

A floppy disk is a data storage device that is composed of a ring of thin, flexible (i.e. "floppy") magnetic storage medium encased in a square or rectangular plastic wallet. Floppy disks are read and written by a floppy disk drive or FDD, the latter initialism not to be confused with "fixed disk drive", which is an old IBM term for a hard disk drive. Floppy disks, also known as floppies or diskettes, were ubiquitous in the 1980s and 1990s, being used on home and personal computer ("PC") platforms such as the Apple II, Macintosh, Commodore 64, Amiga, and IBM PC to distribute software, transfer data between computers, and create small backups.



### TECHFOCUS

# Battle of browsers at its peak

SYED TASHFIN CHOWDHURY

**E**VEN five years back, the very thought of "browsing the net" gave us a visual of the Internet Explorer. The situation has changed recently with the replacement of the Internet Explorer (IE) by various browsers like Maxthon, Opera, Firefox and a number of others.

The availability of browsers like Opera and Firefox alongside IE has caused serious confusion to lots of Internet users within the past two years or more. This article is Star Tech's effort at solving this confusion.

Internet Explorer has for a while been the sole browser for users all over the world. Microsoft shipped Internet Explorer as the default browser in all versions of Microsoft Windows since Windows 95 OSR1. The last major upgrade to Internet Explorer 6.0 was included in Windows XP Service Pack 2 and Windows Server 2003 Service Pack 1 as the Beta version of Internet Explorer 7. The preview version of IE has been available since July 27, 2005.

Due to its initial foothold in this sector, IE has the maximum number of users worldwide.

One of IE's major competitors is Mozilla Firefox, a free, open source cross-platform, graphical web browser developed by the Mozilla Corporation and other volunteers.

After the initial release of Firefox 1.0, the browser never looked back. The browser had over 25 million downloads in 99 days. Could these 25 million be the disgruntled users of IE 6? Highly possible!

Due to its unnerving success, the browser also acquired national acclaim through Forbes and 'The Wall Street Journal'. And its number is still growing.

But Opera is still a worthy opponent in this triple threat bout! The browser got its name from the software company of the same name based in Oslo, Norway.

The browser runs on a variety of operating systems, including Microsoft Windows, Mac OS X, Solaris, FreeBSD and GNU/Linux systems and mobile phones too.

So what makes Opera and Firefox special?

First and foremost, Firefox has a very neat and clean interface compared to IE and Opera. Firefox supports tabbed browsing, which allows users to open multiple web pages in the same browser window.

Users no longer have to minimise a window and check the other window of IE they have

opened. Similarly, Opera gives users the same option of tabbed browsing. Additionally, users can save these windows as a session for later use.

Firefox blocks pop-ups, supports various forms of keyboard

Opera offers a download manager, through which files, images, videos can be efficiently downloaded to the computer. Firefox has a similar feature too.

Firefox is highly customisable enabling users to activate and

ency. Up to its 6.0 version, Opera supported most common web standards, Netscape plugins and some other recent standards such as WAP and WML for wireless devices.

installed in it. This uses Opera's servers to render and compress pages before sending the binary data to a small display program run by the phone. The method makes many pages mobile-compatible.

Firefox browser has been translated into a number of different languages like Hindi, Latvian, Thai, Vietnamese, Malay, Arabic, and Persian. Firefox also has "Live Bookmarking" features that allow users to dynamically monitor changes to their favourite news sources.

These are some of the major features of the two popular browsers. Microsoft has identified these strengths of the two browsers.

Therefore, the IE 7 has features like tabbed browsing, Quick Tabs, and treating tabs. With this new feature, user can find, open, close, and refresh opened tabs easily.

The new IE also has International Domain Names (IDN) support with anti-spoofing technology, a search box to aid fast searches, support for per-pixel alpha transparency in PNG images and Web feed support.

Remember those irritating pop-ups which was one of the reasons for the downfall of IE 6?

