

Abramatic and Gilles Kahn, two INRIA directors, understood perfectly well what I needed. INRIA became cohost of the consortium. Later, in early 1996, we would arrange that Vincent Quint and Irene Vatton, who had continued to develop Grif, would join the consortium staff. They would further develop the software, renamed Amaya, replacing Arena as the consortium's flagship browser/editor.

The whirlwind of events that had taken place in a mere seventy-two hours was exciting yet daunting. The consortium had to get moving with a sense of urgency if it was going to stay ahead of the large forces that were gathering.

I had to wait only two months for confirmation that the Web had become a global juggernaut. In February 1995 the annual meeting of the G7, the world's seven wealthiest nations, was held in Brussels. The world's governments were rapidly becoming aware of the technology's influence, and Michael Dertouzos, LCS's director, was invited to join the U.S. delegation there. As Michael describes in his book *What Will Be*, the keynote speaker was Thabo Mbeki, deputy president of South Africa. Mbeki delivered a profound speech on how people should seize the new technology to empower themselves; to keep themselves informed about the truth of their own economic, political, and cultural circumstances; and to give themselves a voice that all the world could hear. I could not have written a better mission statement for the World Wide Web.

Competition and Consensus

History often takes dramatic turns on events that, at the time, seem ordinary. Microsoft wanted to license Netscape's browser, buy a share of the company, and take a seat on Netscape's board. In return, Netscape would be the browser on Microsoft's Windows 95, an entirely new operating system, which would launch Netscape into the huge personal computer industry. But Jim Clark and Netscape's new CEO, Jim Barksdale, who had been hired to raise money and make deals, were wary. The proposal fell through, and Microsoft redoubled its efforts to offer its own browser.

Other deals, however, did go through, further shaping the competitive landscape. In April, Compaq announced that its new line of personal computers would come with Navigator—the first time a browser would be bundled directly with hardware.