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Accessing the Internet of Tomorrow

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Computers have come a long way in the last few decades, and with ever-faster technology, so has the Internet. While the Web started with text-based static pages, and improved drastically with the addition of graphics, the Internet now houses interactive, stylized pages as well as web-based applications. Neil McAllister has explored this evolution as a freelance writer based in San Francisco. Last May, McAllister wrote an article in *InfoWorld* entitled "Do New Web Tools Spell Doom for the Browser?" In this article, McAllister takes a look at the strengths of new web-based desktop programs, the strengths of new developments for the traditional browser, and how these affect each other.

McAllister's article examines the strengths of new web-based desktop programs. The ongoing evolution of the Web has introduced new standalone software, or Web tools. These Web tools are useful for frequently accessed services or capabilities. Some of these programs access their associated Web service directly, bypassing the traditional access to a Web service through a Web page in a browser. Other Web tools are regular desktop programs that have been built using Web technologies and languages instead of traditional programming methods. This particular advancement harnesses the high-value design and creative talent of the Web design industry for traditional desktop software development.

In the article, McAllister also talks about the strengths of new developments for the traditional browser. These new technologies add capabilities to the browser

and can allow it to overcome limitations such as the reliance on an Internet connection. This gives the browser the experience of a normal desktop program because in the background, the code is saved locally on your computer. This keeps the browser running, even if you lose your Internet connection. The next time you go online, the local changes are submitted to the Web service you were using.

The article also takes a look at how the new technologies interact with each other. In many ways, the web-based desktop programs and the modern browser don't conflict with each other but instead complement each other. Web-based desktop programs offer convenience that modern browsers don't, while the browser offers capabilities that aren't offered by web-based desktop programs. While browsers are generally the starting point for accessing a Web service, web-based desktop programs can extend the experience beyond the browser. Meanwhile, many of the standards that will help build the Internet of the future are being shaped by interactions with these new technologies.

Tomorrow's Internet will probably be accessed by a combination of browsers and other web-based desktop programs. The future will also likely deliver a new kind of browser that combines many of these developments into its capabilities. Developers will opt to use whichever application is appropriate for the situation, whether a standalone Web tool or a browser, and the Internet will continue to be developed using the same intermingling, collaboration, and contribution that have brought it to where it is today.

Works Cited

McAllister, Neil. "Do New Web Tools Spell Doom for the Browser?" InfoWorld. 12 May 2008. 15 Jun 2008 <http://www.infoworld.com/article/08/05/12/20FE-web-app-development_1.html>.