Firefox on Steroids?

or
Addons and Plugins and Themes, oh my!

Pat Murphy

NRAO Webmaster (East)

When you first use Firefox...

- You just get the basics: a web browser.

  - "But isn't that enough?" Decide after watching.

- But... there are several types of "extras":

  - Plugins: java, flash, pdf, more (usually installed by admins)

  - Add-ons: Hundreds (Thousands?) on mozilla site

  - Themes: when looks are everything...

  - Bookmarklets: this is getting weird! (Not covered here).

- Some can significantly improve the browsing experience

  - And others may make that experience more secure.

Plugins

- See what plugins are installed
    - Enter `about:plugins` in the URL bar
    - Or: Tools -> Add-ons -> Plugins
- Installed in FF 3.6 in /opt/local in CV:
    - Java (1.6.0_18), Flash, various movie helpers
- Usually no need to add more
    - They go in `~/.mozilla/firefox/{profilename}/plugins`
    - Author finds `nppdf.so` problematic (acroread embedded)

Add-ons (the good stuff)

- Add-ons change aspects of the browser

    - Usually, they add functionality, buttons, *etc*.

    - Stored in `~/.mozilla/...` so no admin privileges needed

        - But that means they're account specific.

- My favourites:

    - NoScript, Adblock Plus, Web Developer, BetterPrivacy, FoxClocks, Master Password Timeout, Download Statusbar, PDF Download, Print/Print Preview, Resizable Textarea, SSL Blacklist, User Agent Switcher.

    - Not yet in 3.6: SwitchProxy, MultiProxy,

    - Tools -> Add-ons -> Get Add-ons (see all recommended...)

    - or navigate to `https://addons.mozilla.org/`

Addons: NoScript

- Get it at: addons.mozilla.org

    - HUGE boost in security

    - Puts YOU in control, not the web server or web app writer

    - Allows you to build up your personal "white list" over time

    - Application Boundary Enforcer (ABE) needs turned off

    - XSS needs one exception for NRAO ESS to work

        - Add-ons: NoScript: options -> Advanced -> XSS

        - `https://staff.nrao.edu/wiki/bin/view/Ccs/SecureBrowsing`

- Options: recommend placing in status bar.

    - Right click for menu: Allow or Temporarily allow (some/all)

    - Also, temporarily allow all this page

Addons: AdBlock Plus

- Several "ad blocking" add-ons available

- `AdBlock Plus` provides what AdBlock does, and more

  - Subscription to one of several "unwanted ads" lists

    - "Easylist USA" is the best option (also the first one).

  - Let someone else figure out what's to be blocked

  - Preference recommendations: put in status bar:

    - When blocking: right click for options

    - When disabled on a particular page

  - Right-click on icon for options:

    - Disable on site, disable on this page

    - It remembers, so you can build up your whitelist.

Addons: BetterPrivacy

- The problem: FLASH plugin IGNORES ff privacy settings!
    - It has its own area for (permanent) storage of info
    - Its own cookies (LSO), history, etc.
- Get it at addons.mozilla.org
- Recommended option settings:
    - Point it at `~/.macromedia/Flash_Player`
    - Delete flash cookies on exit, including default cookie
    - Delete flash cookies by timer unless modified (2 hours)
    - Auto-delete DOMStorage file

Addons: Ghostery

- **No Longer Recommended**

- Issues with privacy: *"an advertising agency now own a product that was meant to block advertising agencies"*

- Intent is to let you know when it detects tracking:

  - Show Alert bubble (5-15 seconds, top right)

  - Enable Web Bug Blocking (some or all)

  - But... THEY are now tracking what you do instead!

- Read more:

  - Ghostery Privacy Concerns

  - Terms of Service and Privacy Policy

Addons: Web Developer

- Download here (on the mozilla add-ons site)

- Adds a toolbar under the URL toolbar

- Invaluable for analysing what's wrong with a "page"

- Disable/enable things, see form info, CSS, DOM, more

- Outline Tables and Cells (see where you messed up)

- Nifty Resize menu: set of standard sizes

    - See if your page looks ok in different screen sizes

- Complete DOM inspector

- And more.

Themes

- Eye candy (or not: high/low contrast, dark vs light...)

- Also on the Mozilla add-ons site

- Tools -> Add-ons -> Themes

- Murphy uses "NASA Night Launch"

    - Fits in well with Dark gmail theme.

- Hundreds to choose from.

</talk>

- This is meant to be a "dig in and try it" talk
    - Links are in `cyan text, like this`
    - Examples are in `green text, like this`
- Permalink:
    - `http://www.cv.nrao.edu/~pmurphy/Talks/ff/ff.pdf`
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- So go dig in, and try some of those add-ons!

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