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Microsoft Silverlight Catching Up To Adobe Flash

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Microsoft (MSFT) has been building out its Silverlight Web video/animation software with some success: While companies like Netflix (NFLX), CBS, and NBC have used it for big projects, it's still far behind Adobe's (ADBE) Flash in adoption and usage.

But that doesn't mean Microsoft can't catch up: The latest version of Silverlight "promises to put Microsoft's player on a nearly level playing field with Adobe's Flash framework," [according to The Register's Scott Gilbertson](#). In a [lengthy review](#), he says Microsoft is catching up feature-wise, but still lacks some of the elegance of Adobe's Flash tools.

That's solid progress for Microsoft, but that's probably not good enough for companies and designers -- who have many years of Flash experience -- to ditch it for all but the most specialized projects.

Microsoft has been able to get companies like NBC to use Silverlight for one-time projects like the Olympics by funding them. (Likewise, Microsoft has a special relationship with Netflix; the DVD rental service's founder and CEO Reed Hastings sits on Microsoft's board.)

But the true sign of success will be everyday Web video sites and large advertisers -- who still value Flash's install base and familiarity more than anything Microsoft provides -- switching to Silverlight from Flash. We don't see that happening soon.

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