsers than others.

[Reply to This](#)

- **User group (Score:1)**

by [Lord Lode \(1290856\)](#) on Monday July 07, @03:03AM ([#24080941](#))

Firefox users are already going to be people who care more about what software they're using and security. IE users are everyone who doesn't really care and never actually chose what browser to use, everyone who doesn't know too much about computers and on top those who do care and chose IE, but those are only a minority of the IE user group. So it's logical that in the firefox user group people are going to update faster, it's not directly related to the browser but to the user group.

[Reply to This](#)

- **Corporate policy? (Score:1)**

by [ZipOtter \(1272760\)](#) on Monday July 07, @03:05AM ([#24080947](#))

I wonder how much of that 47.6% figure is due to corporate IT departments refusing or unable to roll out newer versions of IE. I work on a fairly popular european website, with close to half of its IE users (around 25% total) still using IE 6. Site usage spikes around noon with a sharp dropoff on the weekend, suggesting that people browse it from work. So I did a quick internal survey in my (tech) company and found that outside of IT and Software Development, almost everyone was still using Windows 2000, which of course doesn't get IE 7+. It's a shame, really. As a web developer, I hate IE 6 with a burning passion but it's not going away until MS activates the secret killswitch in W2K in a desperate attempt to get people to switch to Vista...

[Reply to This](#)

- **Old Firefox usage (Score:3, Insightful)**

by [IBBoard \(1128019\)](#) on Monday July 07, @03:20AM ([#24081011](#)) [Homepage](#)

I wonder how much of the old Firefox usage is old installs in Linux? You can't use the built-in updater if you installed the RPM/DEB because the permissions are (or should be) wrong for letting you write to the folder. AFAIK there's only a few distros who have moved to Firefox 3 so far, so the rest would be showing up as out-dated.

Similarly for Windows, if they're counting Firefox 3 as "up to date" then how many people are still on old

v2s because they don't know about v3?

[Reply to This](#)

- o [Re:Old Firefox usage](#) by belmolis (Score:2) Monday July 07, @03:25AM
- o [Re:Old Firefox usage](#) by Antique Geekmeister (Score:2) Monday July 07, @03:59AM
- o **1 reply beneath your current threshold.**
- **Meh (Score:2)**

by [Alarindris \(1253418\)](#) on Monday July 07, @03:25AM ([#24081029](#))
Newer is NOT always better.

Anyone who uses linux should know this.

For example, wine v0.9.58 works perfectly for me; I blindly updated to .59 only to find that ctrl/shift + mouse clicks were bugged, therefore screwing me in WoW. Had to revert back.

Usually, updates are a good thing, but not always.

[Reply to This](#)

- **The Camino folks have it just right (Score:1)**

by [rubenerd \(998797\)](#) on Monday July 07, @04:06AM ([#24081187](#)) [Homepage](#)

I use [Camino](#) [[caminobrowser.org](#)] as my browser on my Mac and choose to leave the home page as the default "Camino Start" page. Its very minimalist, just shows a small Google search box, and a link to the latest version which changes colour to red if my version is outdated.

No in-your-face messages, no irritating popups, no external syncing software... though I guess it only works if you keep it as your home page. Makes sense to use a feature that's built into every web browser (sarcasm aside): the ability to load a web page!

[Reply to This](#)

- **Re:Lynx? (Score:3, Funny)**

by [Hucko \(998827\)](#) on Monday July 07, @01:47AM ([#24080607](#))

Development cycles are too extended to be used in any annual statistics. Perhaps you can petition to have them included in centennial statistics?

[Reply to This](#)

[Parent](#)

- **Re:Push (Score:2, Interesting)**

by [Thiez \(1281866\)](#) on Monday July 07, @02:14AM ([#24080731](#))

AC makes no sense. Assuming it takes users some constant time C to update, and all users update their browsers (big assumption...), then with two updates per week, users will run the latest version of the browser $1-C/7$ of the time. With updates twice per month, users will run with the latest version $1-C/30$ of the time. Obviously $C/7 > C/30$ therefore if you update less often users will be up-to-date more often. That firefox users are up-to-date 83-ish% of the time is MORE, not less, impressive because Mozilla

pushes out a fix for something about twice a week.

[Reply to This](#)

[Parent](#)

- [4 replies](#) beneath your current threshold.
-

I am here by the will of the people and I won't leave until I get my raincoat back. - a slogan of the anarchists in Richard Kadrey's "Metrophage"

All trademarks and copyrights on this page are owned by their respective owners. Comments are owned by the Poster. The Rest © 1997-2008 [SourceForge](#), Inc.