

Mozilla to ban Firefox derivative browsers

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THE MOZILLA FOUNDATION used to be all about competition, about creating and implementing web standards and delivering code that could be re-used by anyone. In fact, during the 1998-2004 time frame when Netscape/AOL funded the Mozilla.org project - including dozens of programmers on Netscape's payroll, the re-branding and use of the Gecko engine by third party applications was encouraged.

At one time, Mozilla.org said that the browser package was primarily intended for tweaking, rebranding and distribution by third parties, rather than to be downloaded directly from Mozilla.org by each individual web user. But things changed when AOL finally let go the Mozilla.org project in mid 2003 and the Mozilla Foundation was born. Then, the Mozilla Foundation (now commonly referred to as MoFo in the mozillaspeak lingo) started pushing the separate e-mail and web browsers, instead of the integrated suite, and a whole marketing operation was created around MoFo's now separate components (Firefox and Thunderbird) targeting the end-user audience. Yet, at the same time, the open source nature of MoFo's code made one believe that re-distribution and re-branding was still welcome. That seems not to be the case anymore, if one reads MoFo's Ben Goodger's [blog](#) [2].

As we reported, Goodger said of Netscape's v8.0 browser: ""If security is important to you, this demonstration should show that browsers that are redistributions of the official Mozilla releases are never going to give you security updates as quickly as Mozilla will itself for its supported products". He was referring to the fact that Netscape initially made v8.0 available, which was based on Firefox 1.03.

Perhaps it's just me, but I see some irony in Ben Goodger complaining about the insecurity of the initial Netscape 8.0, which was in turn caused by the insecurity of the Mozilla Foundation's own Firefox 1.03 code. As some users put it in Goodger's own blog: "I think that it was bad form to go after Netscape that way just to make yourself look better. So when did you decide to become Microsoft?.

Another user said: "Shouldn't Mozilla work with other companies (such as Netscape) to try to resolve these problems? Rather than publicly slamming them. I expect Mozilla (a non profit organization that I have donated to) to cooperate with others that want to use their code. Not fight against them like any other for-profit company".

I think that Goodger's childish Netscape-bashing goes against the very spirit of the early Mozilla.org's mission, and if the Foundation doesn't want any other redistribution than the official Firefox browser, then they should change the licence wording to reflect that.

[Full Story](#) [3].

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[2] <http://weblogs.mozillazine.org/ben/archives/008180.html#comments>

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