	Documenting the Web together (windows.com) 450 points by marvinpinto 2 hours ago hide past web 81 comments favorite
	add comment
	madmax108 1 hour ago [-]
	MDN is an AMAZING resource, and I'm glad that it's getting the attention it deserves (both from Mozilla and the rest of the internet). Really hope this effort lasts over time as the effort put into MDN by volunteers, besides Mozilla employees, is tremendous!
	Hope MDN becomes the go-to Wiki for the web (It practically is for me already) Kudos to the team! :)
*	reply Egidius 1 hour ago [-]
	For me, as an experienced front-end-focussed developer, MDN has been my go-to website for quick spec references. MDN has all I need to know, and I know my way around. However, I've been in teams where the less-experienced developers went to W3C Schools to see how they should implement some feature. And to be honest, I cannot completely blame them. W3C Schools shows directly what you need to know and how the API you are discovering works. This is mainly because of the playground with possible implementations on top of every specification page. I hope MDN can make their site more appealing for less experience developers without cutting in on the feature-completeness.
	For those interested: Behold, the W3C Schools hider extension. <u>https://github.com/Spetnik/W3Schools-Hider</u>
	Marksomnian 1 hour ago [-] Your comment excellently demonstrates the problem with them: W3Schools is not related to the W3C in any way. Many beginners see the "W3" and think it's an
	official resource. This is bad.
	Egidius 1 hour ago [-] I never implied that W3C Schools is related to W3C. But I do agree with you: that's bad. But for me that's a public secret. I don't think that's the main reason why I dislike W3C schools, though. My problem with W3C Schools is that they are not the right away to learn web development in a proper way: <u>https://www.impressivewebs.com/w3schools-ugly-bad-good/</u> . MDN holds a far greater standard on a whole lot of aspects: following exact W3C specs, being up to date, design, just to name a few obvious ones. <u>reply</u>
	rodorgas 54 minutes ago [-] Parent thought you believe W3Schools is related to W3C because you keep calling it "W3C Schools" (it's W3Schools).
	reply Egidius 50 minutes ago [-]
	aha right :D
	A briandear 51 minutes ago [-] Most beginners have no idea what W3C is or why they should care.
	reply
	Ive been that less experienced developer, using w3schools would save a minute or two on certain searches. Now I enjoy going to MDN and learning a few extra things on a given topic, or reinforcing an existing understand, via MDN. Sometimes i'll lose 15 minutes crawling a few tangential links - worth. reply
*	tareqak 1 hour ago [-] Given that the blog is on windows.com and it mentions MSDN, I think the title should include Microsoft as well. I was actually confused/befuddled seeing the juxtaposition
	of Google and Mozilla in the title, and windows.com as the domain in brackets to the right of the title. reply
*	fyrstenberg 1 hour ago [-] Don't forget you can use <u>https://devdocs.io/</u> too which also searches MDN and store offline. The two are a great pair. <u>reply</u>
	▲ y4mi 19 minutes ago [-]
	cool, i didn't know that site. wonderful ux how's the content added though? its missing so many libraries i use
*	reply andy_ppp 1 hour ago [-]
	Great, while they are at it can Google please downgrade the extremely spammy w3schools or at least allow me to remove certain websites from my searches. There are so many better resources out there reply
	vinhboy 1 hour ago [-] I've never understood the hate for w3schools. I've always found them to be extremely useful. I like that usage examples is the focus of their site. I find that more useful than wordy documentations that more advanced references provide.
	reply ▲ TAForObvReasons 1 hour ago [-]
	http://www.w3fools.com/ top of the page summarizes the situation: > When W3Fools was launched in 2011, the state of documentation for developers was poor. This site documented many content errors and issues with the
	W3Schools website. The Mozilla Developer Network was around but it did not have much support at the time. > Today, W3Schools has largely resolved these issues and addressed the majority of the undersigned developers' concerns. For many beginners, W3Schools has structured tutorials and playgrounds that offer a decent learning experience. Do keep in mind: a more complete education will certainly include MDN and
	other reputable resources. MDN would greatly benefit from more soft documentation and a playground setup similar to W3Schools
	<u>reply</u> ▲ 52-6F-62 1 hour ago [-]
	I'm still waiting for the true spiritual revival of HTML Goodies <u>https://web.archive.org/web/19980130110903/http://htmlgoodie</u> Or not. MDN usually suits me fine.
	Actually, I find TutorialsPoint <u>https://www.tutorialspoint.com/</u> generally pretty good, if not lacking in some depth. They give a decent soft intro, though.
	I think if you tried to add that to mdn you'd make it worse at what it's good for
	reply A shawnz 35 minutes ago [-]
	They aggressively create separate pages for every element and attribute, each full of ads, but hardly any containing substantive descriptions of the things they document. At worst they just restate the name of the attribute in different words. And the examples, while sometimes nice, often just show the effect of turning a property on or off and don't really demonstrate the different things you can do with it. If they focused more on substance and less on SEO, they could be a much better resource.

