WebRTC puts video chats all in the browser

April 10 2012, by Nancy Owano

(Phys.org) -- "It's all in the browser. No plugins. And you don't just need only Chrome either, Good stuff." Those are the comments you can hear when in WebRTC circles. For those who have not yet heard about WebRTC, you probably will and more often in the months to come. A web standard still in its draft stage is getting lots of attention, nightly experiments, and hard work to get the standard into shape. The WebRTC standard has been endorsed by a number of browser vendors. The standard group's reason for being is that "Currently, there is no free, high quality, complete solution available that enables communication in the browser." WebRTC aims to make that happen.

Technology watchers agree that once the standard is mature, it's likely to get widespread attention, helping to eliminate the need for plugins to

enable [video chat](). The underlying technology comes from Global IP Solutions, a 2010 Google acquisition. Google opened the source code under a BSD license, with the intention of greasing the wheels toward its standardization. Web RTC stands for Web Real Time Communication.

The standard is designed to support streaming audio and video communications directly on the web, with no plug-ins. WebRTC enables [web]() browsers with Real-Time Communications (RTC) capabilities via simple Javascript APIs. According to the WebRTC site, its goal is to enable "rich, high quality, RTC applications to be developed in the [browser]() via simple Javascript APIs and HTML5."

The initiative has the support of Google, Mozilla and Opera. Presently, there is a lot of work ahead, however. According to reports, the standard is going though major revisions and is being drafted through a working group, the WebRTC W3X working group.

To prove how it could be possible to engage in video chat without plugins, Mozilla, which wants to bring WebRTC to Firefox, fanned much interest in WebRTC when it staged a demo of browser-based video chat application for Firefox. Mozilla's demo took place last month at IETF 83 in Paris, where Mozilla team members showed how they could do a simple video call between two BrowserID-authenticated parties in a special build of Firefox with WebRTC support.

According to Mozilla's Anant Narayanan, who blogged about the event, "It is still very early days for WebRTC integration in Firefox, but we're really excited to show you something that works!"

He said that the team at Mozilla Labs has been experimenting with integrating social features in the browser, "and it seemed like a cool idea to combine this with WebRTC to establish a video call between two users who are signed in using BrowserID (now called Persona). "

More information:
www.tboyt.com/2012/04/webrtc-hangout.html
hacks.mozilla.org/2012/04/webr … underway-at-mozilla/

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