

# QUICK TAKE

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## Internet Explorer 7: Just Do It

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Microsoft expects to release Internet Explorer 7 (IE7) by the end of 2006. So, what should IT support staff do? IT operations professionals should thoroughly test their line-of-business (LOB) applications on IE7 before deploying the browser to end users. Overall, IT pros can deploy the new browser without worrying: Microsoft has done five beta tests of the application, including more input from the field than for any previous version of IE. While you will inevitably discover some incompatibilities with your internal applications at first, expect these to be resolved shortly. And when in doubt, upgrade.

### TARGET AUDIENCE

IT operations/engineering professional, security and risk professional

### ENHANCED FUNCTIONALITY AND SECURITY MAKE INTERNET EXPLORER 7 A NO-BRAINER

By the end of 2006, Microsoft Internet Explorer customers will receive a large update via Windows Update. This update will include the much-anticipated Internet Explorer 7 (IE7). Despite reports to the contrary, customers will be able to choose whether to install the update or not. Forrester's advice:

- **Carefully lab-test IE7 against your line-of-business (LOB) applications — then upgrade.** No first release of a Microsoft product ever goes without issue. Consequently, IT operations pros should thoroughly test their Web-based LOB applications — and any other applications that embed IE components — before deploying the new browser. But, once you resolve any issues with these applications, don't hesitate to upgrade users on pre-Vista operating systems to IE7. Thanks to a carefully-designed uninstaller, we can safely say, "When in doubt, upgrade."
- **Look forward to enhanced productivity . . .** Microsoft has added a number of requested features in IE7. Users will recognize the majority of these from other popular browsers like Mozilla Firefox and Opera — in particular, tabbed browsing and support for RSS feeds will win with browser geeks whose IT departments won't let them run Firefox. And for the non-browser-initiated, IE7 sports new plain English dialogs and security warnings that will help users take the appropriate action when prompted. Considering the amount of time that many office workers spend in the Web browser every day, productivity gains from features like tabbed browsing should be enough incentive to drive the upgrade.
- **. . . and improved security.** IE7 will also offer customers significant security enhancements to Internet browsing.<sup>1</sup> In IE7, users will have to opt into ActiveX controls, which will help users stop

malicious code from taking over their browsers. Microsoft will keep an “allow list” of controls that can run by default, such as Adobe Flash, and it will require user intervention for others. In IE7, Microsoft has also incorporated antiphishing capabilities, added security features to protect the new support for international domain names, and disabled dynamic HTML scriptlets for Internet sites — intranet sites will be enabled by default.<sup>2</sup>

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Microsoft will add multiple security features to IE7, including antiphishing capabilities that warn users if they visit a suspicious Web site, as well as improvements to how ActiveX controls are handled that will help to protect users from Internet exploits. See the May 12, 2006, Question & Answer “[Microsoft Poised To Take A Big Chunk Of The Security Market.](#)”
- <sup>2</sup> Scriptlets can be re-enabled by system administrators if their programs are incompatible with IE7.