loain

<u>reply</u>

🔺 jwdunne 11 minutes ago [-]

Hacker News new | comments | show | ask | jobs | submit

I'm surprised. This is the type of thing that should fall within the Panda update cross hairs. Thin content, heavy ads - Google should by design be favouring pages that aren't shooting for cheap long tail hits.

<u>reply</u>

smidgen2 39 minutes ago [-]

When I was a noob, w3schools was far more useful. I learned HTML and CSS on w3schools. Now I'm more of an expert, I need the detailed documentation that MDN has. Each site has its niche. Still sometimes reference w3schools because it's easier to read, though.

<u>reply</u>

▲ tambourine_man 50 minutes ago [-]

Yeah, MDN is akin to Unix man pages, W3Schools is more to the point.

They've corrected most of the bad sample code.

<u>reply</u>

🔺 brokentone 1 hour ago [-]

At this point (trying to be a good citizen, not using an ad blocker) the ads on the site lock up my computer, and a simple lookup turns into a substantial time investment. Vs MDN doesn't have this issue.

<u>reply</u>

🔺 irrational 2 minutes ago [-]

How can you use the web without an ad blocker? Anytime I get on a browser without an ad blocker I'm reminded of how slow and horrible the web used to be (and apparently still is).

<u>reply</u>

🔺 weberc2 5 minutes ago [-]

They were great in 2006 when I was learning, but they're not nearly as useful as MDN (even foregoing the accusations that w3schools is errant and spammy). It's simply annoying to have to manually filter the w3schools (and others) search results when MDN is sooo much better.

<u>reply</u>

▲ gicadin 34 minutes ago [-]

Wc3 is good as a reference to html or css syntax but I feel it's spread it's tentacles to far and wide. It's the first result when I search for a php method, and I don't feel it's nearly as good as the php manual

<u>reply</u>

🔺 frik 30 minutes ago [-]

I use w3schools and MDN, both. w3schools improved a lot over the years, and it's easy to find something fast. MDN is more in depth. CanIuse.com is another very useful resource. Google should keep all three resources in the top results.

reply

madeofpalk 1 hour ago [-]

I'll never/rarely click a w3schools link, but I do find MDN to be quite difficult to read with it's pages being quite technical and terse. W3schools is quite pragmatic with providing a reference for CSS properties.

I hope these extra resources will let MDN improve on this.

<u>reply</u>

🔺 monocasa 19 minutes ago [-]

Yeah. I treat w3schools vs MDN like Simple English Wiki vs regular Wikipedia. There's some subjects on Wikipedia (like math particularly) where to understand the wiki page, you need such a good background that you don't need the wiki page anyway. It's good to have a simpler, not complete place to get your feet wet first.

<u>reply</u>

HatchedLake721 1 hour ago [-]

Exactly. Sometimes I just close MDN and then click on w3schools link for this reason.

<u>reply</u>

▲ booleandilemma 1 hour ago [-]

I agree. I feel like going to MDN to quickly look up syntax is like trying to kill a fly with a handgun.

reply

🔺 megalodon 1 hour ago [-]

I'm quite the opposite, I feel like MDN is the only sane resource in an ocean of opinionated crap. Not saying it covers everything but for syntax it's practically the only place I visit.

