Can We Get There From Here?

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The Roadmap

- Where do we want to go?
- Where are we now?
- What's our rate-of-change?
  - Why?
- What strategies can affect that rate?
  - What are the costs?

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Thank You, Google

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We Want Apps That Are:

- Web-delivered
  - Anyone can run them from anywhere
- Cheap to build
- Useful and engaging
- Analogous to desktop apps
  - Only better?
- Able to be searched, linked to, and remixed

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So Where Are We Now?

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“...it depends”

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“...it depends”

- Well served by the current web:
  - Apps with static(ish) content
  - Text-based content creation (blogs, etc.)

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"...it depends"

- Well served by the current web:
  - Apps with static(ish) content
  - Text-based content creation (blogs, etc.)
- Not well served by the current web:
  - Everything else

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http://flickr.com/photos/sonalandabe/519213371/

"We're so far from the state of the art we can't even see the state of the art"

Doug Crockford

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<a href="...">

http://flickr.com/photos/autanex/519742656/

.dj_ie6 .giganticHack { ... }

http://flickr.com/photos/senor_codo/352250460/

Costs and Externalities

- Doing interesting things in HTML is hard, but...
  - Devs know HTML
  - Systems produce HTML
  - Search engines *only* understand HTML
- Many apps can't be attempted with HTML alone
  - Almost: 2D vectors, offline/storage, Comet
  - No chance: Audio, video, 3D, image transforms

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The Contenders

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The Contenders

- HTML

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The Contenders

- HTML
- HTML + Ajax/Other

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The Contenders

- HTML
- HTML + Ajax/Other
- Pure JavaScript

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The Contenders

- HTML
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- Silverlight

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The Contenders

- HTML
- HTML + Ajax/Other
- Pure JavaScript
- Silverlight
- Flash/Flex

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Ubiquity + Capability *Is* The Game

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Is It The Web If You Can’t “View Source”?

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Is It The Web If You Can't "View Source"?

"Not the web I love"

Joseph Smarr
(lunch, today)

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Continuum

Markup

Code

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Continuum

Web-ish

Desktop-ish

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Browsers Suck

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Will Browsers Always Suck?

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Disambiguation: 2 Kind of "Suck"

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Disambiguation: 2 Kind of "Suck"

- Can't begin to handle the problem
  - No native capability
  - Uneven availability
  - Non-standard API

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Disambiguation: 2 Kind of "Suck"

- Can't begin to handle the problem
  - No native capability
  - Uneven availability
  - Non-standard API
- Too complex to be realistic
  - Ubiquitous, but buggy / uneven impl
  - Requires too much code / too slow

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“Competition Will Save Us!”

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New Goodies

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New Goodies

- Firefox 3

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New Goodies

- Firefox 3
  - Auto/forced upgrade

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New Goodies

- Firefox 3
  - Auto/forced upgrade
- Safari...just grab a nightly

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New Goodies

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  - Pushed through Software Update

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- Firefox 3
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- Safari...just grab a nightly
  - Pushed through Software Update
- Opera 9.5

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New Goodies

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  - Pushed through Software Update
- Opera 9.5
  - Upgrade notices

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New Goodies

- Firefox 3
  - Auto/forced upgrade
- Safari...just grab a nightly
  - Pushed through Software Update
- Opera 9.5
  - Upgrade notices
- Internet Explorer 8

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New Goodies

- Firefox 3
  - Auto/forced upgrade
- Safari...just grab a nightly
  - Pushed through Software Update
- Opera 9.5
  - Upgrade notices
- Internet Explorer 8
  - It's complicated

