

Silverlight Install Base - How big is it?

Asked 16 years, 3 months ago Modified 13 years, 7 months ago

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14



Silverlight v2.0 is getting closer and closer to RTM but I have yet to hear any stats as to how many browsers are running Silverlight. If I ask Adobe (by googling "Flash install base") they're [only too happy to tell me](#) that 97.7% of browsers are running Flash player 9 or better.



Not that I believe everything I read, but **where are these statistics from Microsoft or some other vendor about Silverlight?** I'm going to be making a technology choice soon and a little bit of empirical evidence would be an asset at this point...

All you Silverlight developers out there, show me your stats!

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silverlight

installation

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asked Sep 12, 2008 at 22:58



Tyler

3,200 ● 1 ● 32 ● 44



20



Quick Answer: www.riastats.com

This site compares the different RIA plugins using graphical charts and graphs.

It gets its data from small snippets of javascripts running on sites accross the web (approx 400,000 last time I looked)

At the time of this post, Silverlight 2 was sitting at close to 11%.

I would not take this as the end-all, be-all in RIA stats, but it's the best site I've found so far.

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edited May 6, 2011 at 12:16



[casperOne](#)

74.5k ● 19 ● 188 ● 259

answered Dec 17, 2008 at 21:46



[Jeff Weber](#)

949 ● 1 ● 8 ● 18

3 **As of May 2010, Silverlight is at 57%. – [Ray Burns](#)** May 11, 2010 at 22:11

4 As of Feb 2011 Silverlight is at 71% (Just as much as Java) – [Shrage Smilowitz](#) Feb 2, 2011 at 4:33



6

If you are developing something for a general audience, I would highly recommend against Silverlight as you immediately cut out Linux users.



I went to watch videos for the Olympics (and I run exclusively Linux), and I couldn't watch the video on their site because they were in Silverlight. On top of that, they actively removed all videos from YouTube, so I had no alternative but to try and scrounge up a Windows boot. This only served to give me a very negative opinion of NBC, and consider them quite amateurish to pick such a restricting technology for something that should be available for everyone.

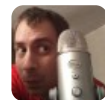
While Flash has it's problems, it works fine in Linux, so I would say (at this point), it is a much superior technology choice.

If you KNOW your audience is entirely on Windows (maybe Mac).... then you can consider Silverlight with knowing you won't be cutting out part of your audience.

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answered Sep 12, 2008 at 23:03



Mike Stone

44.6k ● 30 ● 114 ● 140

2 Have you tried Moonlight[1]? It is suppose to be an implementation of silverlight for Linux/Unix. [mono-project.com/Moonlight][1] – Ethan Gunderson Sep 12, 2008 at 23:07

@Ethan no, but thanks for the suggestion! It's nice to know there is a way to use it, but I still don't have high respect for a product that wants to be fully pervasive and doesn't support all major platforms from the provider (in this case MS)

– [Mike Stone](#) Sep 12, 2008 at 23:10

Mike, totally agree. I really like the idea of Silverlight, its ties with Visual Studio are really awesome, but it has quite a way to go before it is mature enough for primetime use.

– [Ethan Gunderson](#) Sep 12, 2008 at 23:13

- 2 yeah, on top of that I think Joel and Jeff (in the podcast) are dead on that both silverlight and flash have a huge competitor... JavaScript, which is already more pervasive than both, and a serious option now – [Mike Stone](#) Sep 12, 2008 at 23:16
-

Yeah, I had never really thought about it before they mentioned it in that podcast, but they are very right. I think the next couple of years will definitely be interesting in that competition. – [Ethan Gunderson](#) Sep 12, 2008 at 23:29



6

if you're that concerned about locking out potential users, you should be building a low-bandwidth HTML only version of your site anyways...regardless of whether you use Flash or Silverlight.



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answered Sep 22, 2008 at 21:12



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[Karthik Hariharan](#)

559 ● 3 ● 7



I struggled with this for a while. Ultimately, I chose to develop my site using Silverlight for the major

4

components. I did a good bit of research, and I reached the following bottom-line conclusion:



If Silverlight fails, it will **not** be for lack of installed base. There are simply too many levers for MS to pull (windows update, embedding it in IE8, or even paying highly trafficked sites to use it.

I will add this from Alexa - microsoft.com has pretty impressive daily reach and it uses SL on the main page. I would also not be surprised at all if Outlook Web Access is moved to Silverlight - thereby turning every single office outlook user who wants to access email from home/other into a roaming SL installer.