<u>reply</u>

📥 weberc2 1 minute ago [-]

Same here. For syntax and quick examples, I find w3schools much harder to parse than MDN. Maybe there's more noise in w3schools, or maybe the layout/design of MDN are better for these purposes.

Ilccbb 37 minutes ago [-]

But going to w3schools is like trying to kill a fly with a flyswatter with a dashed red border of weight 2px. Their examples are so basic, pre-canned, and repetitious between pages that you rarely see useful options and intricacies that each tag/property may posses.

For super quick syntax checks ("Is it fill-opacity or opacity?") MDN might be a little overboard, but as any sort of reference beyond 3 line snippets it is the link that I always look for. I usually append MDN to the end of my searches for HTML/SVG help.

reply

wil421 1 hour ago [-]

Agreed. Even simple concepts can have overly technical examples on MDN. Sometimes it causes me to overthink a simple script.

reply

🔺 nachtigall 24 minutes ago [-]

I find duckduckgo much better for these kind of searches. It also shows a brief instant result which is usually an excerpt from MDN.

Actually, I find duckduckgo better for all kinds of technical searches these days.

reply

🔺 badestrand 17 minutes ago [-]

Their Stack Overflow integration is to me one of the best things that ever happened to search engines.

<u>reply</u>

wnevets 1 hour ago [-]

> or at least allow me to remove certain websites from my searches.

Im currently using a chrome extension from google[0] to do exactly this.

[0] <u>https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/personal-blocklist...</u>

reply

- amelius 40 minutes ago [-]
- Why is this supported through a Chrome extension?
- Google is tracking everything about me. So I expect that certainly they can track which sites I don't like, especially when I mark them as such.

<u>reply</u>

- 🔺 wnevets 9 minutes ago [-]
 - They use to for a short time, I don't recall if they ever said why they removed the feature from google search itself. This extension came after they removed it.

▲ the8472 1 hour ago [-]

<u>reply</u>

<u>reply</u>

https://www.google.com/search?q=querySelectorAll+-site:w3sch...

this syntax has been supported for many years

<u>reply</u>

- 🔺 haberman 1 hour ago [-]
 - I also like the "Personal Blocklist" extension for Chrome: <u>https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/personal-blocklist...</u>
- ▲ mrighele 1 hour ago [-]

