= Web (web browser) =

Web (originally called Epiphany from 2003 to 2012) is a free software web browser for the GNOME desktop environment .

The browser was forked from Galeon , after developers ' disagreements about Galeon 's growing complexity . Since then Web has been developed as part of the GNOME project and uses most of GNOME 's technology and settings when applicable . It is part of the GNOME Core Applications . As required by the GNOME Human Interface Guidelines (HIG) , Web maintains the clean and simple graphical user interface with only a required minimum number of features exposed to users by default . The browser 's functionality and configurability can be extended with official and third @-@ party extensions .

Instead of developing a custom web browser engine Epiphany originally used the Gecko layout engine until version 2 @.@ 28 and WebKitGTK + starting with version 2 @.@ 20 . This approach allows the relatively small developer community to maintain a sufficient level of modern web standards support . The features of Web include reuse of GNOME configuration settings , smart bookmarks and web application integration into user desktop . Web extensions add support for ad filtering , Greasemonkey user scripts support and other smaller , yet useful , options .

Web 's source code is available under the GNU General Public License from the GNOME project . The binary builds of the browser are available in the package repositories of most Linux distributions and BSD releases .

= = Development = =

= = = Galeon fork = = =

Marco Pesenti Gritti , the initiator of Galeon , originally developed Epiphany in 2002 as a fork of Galeon . The fork occurred because of the divergent aims of Gritti and the rest of Galeon development team about new features . While Gritti regarded Galeon 's monolithic design and the number of user @-@ configurable features as factors limiting Galeon 's maintainability and user base expansion , the rest of the Galeon developers wanted to see more features added . At the same time the GNOME project created the GNOME human interface guidelines , which promoted simplification of user interfaces . As Galeon was oriented towards power users , most developers saw the implementation of those guidelines as unacceptable . As a result , Gritti created a new browser based on Galeon 's codebase , with most of the non @-@ mission @-@ critical features removed . He intended Epiphany to comply fully with the GNOME human interface guidelines , with a very simple user @-@ interface . As such , Epiphany does not have its own theme settings and uses GNOME 's settings , which are specified in the GNOME Control Center .

Gritti explained his motivations :

While Mozilla has an excellent rendering engine , its default XUL @-@ based interface is considered to be overcrowded and bloated . Furthermore , on slower processors even trivial tasks such as pulling down a menu is less than responsive . Epiphany aims to utilize the simplest interface possible for a browser . Keep in mind that simple does not necessarily mean less powerful . We believe the commonly used browsers of today are too big , buggy , and bloated . Epiphany addresses simplicity with a small browser designed for the web ? not mail , newsgroups , file management , instant messaging or coffee making . The Unix philosophy is to design small tools that do one thing , and do it well .

Galeon continued after the fork , but lost its momentum due to the remaining developers ' failure to keep up with the new features and changes Mozilla introduced . Galeon development finally stalled and the developers decided to work on a set of extensions to bring Galeon 's advanced features to Epiphany instead .

Epiphany 's early philosophy included a commitment to creating a web browser specifically for GNOME :

Epiphany 's main goal is to be integrated with the gnome desktop . We don 't aim to make Epiphany usable outside Gnome . If someone will like to use it anyway , it 's just a plus . For example : Making people happy that don 't have control center installed is not a good reason to have mime configuration in Epiphany itself .

Gritti ended his work on the Epiphany project and a GNOME team led by Xan Lopez , Christian Persch and Jean @-@ François Rameau now direct the project . Gritti died of cancer on 23 May 2015 .

While some promote Epiphany as the default web browser in Linux distributions with GNOME as the default desktop environment , most distros offer Firefox instead . In most minimalist distributions , Epiphany is installed with the GNOME meta @-@ package or packages group .

= = = Gecko @-@ based = = =

The first version of Epiphany was released on December 24 , 2002 .

Epiphany initially used the Gecko layout engine from the Mozilla project to display web pages . It provided a GNOME integrated graphical user interface for Gecko , instead of the Mozilla XUL interface .