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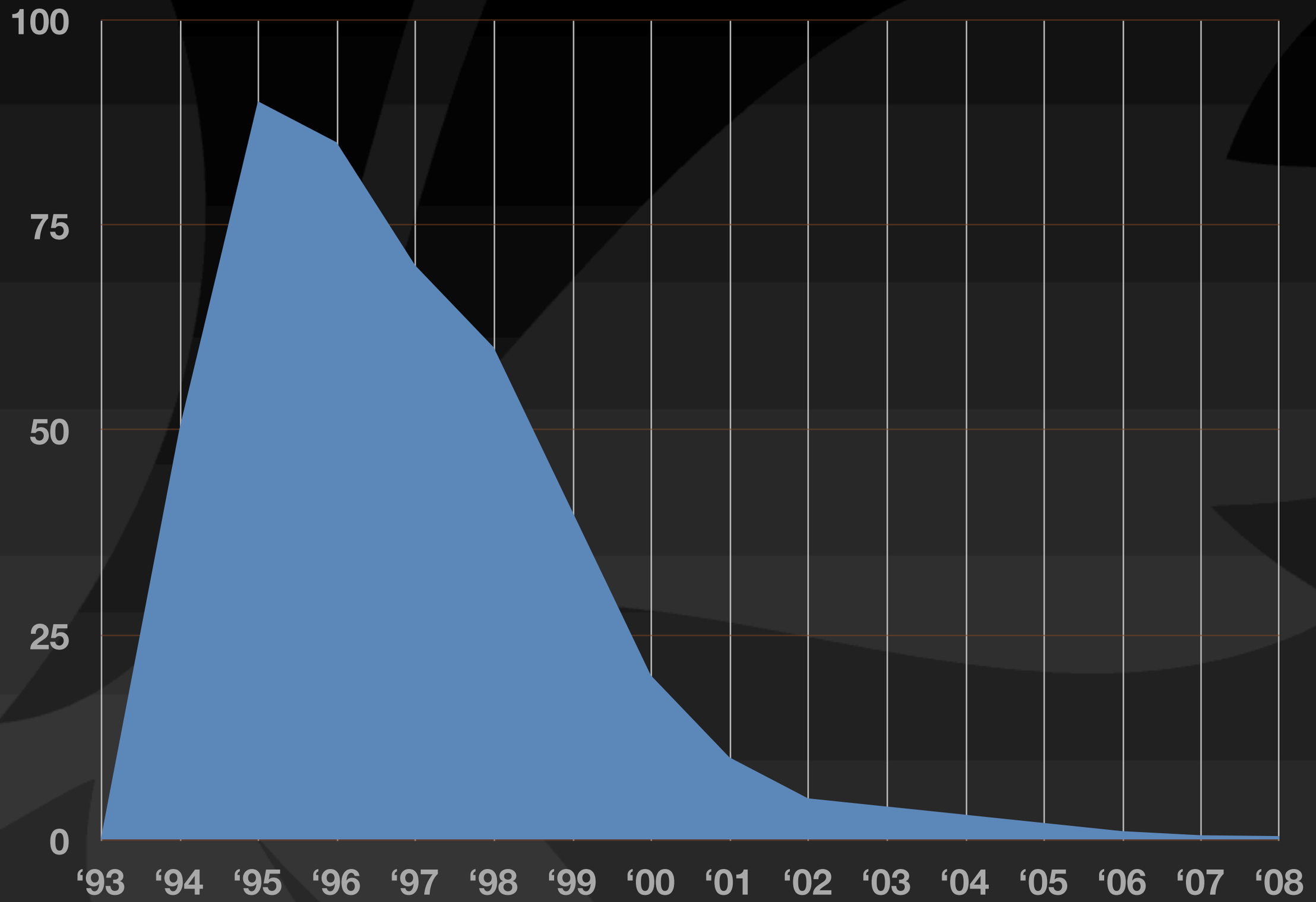
Netscape Usage Share