I think the parent meant to exclude some domains from every search. I would love that too. If I have to add "-site:somedomain.com" (and maybe even many of them!) it takes less effort ignore them in the result <u>reply</u> 🔺 hollander 1 hour ago [-] Bookmark that. I use the following: https://www.google.com/webhp?hl=en&newwindow=1&num=30 I remove the ei identifier from the bookmark. I guess this is a unique ID that makes it possible for google to keep following me if I happen to bookmark it. Eg: ei=Vo_n34buB9Cabdedfk6gO And I happen to like the W3school examples, especially CSS. They've helped me many times. I don't see the problem with them, but please ignore them if you don't like it. <u>reply</u> accountforty 14 minutes ago [-] IMO W3schools has some of the best development tutorials for beginners <u>reply</u> jrowley 1 hour ago [-] Some googlers made this w3fools, so employees certainly aren't fond of w3schools. http://www.w3fools.com/ <u>reply</u> kbumsik 1 hour ago [-] The is great indeed. I hope w3schools.com won't appear in Google search result. BTW, It feels like OP omitted to mention to MS in the title though. <u>reply</u> ▲ 482794793792894 1 hour ago [-] Mozilla Blog post: <u>https://blog.mozilla.org/blog/2017/10/18/mozilla-brings-micr...</u> <u>reply</u> 🔺 nycdotnet 1 hour ago [-] Interesting that there is no Apple representation. <u>reply</u> Egidius 1 hour ago [-] Representation? You've got an app for that ;-) reply dmitriid 1 hour ago [-] Apple never hosted web-related docs, so they probably don't care. <u>reply</u> jsmthrowaway 1 hour ago [-] Sorry, that is not true. Apple documents all of its platforms quite thoroughly, and Safari is one of them. Theirs is simply not an analogue to MDN. https://developer.apple.com/library/content/documentation/Ap... "Apple doesn't attempt to document general-purpose Web technologies without an eye on its own platforms" might be a more accurate statement, but even that is shaky because they spent a lot of time explaining HTML5 media while killing Flash. <u>reply</u> Ajedi32 1 hour ago [-] Google blog post: <u>https://blog.chromium.org/2017/10/building-unified-documenta...</u> <u>reply</u> hour ago [-] Good Bye w3schools.com ? <u>reply</u> rand_r 1 hour ago [-] w3schools.com is a great resource. I prefer it when I need a quick refresher on an HTML element because it's especially good for having short, simple examples I can copy and paste. MDN tends to be verbose and technical. It's good when you need to know everything in detail, but often I need a quick refresher and a simple example and for that w3schools.com always seems to have better content. Compare these two pages for input types: https://www.w3schools.com/html/html form input types.asp https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Web/HTML/Element/in... The MDN page is more complete, but reading it gives me a headache. <u>reply</u> samBergeron 1 hour ago [-] The whole point of documentation though is for it to be complete, technical and well explained. Not to have copy-pastable examples. W3schools is neither good documentation or good examples though. <u>reply</u> briandear 49 minutes ago [-] When I need to change a car's oil, I don't need a complete, detailed overview of the entire lubrication system. There is a place for all kinds of documentation, but exhaustive explanation is often less preferable to a quick "how do I do this." <u>reply</u> smidgen2 42 minutes ago [-] I find w3schools a better reference for quick HTML element and CSS rule lookup, but I always go to MDN for Javascript stuff, especially the newer API's that came with HTML5. <u>reply</u> addicted 1 hour ago [-] W3Schools is a decent introduction though. When I was just starting out it was nice to be able to quickly look up the syntax of a basic JOIN SQL statement on w3schools. <u>reply</u> ▲ clairity 45 minutes ago [-] the MDN example (unfortunately at the bottom of the page) is more correct by using a proper <label> tag with the <input> tag, while w3schools omits that detail, which makes it seem like plain text labels with
 tags (yuck) after them are ok (label tags add accessibility among other things). tl;dr: use <label>'s with <input>'s, not plain text labels, as MDN shows you to do. <u>reply</u> pkrefta 1 hour ago [-] Hopefully - and thank God :) <u>reply</u> rainbowmverse 1 hour ago [-] For the people who have and will comment on how bad w3schools is, Google provides a Chrome extension for blocking domains in search results. https://googleblog.blogspot.com/2011/02/new-chrome-extension... I don't know if there's a Firefox version. <u>reply</u> ▲ josefresco 1 hour ago [-] Can Google see your own personal list of blocked sites? Post seems to indicate just that: "One of the signals we're exploring is explicit feedback from users."

.

<u>reply</u>

rainbowmverse 57 minutes ago [-] They started with it built into search. This was probably a compromise solution to some competing internal concerns. reply

edent 23 minutes ago [-]

We were speaking about this at the W3C's Advisory Board meeting in London earlier this week.

It distresses me that the specs on w3.org are so hard to read for the average developer. It's great to see how MDN focuses on simplicity, readability, and usable examples. reply

🔺 shmerl 24 minutes ago [-]

> One of our guiding principles in developing Microsoft Edge is that end users should never have to worry about which sites work in which browsers. This philosophy—"the Web should just work for everyone"—led to our choice to target the "interoperable intersection" of web APIs in our browser engineering.
 That's a good move by MS. In this context it's great to see them supporting open codecs, and for istance OGG container for audio which was recently announced as work in progress in Edge. Quite a turnaround from the old times of "best viewed with IE", ActiveX, Silverlight and etc.

Why can't MS apply same principle across all their teams? Compare the above to their push for 3D graphics API lock-in.

mark242 1 hour ago [-]

This is a great start. Now let's integrate caniuse into every single MDN page.

<u>reply</u>

<u>reply</u>

<u>reply</u>

raymondgh 20 minutes ago [-]

I wonder how much influence over MDN content these new contributors will have. On the one hand, it looks like a victory for Mozilla and developers everywhere; on the other hand, it looks like this will amplify Google's voice on the direction of web standards and help grow Chrome's market share at the cost of Firefox's.

opendomain 1 hour ago [-]

A few years ago most of these companies got together to do the same thing and launch the WebPlatform for the same thing. If you watch the video, you can see some guy named Tim Berners-Lee with a title "Web Developer" say it was the place to learn.