The development process of Epiphany was mainly focused on numerous small usability improvements . The most notable of them was the new text entry widget , which first appeared in 1 @.@ 8 stable version series . The new widget supported icons inside the text area reduced the amount of screen space needed to present the information and improved GNOME integration .

The second major milestone (after version 1 @.@ 0) in Epiphany development was the 2 @.@ 14 release . This was the first Epiphany release which followed GNOME 's version numbering . It also featured network awareness using NetworkManager , smart bookmarks @-@ related improvements and the possibility of being compiled against XULRunner . The latter was critical , as previously Epiphany could only use Firefox or Mozilla / SeaMonkey as a layout engine provider , so it could only be installed alongside one of those browsers . The XULRunner support made it possible to install Epiphany as the sole web browser on the system .

= = = WebKit @-@ based = = =

The development process heavily suffered from multiple problems , related to the Gecko backend . To address these issues in July 2007 the Epiphany team added support for WebKit as an alternative rendering engine for Epiphany . As the backend development advanced , on 000000002008 @-@ 04 @-@ 01 @-@ 0000April 1 , 2008 the Epiphany team announced that it would stop using the Gecko rendering engine and proceed using just WebKit .

The size of the development team and the complexity of porting the whole browser to a new backend caused Epiphany to re @-@ release version 2 @.@ 22 with bugfixes instead of the actual development code , so browser development remained stagnant until 000000002009 @-@ 07 @-@ 01 @-@ 0000July 1 , 2009 , when the project team announced that Epiphany 2 @.@ 26 would be the final Gecko @-@ based version . Eventually , in September 2009 the Webkit @-@ powered Epiphany 2 @.@ 28 was released , as part of GNOME 2 @.@ 28 .

With GNOME 3 @.@ 4 release Epiphany was renamed Web . However , the name Epiphany is still used internally for development , such as for bug tracking and in the source code . The package remains epiphany @-@ browser .

= = = Release history = = =

= = Features = =

Web is based on the WebKit web browser engine , which provides support for HTML 4 and XHTML , CSS 1 and 2 , substantial degree of implementation of HTML5 and CSS 3 features , Web Inspector

(HTML and JavaScript debugging tool) and NPAPI , including Adobe Flash and IcedTea plug @-@ ins support .

= = = GNOME integration = = =

Web reuses GNOME frameworks and settings . Therefore , its user interface theme is the GNOME default theme , the network settings with GNOME NetworkManager configuration , printing with the GNOME printing system , settings with GSettings and GNOME default applications settings are used for internet media types handling .

The built @-@ in preference manager for Web is designed to present user only basic browser @-@ specific settings . All the advanced configuration is done with the stand @-@ alone GSettings configurator tools such as GNOME 's default dconf (command line) and dconf @-@ editor (graphical) .

Web follows the GNOME Human Interface Guidelines and follows the platform @-@ wide design changes . For example , in Web 3 @.@ 4 release the menu for application @-@ wide actions was moved to the GNOME Shell 's top panel application menu and the menubar was replaced with " super menu " button , which triggers the display of window @-@ specific menu entries .

= = = Bookmarks = = =

While most browsers feature a hierarchical folder @-@ based bookmark system , Web uses categorized bookmarks , where a single bookmark (such as " Web ") can exist in multiple categories (such as " Web Browsers " , " GNOME " , and " Computer Software ") . A special category includes bookmarks that have not yet been categorized . Another innovative concept supported by Web (though originally from Galeon) is " smart bookmarks " . These take a single argument specified from the address bar , or from a textbox in a toolbar . Bookmarks , along with browsing history , are accessed from the address bar in find @-@ as @-@ you @-@ type manner .

= = = Modularity = = =

Up until version 3 @.@ 6 , Web was extensible with a plugin system called Web extensions . This package was distributed by the developers of Web and contained the official extensions . For version 3 @.@ 8 , this system was removed because of problems with stability and maintainability , with some popular extensions being moved to the core application instead . A new , out @-@ of @-@ process plugin system is planned for the future .

