Article Side

Rich Internet Applications and their role in Web Development

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Rich Internet applications feature an interface that is extremely responsive compared to traditional applications. Many of the frameworks which are used to build rich internet applications involve more processing to the client server than the centralized server. The user's browser sends small pieces of data one at a time in asynchronous mode. Hence only relevant pieces of information are sent and updated, after which the traditional web applications follow suit. Hence web development companies prefer to use RIAs for providing an optimal experience to the user.

The best known frameworks for developing rich Internet applications are Flex, AJAX, and Microsoft Silverlight. Let us have further insight into each one of these.

Flex stands tall with the largest market share compared to any other framework. It boasts of a penetration of around 90 percent which is quite difficult to achieve for Silverlight. Flash was originally designed for multimedia management and hence most internet browsers support its plugin. It is also freely available and runs easily. Flex can also enable a website to perform as a thick client application too.

But there are cons involved too. Not all browsers have Flash installed and versions also change from time to time. The user is required to download the new version if the webpage requires it. Some see this part as a drawback since those users who are not allowed to download it will automatically navigate away from that web page.

Microsoft Silverlight on the other hand was created to compete with Flex and with other RIA frameworks. Silverlight is based on .NET technology and is part of Windows Presentation Foundation (WPF). Microsoft Silverlight offers a lightweight version of .NET which runs in a browser sandbox.

Silverlight is not currently in as much as use as Flex so chances are that users would ignore the page totally if they are required to download the necessary plug in. Yet, Microsoft Silverlight is extremely appealing for .NET developers who are into web development from some years. Since .NET is already well-known all over the web development world, Silverlight has the chance to grab market share in the near future.

AJAX stands for Asynchronous JavaScript and XML which is gaining acceptance and is making its web presence felt. AJAX gives the developer the ability to create pages which are like thick clients. Those who understand JavaScript language can use AJAX. Not all browsers use JavaScript well and users have the choice to disable it completely.

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John Monatta is professional writer who is expertise in writing a Rich Internet Application Development and a Silverlight Development articles. He is also expertise in Web apps, Mobile apps development and many a wide range of better-quality content writing.

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