[Alexa Link comparing microsoft.com/ebay.com/amazon.com](#)

I will add this from [ScottGu's blog entry](#):

In addition to powering the Olympics experience in the US, Silverlight was also used in France (by FranceTV), the Netherlands (by NOS), Russia (by Sportbox.ru) and Italy (by RAI). In addition to video quality, a big reason behind these broadcasters decision to use Silverlight was the TCO and streaming cost difference Silverlight provided. In the August 2008 edition of Web Designer Magazine (a Dutch publication) a NOS representative reported that they were able to

serve 100,000 concurrent users using Silverlight and 40 Windows Media Servers, whereas it would have required 270 servers if they had used Flash Media Servers.

Over the last month we've seen several major new deployments of Silverlight for media scenarios. For example: CBS College Sports is now using Silverlight to stream NCAA events from its 170 partner colleges and university. Blockbuster is replacing Flash with Silverlight for its MovieLink application. And Netflix two weeks ago rolled out its new Instant Watch service using Silverlight.

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edited Jan 23, 2009 at 20:46

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answered Sep 17, 2008 at 14:33



caryden

7,854 ● 3 ● 31 ● 31



3



At the 2009 Microsoft Professional Developers Conference, Scott Guthrie said that Silverlight was installed on "45% of the world's Internet-connected devices"

<http://www.betanews.com/article/PDC-2009-Live-from-the-Day-2-keynote/1258561992> (quote taken from "9:28am PT") entry





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answered Nov 18, 2009 at 22:23

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[Joe Regan](#)

498 ● 4 ● 10



2

This was the [weekly_poll over on CP](#) a few weeks back. Out of the 1463 developers responding, aprox. 62% had Silverlight installed on at least one system.



So... if you're making a site targeted at Windows developers... and don't mind locking out a third of your potential market...



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answered Sep 12, 2008 at 23:13

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[Shog9](#)

159k ● 36 ● 235 ● 240

4 Not a very accurate measure of the community considering CP is a microsoft orientated developer site. – [mP](#). Feb 6, 2009 at 4:11

As of May 2010, 57% of all internet users already have Silverlight installed and that number is still increasing at about 3%/month. See [riastats.com](#) for more details.

– [Ray Burns](#) May 11, 2010 at 22:25

The fact that silverlight is not installed is not "locking out" anyone. Silverlight installs in exactly the same way as flash, i.e. you see a 'get flash' button or a 'get silverlight' button. I don't think that the installed base is necessarily the best technology decider, since either can be installed at a whim. I'm more likely to ponder the future of the various technologies and Apple's attitude towards Flash might put a different complexion on things. – [Tim Long](#) Aug 4, 2010 at 15:05

@Tim: I rather doubt Apple will be allowing Silverlight on their mobile devices anytime soon... As you say, it works pretty much the same way Flash does. If that's your target market, choosing either plugin as your platform of choice is a bad idea. – [Shog9](#) Aug 4, 2010 at 15:25



2



I haven't been able to get stats. I'd assume they might release some at PDC in late October. If you're building a site which needs to target a non-developer audience who won't want to install another plugin, you might want to wait for Silverlight.



I have done a good amount of testing with Moonlight on Linux, and it works well for sites which use either use Silverlight 1.0 functionality (pretty much 100% supported) or which happen to use the Silverlight 2.0 bits which Moonlight currently supports. The caveat is that some websites explicitly check the user agent and won't offer content if you're not on a "supported" platform. That's poor website coding, not a fault of the Silverlight plugin.

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Jon Galloway

53.1k ● 25 ● 127 ● 194

NBC Olympics did that... which really made me mad, regardless of the fact that I didn't know Moonlight existed and might be an option, I would still rather have a message say "You might not be able to view this" rather than blocking outright – [Mike Stone](#) Sep 12, 2008 at 23:49



2



During the keynote @ ReMIX UK when ScottGu gave the figure of 1.5 million installs/day I was sat next to Andrew Shorten, one of the Adobe platform evangelists (and also a good chum). He was telling me Adobe have independant evidence of an AVERAGE of 12 million installs a day, with over 40 million downloads.

It would appear 1.5 million is a tiny amount of what it could be.

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answered Sep 29, 2008 at 22:34

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Neil Middleton

22.2k ● 19 ● 83 ● 135

1 That's 4.38 billion install per year. I highly doubt this number.
– [tster](#) May 11, 2010 at 22:16 ✎

Remember people will install Flash many times a year. Installs includes upgrades – [Neil Middleton](#) Apr 5, 2011 at 16:42



1

Well 6 million watched the Olympics on NBC, which used a silverlight player. So at least 6 million. I've never seen exact stats, but you can be pretty certain that it is pretty small still.



