

Your official guide to the
open source version of
Netscape Communicator



Mozilla™

source code guide

William R. Stanek



Bonus CD-ROM includes:

- Source code for Mozilla
- Additional open source modules
- Mozilla developer tools

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Netscape[®] Mozilla[™] Source Code Guide

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IN THIS CHAPTER

- Introducing Mozilla
- Understanding the Netscape Open Source Program
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 - Exploring mozilla.org



Introducing Mozilla and the Netscape Open Source Program

Early in 1998, Netscape announced to the world that it would provide the source code for Netscape Communicator freely to the Internet community and that this free version of Communicator would be known as *Mozilla*. Mozilla is possibly the single most important development in the history of the Open Source movement — and that's saying a lot considering its predecessors are the likes of Linux, BSD Unix, and Apache. Mozilla is so important because it is a

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cornerstone application for everything the Internet has to offer, from browsing to e-mail to newsgroups and more.

Every day millions of people access the Internet, or Net, using Communicator. As the number of Net users grows, so do the number of people who use browsers, and a large portion of these users will use browsers based on the Mozilla source code. As a programmer, you have an opportunity to be a part of this historic development, writing code for what could become one of the most widely used applications of all time.

Because Mozilla is so large and complex, there are always hundreds of different initiatives ongoing at mozilla.org, the official headquarters of Netscape's Open Source movement. By becoming a member of the Mozilla team, you can help implement projects you find interesting regardless of whether you want to program, track down bugs, or write documentation. You can even go it alone and develop your own custom solutions using Mozilla.

Introducing Mozilla

Mozilla is many things to many people, and this is because the word's meaning has evolved over time. Mozilla was introduced to the world with Netscape Navigator. It is the original code name for the browser and later for Communicator. It is the internal code name that Navigator and Communicator report in the HTTP header request. It is also the name of Netscape's mascot, a friendly, fire-breathing dinosaur. When Netscape released the source code for Netscape Communicator, mozilla.org adopted the term as well, using it as the catchword for both the free software version of Netscape Communicator and any browsers developed from this code.

So What Is Mozilla?

With so many meanings, it is difficult to know what Mozilla is and isn't. In this book, Mozilla is the name for the free software version of Communicator. Mozilla

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