Previously extensions could be written in either C or Python , but the Python support was dropped with WebKit adoption .

A list of Web extensions before version 3 @.@ 8 include :

Several unofficial extensions exist , though most of them are not currently supported .

= = = Web Applications mode = = =

Since GNOME 3 @.@ 2 Web allows creating application launchers for web applications . The subsequent invocation of a launcher brings up a plain single instance of Web limited to one domain , with off @-@ site links opening in a normal browser . The launcher created this way is accessible from the desktop and is not limited to GNOME Shell . For instance it may be used with Unity , used on Ubuntu . This feature facilitates the integration of the desktop and World Wide Web , which is a goal of Web 's developers . Similar features can be found in the Windows version of Google Chrome . For the same purpose Mozilla Foundation previously developed a standalone application Mozilla Prism , which was superseded by the project Chromeless .

Web applications are managed within Epiphany 's main instance . The applications can be deleted from the page , accessible with a special URI about : applications . This approach was supposed to be a temporary solution and a common GNOME @-@ wide application management was intended

to be implemented in GNOME 3 @.@ 4 , but was not rolled out .

= = System requirements = =

Being a component of GNOME desktop environment , Web has neither software , nor hardware dependencies beyond the GNOME platform . Though the GNOME Project does not list the minimum system requirements , it states that GNOME 3 should run on any modern computer .

Web is only released as source code or with Linux distributions and BSDs making binary packages . Thus the availability of Web depends on the distributor . Web can be run on many hardware platforms , including i386 , amd64 and several other processor architectures .

= = Reception = =

In reviewing the Webkit @-@ powered Epiphany 2 @.@ 28 in September 2009 , Ryan Paul of Ars Technica said " Epiphany is quite snappy in GNOME 2 @.@ 28 and scores 100 / 100 on the Acid3 test . Using WebKit will help differentiate Epiphany from Firefox , which is shipped as the default browser by most of the major Linux distributors . "

In reviewing Epiphany 2 @.@ 30 in July 2010 Jack Wallen described it as " efficient , but different " and noted its problem with crashes . " When I first started working with Epiphany it crashed on most sites I visited . After doing a little research (and then a little debugging) I realized the issue was with javascript . Epiphany (in its current release) , for some strange reason , doesn 't like javascript . The only way around this was to disable javascript . Yes this means a lot of features won 't work on a lot of sites ? but this also means those same sites will load faster and won 't be so prone to having issues (like crashing my browser) . " Wallen concluded positively about the browser , " Although Epiphany hasn 't fully replaced Chrome and Firefox as my one @-@ stop @-@ shop browser , I now use it much more than I would have previously . [It has a] small footprint , fast startup , and clean interface . "

In March 2011 Veronica Henry reviewed Epiphany 2 @.@ 32 , saying " To be fair , this would be a hard sell as a primary desktop browser for most users . In fact , there isn 't even a setting to let you designate it as your default browser . But for those instance where you need to fire up a lighting @-@ fast browser for quick surfing , Epiphany will do the trick . " She further noted , " Though I still use Firefox as my primary browser , lately it seems to run at a snail 's pace . So , one of the first things I noticed about Epiphany is how quickly it launches . And subsequent page loads on my system are equally as fast . " Henry criticized Epiphany for its short list of extensions , singling out the lack of Firebug as a deficiency . Web instead supports Web Inspector offered by the Webkit engine , which has similar functionality .

In April 2012 Ryan Paul of Ars Technica used Web as an example to his criticism of GNOME 3 @.@ 4 design decisions : " Aside from the poor initial discoverability of the panel menu , this model works reasonably well for simple applications . [...] Unfortunately , it doesn 't scale well in complex applications . The best example of where this approach can pose difficulties is in GNOME 's default Web browser . [...] Having the application 's functionality split across two completely separate menus does not constitute a usability improvement . " This was addressed in later versions , with a single unified menu .