Well the IE 7 has ActiveX Opt-In blocks ActiveX Control unless it allowed to be installed. This feature improves security from unverifiable and vulnerable controls.

Also, a number of improvements to CSS and HTML support have been made.

Microsoft has also improved other features and fixed bugs which caused problems for developers in version 7.

Also, IE 7 is no longer integrated with the Windows Explorer shell and old protocols and technologies like Gopher, Telnet, CDF, DirectAnimation, XBM and Scriptlets have been removed.

Therefore, IE is putting up a fight through its Beta version. Rumour has it that the original release of the IE 7 may have a number of other unique features that will once again make it "the King of the Browser Hill."

But Microsoft should tread carefully as Mozilla Firefox and Opera may have other tricks up their sleeves.

Whatever the consequences, things are and will just get better for users through this battle of the browsers.



navigation such as tabbing navigation and caret navigation, "find as you type" feature, a built in search engine and a "custom keyword" facilities feature.

Opera, on the other hand, allows the use of access keys, mouse gestures, page zooming and "fit to windows" options.

These unique accessibility features were not available in IE 6, which has caused the browsers to gain an edge over it.

Also in their respective arsenal, these two browsers have lots of unique aspects, which caused Microsoft to wake up and smell the coffee.

deactivate features according to their whims and wishes.

Opera users can also customize user interfaces themes, allowing users to change the location and style of toolbars, buttons and menus.

As far as standards are concerned, these two browsers are fighting a head to head battle.

Firefox has extensive support for most basic standards including HTML, XML, XHTML, CSS, ECMA Script (JavaScript), DOM, MathML, DTD, XSL and XPath. The browser also supports PNG images and variable transpar-

Version 7.0 introduced the faster and more powerful Presto layout engine. Version 8.0 introduced support for Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG) 1.1 Tiny.

The two browsers have their own range of unique features also.

Opera can reformat any webpage for narrow tall viewports, such as smartphones and PDA displays. This can also be used with Panels.

There is also an Opera Mini, a free compact browser for mobile phones and other handheld devices. Opera Mini has Java ME

### TECHVIEW



## Yaris vs Corolla XLi

SHAHRIAR ROBIN

**P**ICTURE this... you are driving down Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue and as always you stop at the red light near Sheraton Hotel. Nothing to do, you look around and find a Corolla next to you on the left, and there is another one on the right, at the back and of course you are behind one too. Toyota owns the best-selling car ever to hit the world market and no wonder nearly half the cars plying on Dhaka streets are Toyota Corollas.

People living in the west try to buy cars that would make them individual on the road where as down here they just buy the one every one is buying. You may assume Bangladeshi people do not think much before they buy a car, they just follow the crowd.

Well, Navana Ltd has done something that would probably put this theory to test. They have introduced Toyota Yaris in Bangladesh. With the flashy new look Yaris appears much smaller than the Corolla but the people at Navana claim it to be more spacious inside than the Corolla. So it would probably be easier to visit the relative you have living in the Goran or Old Dhaka area. And while you are driving there, there is a

ood chance you would not see another Yaris anywhere on the road.

So what actually do you get when you buy this Tk17,50,000 car off the shelf. You get power steering, wireless door lock, child safety lock, automatic gearbox, ABS, dual airbags, catalytic converter, and a three-year warranty.

The surprising thing is Toyota already has a Corolla very similar to these specifications. The Corolla XLi. This car has a

driving on Dhaka streets with a manual gearbox. Then again why would you spend extra money for an automatic when your driver is the only one driving it. Some motorist think the automatic kills the driving pleasure but lets just say that is there personal opinion.