Also, there is an implementation of silverlight for linux called [moonlight](#).

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answered Sep 12, 2008 at 23:04

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[Ethan Gunderson](#)

11.4k ● 8 ● 31 ● 29

Yeah but how many of those 6 million were repeats.. Is that 6 million uniques or visitors ? – [mP](#). Feb 6, 2009 at 4:11



1

I think an interesting stat comes from this site itself. Have a look at how many silverlight questions there are! And how many responses - it's not the most active topic!



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answered Sep 12, 2008 at 23:09

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[Nick Randell](#)

18.3k ● 18 ● 62 ● 74



-
- 1 That could be more due to the fact that fewer people are having issues with the product. After all, a lot of its core technologies go by different names like XAML, WPF, etc.
– [Soviut](#) Mar 17, 2009 at 2:34
-



1



I think you'll see a dramatic increase in the Silverlight install base after Silverlight 2.0 officially comes out. Right now it's still in beta. Silverlight 1.0 is out and runs quite well from what I've seen in Moonlight on Linux, but it's much harder to create full-scale applications for than version 2.0. According to Microsoft, Moonlight will be "100% compatible" at release time. See [Scott Guthrie's blog](#) (note: 2.0 was called 1.1 at the time).

Nick R, as for the fact that there isn't much Silverlight activity on these forums, I think the biggest reason for that is the very active community on the [silverlight.net](#) forums.

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answered Sep 18, 2008 at 14:51

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dcstraw

3,311 ● 3 ● 31 ● 38



1



Scott Guthrie said (at Remix UK Sept 18 2008) that Silverlight is currently downloaded 1.5 million times per day. Over 115 million downloads since the version 1 release.

The Version 1 installed base will automatically update to version 2 when it is out of beta.

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answered Sep 18, 2008 at 19:50

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Andrew



1



Wow! Scott said the same thing at Mix in February 08 about run rate - 1.5m. So it seems that a daily run rate of 1.5m per day for 6 months would add 270m installs to the installed base. So their numbers are not exactly clear in their meaning.

If one assumes the 115m installed base is correct, then it implies a run rate around 700k per day in the six months since SL2. Of course, many users are upgrading versions B1 to B2 as an example.

Either way, it is gaining some steady installs. It would be nice to see the run rate improve. By 2nd quarter of next year, it should be dramatically higher due to v2 shipment, application/web site adoption, pre-installation on various computers (like HP) and any unannounced distribution mechanisms.

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answered Sep 22, 2008 at 21:07



TMC2K

433 ● 5 ● 8



1



While in general I support the idea of developing a site using silverlight and feel that that, depending on your audience, you should not have too much trouble getting users to download the plug in I would caution you against assuming that Microsoft will release the plugin built into IE or as a part of windows update.

I have had two separate Microsoft Technology Evangelists tell me that the company is reluctant to do that due to Anti-Trust reasons.

This was over a year ago and their strategy has probably evolved since then, but it enough to make me not count on that as an option for greater market penetration.

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answered Sep 22, 2008 at 21:31

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[Bart](#)

1,131 ● 3 ● 12 ● 15



1



Don't forget that the Silverlight 2 install base will never include PPC Mac users. It [doesn't look like](#) the Moonlight people are targetting them at all, despite the [heroic effort](#) to add PIC streaming for Silverlight 1.0 users for the Obama inauguration.

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answered Feb 6, 2009 at 4:07

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[Andy Dent](#)

17.9k ● 7 ● 92 ● 119



0

The larger question is how many users will your site lose if implemented in Silverlight. And, it very much depends on your audience.



If you're running a site about the joys of Linux kernel hacking or the virtues of Internet security, you'll probably lose a significant chunk of your audience. If you're running a more mainstream site, my experience is that, sadly, people will download anything they're told to most of the time. That's why spyware and malware work. And, as the NBC/Olympics deal shows, Microsoft will aggressively push its partners to use Silverlight until it's fairly ubiquitous.

I won't be using Silverlight until it's more mature because I *do* cater to a fair number of Linux users, but I might for a less technically-oriented site.

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answered Sep 18, 2008 at 19:59

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[Yes - that Jake.](#)

17.1k ● 15 ● 72 ● 99

I'd say it depends on primarily on the attitude of your users, not what OS they're running. Linux users can easily install Moonlight and use Silverlight content if they want. However some crowds (such as security researchers and hard-core hackers) will refuse to run Flash or Silverlight or any other RIA technology, so you are forced to go with primitive HTML. I'm sorry for those who have to do this, but it can't be helped.

– [Ray Burns](#) May 11, 2010 at 22:24