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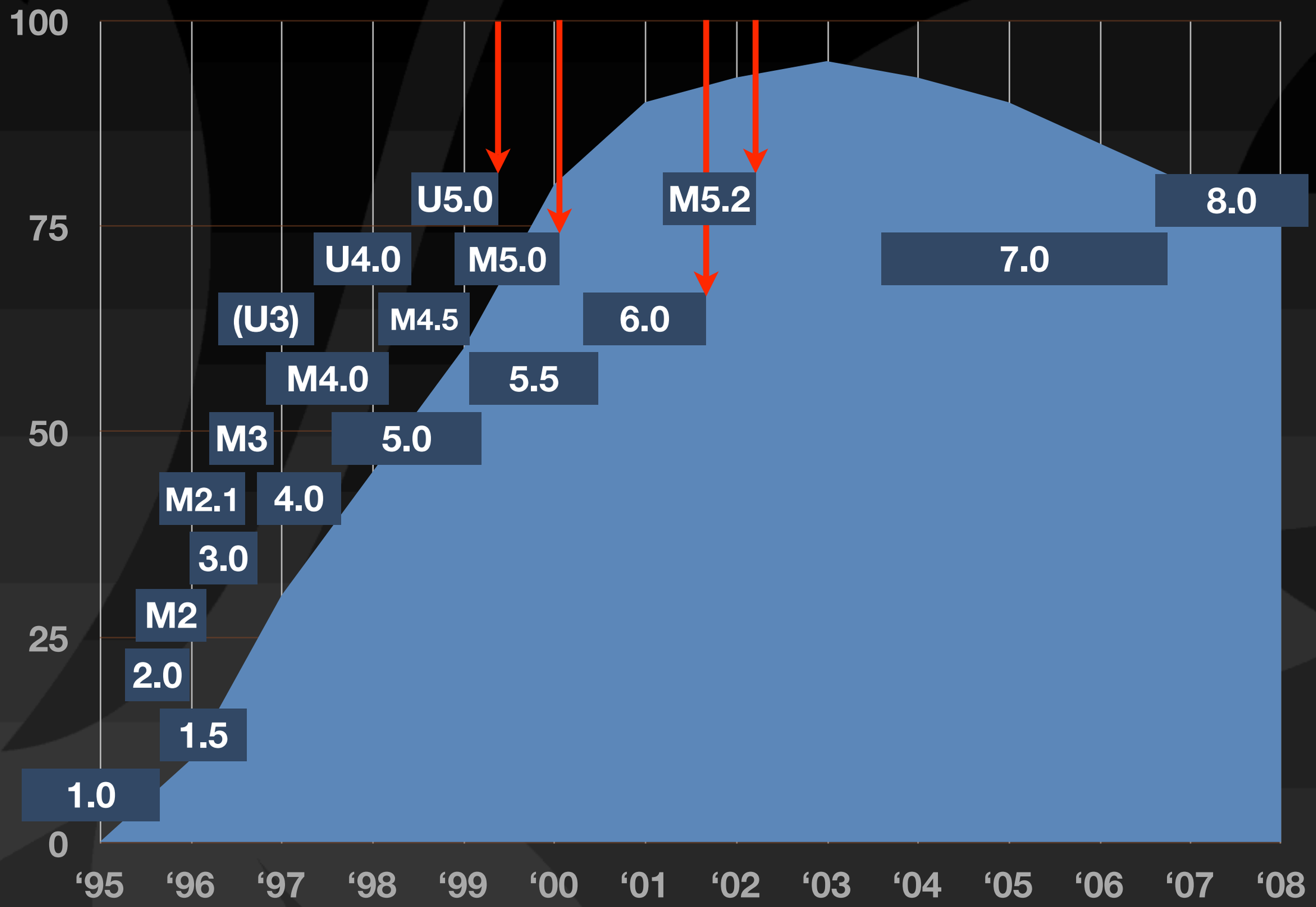
IE Versions Over Time