Costing Tk 50,000 less than Yaris it can be said the Corolla XLi would probably give the Yaris a run for the money. Hamidur Rahman, Navana's manager of sales and market-

COMPARISON	Yaris	Corolla XLi
Engine	1.3L/85bhp/16 valve DOHC with VVTi	1.3L/85 bhp/16 valve DOHC with VVTi
Transmission	Four -speed Automatic	Five -speed Manual
Kerb Weight	1015kg	970kg
Length/width/height(mm)	4300/1690/1460	4365/1695/1490

similar engine and there is hardly anything in it in terms of performance. The Yaris is a touch low in ground clearance while the Corolla seems to be bit larger in appearance. The 1.3 litre engines the cars have extract roughly the same amount of BHP's too. But the Corolla comes with a five-speed manual gearbox which could be a headache if you are not used to

ing, said the Yaris comes with technologies that are very current while the Corolla will have a new model soon.

So what would you do? Buy the touch expensive Yaris and be different at the red lights? Buy the Corolla and be not so different at the red lights, yet get a bigger car. Or wait for the new Corolla to arrive. Your choice.



### TECHNEWS

## Kingston introduces first fully secure USB drive

STARTECH DESK

**K**INGSTON Technology Company, Inc. introduced Kingston DataTraveler Elite Privacy Edition (DTE Privacy Edition), the world's first USB Flash drive that secures 100% of data on-the-fly via 128-bit hardware-based AES encryption, ensuring fail-safe security best practices without IT intervention on March 20, says a press release.

Offering up to 4GB of secure storage, DTE Privacy Edition is a plug-and-play USB device specifically targeted to meet enterprise-level security and compliance requirements. If the drive is ever lost or stolen, data on the DTE Privacy Edition device remains secure.

In addition to hardware-based encryption, the drive features several other advanced security measures, including a complex password protocol and a mechanism that locks out would-be attackers after 25 consecutive failed password attempts, ensuring information is accessible only by authorised users, and thwarting even "brute force attack" attempts to access data on lost or stolen devices.

Thanks to their large capacity, portability and simplicity, USB storage devices have become extremely popular among computer users, and have quickly made their way into the enterprise. However organi-

sations have been challenged in preventing the transfer or loss of corporate data contained on these devices. DTE Privacy Edition is an ideal solution for organisations looking for an efficient, cost-effective method of securing data.

"Securing mobile data is one of the key challenges IT professionals face today," said Dave Lee, digital media product manager, APAC Business Division, Kingston. "Many organisations have hundreds of megabytes of critical information stored

on personal devices that are potentially at risk to loss or theft. With DTE Privacy Edition, enterprises can support their increasingly mobile workforces with an enterprise-grade storage solution, and have peace of mind that sensitive information is secure."

The DTE Privacy Edition drive addresses a major issue companies face today -- enforcement of security policy. While it's relatively easy to establish security best practices and policies, the challenge is getting employee to comply. Even one renegade (or lazy) employee presents a compliance risk. If you have no way of

enforcing security compliance, then your enterprise data is compromised.

The DTE Privacy Edition removes the onus on employees to take steps to secure data; the drive automatically encrypts data, ensuring best practice, fail-safe security. The drive is designed to deliver a smooth streamlined end-user experience. When authorised users access

encrypted files, they are able to view the data without the need for additional software.

Additionally, DTE Privacy Edition drives are operable from any computer, and do not require admin rights. Required by many software programs and a sore spot for many IT administrators, admin rights refer to membership in the local Administrators group, which must be granted and set up by the IT administrator.

DTE Privacy Edition is available now through distributors or retailers. The DTE Privacy Edition runs on Windows 2000 SP4 or higher, and Windows XP operating systems.



### PHOTO TECH

## OFRO 'DETECT' MOBILE

An OFRO "Detect" Mobile Reconnaissance unit manoeuvres outside an office complex in Berlin on January 31, during a demonstration run. The unit, designed and produced by German firm Robowatch Technologies, is equipped, not only with video and heat vision cameras, but also with gas-measuring technology and is able to detect all current tactical gases as well as toxic industrial gases.

PHOTO: AFP