I wonder why they are relaunching instead of using Webplatform.Org ?

<u>reply</u>

▲ the8472 1 hour ago [-]

Can't beat them, join them. Developers simply go to MDN and MDN often is on top of the search results anyway. It often gets linked from stackoverflow too. reply

madeofpalk 1 hour ago [-]

I think MDN is already quite a trusted reference for developers, so abandoning that would be abandoning a lot of "brand value" that's been earnt through lots of hard work.

<u>reply</u>

🔺 waivek 42 minutes ago [-]

Is there an extension to hide all the w3schools related comments in this thread?

<u>reply</u>

🔺 subsidd 1 hour ago [-]

This is great news. I learnt JavaScript from MDN first and it was a great resource. Still use it almost everyday as a reference, would love to see it grow.

<u>reply</u>

▲ binaryanomaly 1 hour ago [-]

Awesome! Great to see that Mozilla gets the approval, respect and support from such big players. Looks like there is hope for a free and open Web! Well done Mozilla!

<u>reply</u>

amq 1 hour ago [-]
Somehow I had more luck with stackoverflow and others when looking for a quick hint/example.

<u>reply</u>

🔺 shashwat986 1 hour ago [-]

I'm so happy to see this! MDN has always been my go-to resource for any JS/CSS help reply

Skywing 1 hour ago [-]

Already was the place to go.

▲ forapurpose 1 hour ago [-]

This news sounds great to me, but I feel like I don't understand what's happening behind the curtain and don't grasp the second-order consequences. What would motivate them? I wonder what the political motives are (industry politics, not the other kind that we won't mention here).

Could this eventually displace standards bodies such as WHATWG and W3C? If the Product Advisory Board of Mozilla, Google, and Samsung agree on a standard and publish it at MDN, will that become as official, at least de facto, as a standard published by W3C? I do see W3C is mentioned as a participant. Also, for the sake of argument (and IMHO, of realism) let's assume that Google, who can virtually set web standards themselves these days, isn't doing this for a purely

altruistic motive of supporting the open web. Why would they give up the 'soft power' of writing their own documentation for their own standards? <u>reply</u>

Vinnl 20 minutes ago [-]

I think there are several motives:

1. The people working on these browsers are just that: people. They haven't necessarily been e.g. at Microsoft when IE vs. Netscape was a thing, and probably don't hold grudges. They were hired to work with the web, not against it.

2. There was a lot of duplicate efforts, and MDN was clearly "winning". That's a waste of time.

3. A more "neutral" MDN (although I think they've been doing a pretty good job already) is good for all browser makers. Even if Mozilla and its volunteers are trying to be a non-biased resource, they'll always be writing from their own viewpoint.

4. For Mozilla, MDN being less Mozilla-/Firefox-focused might not sound like a great option, but Mozilla's mission is to build a better, free and open internet, not to be dominant. (Incidentally, that's also the reason MDN "won": this made it able to attract many contributors and supporters.)

<u>reply</u>

Top19 32 minutes ago [-]

In general I like that Google and others are doing this. The web is so complicated, so overwhelming, that a central source of documentation is needed. This "blog posts as documentation" culture is not healthy.

However I think we should all be skeptical of any actions corporations take today until proven otherwise. When 60,000 Americans are dying of opiods per year (that's all the deaths in Vietnam per year) and drug companies will reject calls to regulate them and pay off members of Congress, some constant skepticism is called for (who could of believed they would do that??) <u>https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2017/investigations/...</u>

<u>reply</u>

📥 rodorgas 37 minutes ago [-]

Supporting open web is not altruism. Proprietary standards on web is pure evil even for companies: see what happened to IE or Flash.

reply

matthberg 1 hour ago [-]

This is great news, but the title misses out on the fact that Microsoft (the blog poster, nonetheless) is part of the "others" joining. Revising for clarity would be good. <u>reply</u>

michaeljchou 1 hour ago [-]

Yeah. And the link is actually to a blog post from Microsoft stating they started redirecting MSDN pages to corresponding MDN ones. reply