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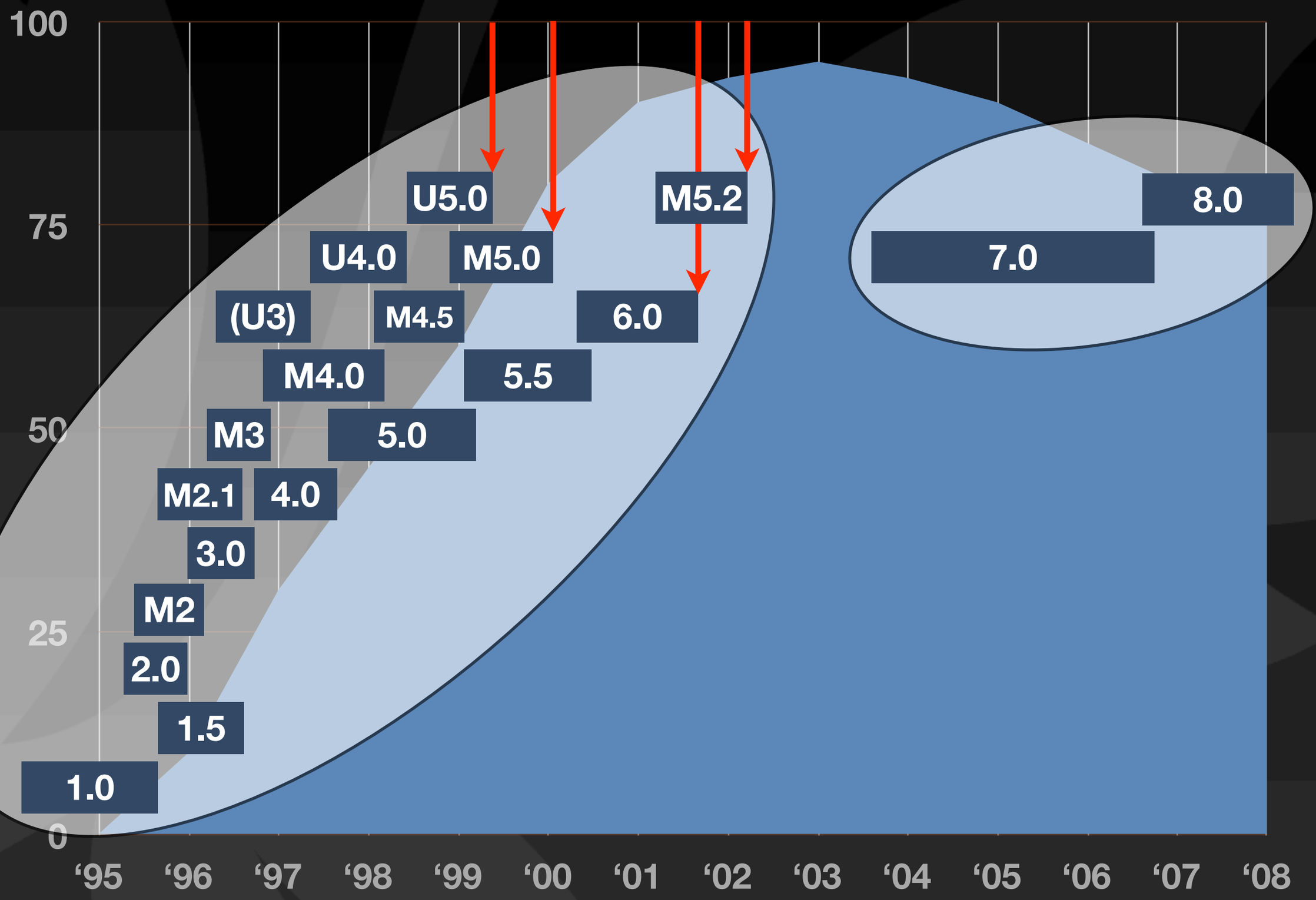
IE Versions Over Time



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Monocultures Reduce Costs In The Short Run

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Monocultures Reduce Costs In The Short Run

But can be sexy!

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Are Web Browsers Prone To Natural Monopolies?

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Are Web Browsers Prone To Natural Monopolies?

How Would Our Attitudes Toward Them Change If We Accepted That They Were?

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Continuum

hostage to deployed browsers

Web-ish

Desktop-ish

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Continuum

rev independently

Web-ish

Desktop-ish

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Economics & The Role Of Standards

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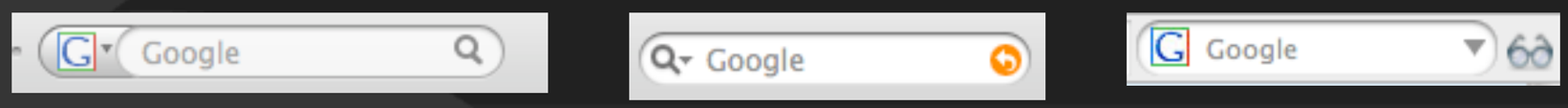
Economics & The Role Of Standards



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Other Options?

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Gears?!

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What About Markup?

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Will It Be Enough?

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Open Questions

- What is the role of semantics in apps vs. pages?
- What happens if a single vendor owns the plugin platform too?
- Does routing around browsers also throw the W3C under the bus?
- What should developers advocate for to browser vendors?

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Thank You

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