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## Window Manager
### Brian Livingston

March 22, 1999

# Readers report their results in removing IE from Windows 98

My past two columns have focused on a method of removing Internet Explorer (IE) files from Windows 98, and on Microsoft's response. I asked readers to test this procedure. Within five days after the first column I received more than 200 detailed responses. This week it's your turn to give your reports to the world.

Those who missed the original excitement can go to Shane Brooks' Web site at www.98lite.net (not .com) to read all about it and download Brooks' free utilities. Remember, use this procedure only on a test machine that you can reformat if need be. Don't run experiments on in-service PCs.

The mail I received was persuasive. Overwhelmingly, readers who ran Brooks' method to remove IE from Windows 98 reported that their systems ran faster and with fewer crashes.

Reader James Yan of Hong Kong sent a typical response. He wrote, "I have 64MB of RAM in my Celeron-A 333 system, which ran like a 32MB system with Win98 and IE installed. Now I've got my full 64MB back with the removal of IE! All my Microsoft Office applications now load and close much faster than before, with a huge improvement in games."

Michael Conner was one reader who quantified his findings after removing IE. He wrote, "With CDEX ripping a CD and encoding it into MP3, Netscape 4.5 running, Notepad open, and other things running, including the ATI taskbar, my system resources were at 80 percent. If I were doing this pre-IE [Version] 4.0 uninstall, it would be down in the neighborhood of 50 percent to 65 percent. There's something seriously wrong with the Win 98/IE integration combo."

Marc Boulware, the owner of a technical firm in Charlotte, N.C., conducted extensive benchmark testing on an old Pentium, and wrote, "Excell Computer Systems performed the given instructions, and noticed that after Step 2 [switching three shell files], there was a 15 percent to 25 percent improvement in speed in the machine. After applying Steps 3 and 4 [removal of other files], our Pentium 75 with cache disabled showed a 25 percent to 35 percent improvement in performance."

Several critical messages came from readers who thought the process merely reverted a Win98 machine to Windows 95. Actually, Brooks gives a lot of detail on his Web site about Win98 benefits that remain after IE is removed (click the "Why?" link on his home page). These include the FAT-32 file system, native USB/AGP support, better right-mouse behavior, and several other features.

A more salient problem is that Microsoft is building more and more applications that require components of IE. Chuck Thompson said, "The problem stems from the new (to Visual C++ 6.0) Microsoft requirement that IE [Version] 4.0 be installed to do the Developer installation."

David Hecksel cited SQL Server and Site Server as other applications with IE requirements. He added, "Office 2000 won't install without Internet Explorer on the machine. I think they call this a `Trojan Horse' strategy."

I reported two weeks ago that the Windows 98 Update feature also requires IE. George Allen reminded me you can now get the same thing from Microsoft using any browser at www.microsoft.com/windows98/downloads/corporate.asp.

Allen was also the first to point me toward Brooks' method, so he will receive a free copy of *Windows 98 Secrets.*

Next week's conclusion to this series: how to roll your own browser.

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*Brian Livingston's latest book is Windows 98 Secrets (IDG Books). Send tips to brian_livingston@infoworld.com. He regrets that he cannot answer individual questions.*

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