

Moving “back” to Vivaldi

by Alan German

In an article, that was included in the September, 2018 newsletter, I extolled the virtues of the Opera web browser in meeting my baseline requirements for specifying the content of any new tabs, managing JavaScript, and displaying the progress of file downloads.

At the time, one minor annoyance with the use of Opera was its inability to display downloaded PDF files in an external PDF viewer, even though there was a setting that should have allowed this feature. Subsequent use of the browser identified a further, even more annoying issue whereby the browser failed to retain the window size on closing the program and reverted to a fixed window size the next time the browser was run.

The final comment in my original article was that “*Time will tell if Opera remains my browser of choice.*” In fact, time, and further use of the browser, have determined that it’s now time to move on – or perhaps move “back” – to yet another web browser.

My current choice of browser is Vivaldi (<https://vivaldi.com>). This is an interesting software package since it is essentially a “retro” version of Opera. Jón Stephenson von Tetzchner, one of Vivaldi’s co-founders, had originally been a co-founder of the Opera web browser. However, von Tetzchner did not agree with the direction taken by Opera’s development team, and in particular the removal of many popular features of the software. Vivaldi is intended to remedy such deficiencies and to reproduce the features of earlier versions of the other browser.



Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741)

This is one of the reasons for my indication of going “back” to Vivaldi. Using this browser maintains many of the features that I liked about Opera, but Vivaldi also provides past functionalities that I find particularly useful.

The name chosen for the browser reflects Antonio Vivaldi, a well-known Italian composer from the Baroque era. The name Vivaldi, therefore, makes the browser easy to remember.

However, the name is also quite appropriate since many of the most famous Italian opera composers (think Verdi and Puccini) lived and worked in the 1800-1900’s, while Vivaldi dates from the 1700’s. Thus, the concept of “going back” from Opera to Vivaldi seems to make sense. [I wonder if this is what the program’s developers had in mind when they named their browser?]

Vivaldi is easy to download and install, and it’s cross-platform, so in my case I can use the same browser for both Linux and Windows.

The first piece of good news is that browser remembers its window size so that, once set, there is no need to continually readjust the window to suit the user’s preference. The second item is that, in addition to being able to set the browser’s home page, a built-in feature allows this to be displayed whenever a new tab is opened. Thus, there is no need to install a third-party extension to provide this capability. In addition, a setting to support the display of downloaded PDF files in an external PDF viewer actually works in this browser. So, three out of three so far.

Like in Opera, the print menu is “hidden” in the browser’s menu system, requiring clicking on the Vivaldi logo in the top-left corner of the browser window and then selecting File – Print. Fortunately, there is a Print extension available that provide a dedicated icon in the top-right corner of the browser window that opens the print menu directly.

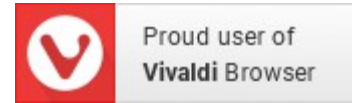
Interestingly, Vivaldi uses extensions that are available from the Chrome Store. So, the print utility is obtained by navigating to Menu – Tools – Extensions, clicking on the “hamburger” icon, selecting Open Chrome Web, searching for Print, and selecting Print for Google Chrome.

There is also no setting to toggle JavaScript on and off. However, a search for an extension related to JavaScript provides links to a number of packages, including JavaScript Toggle On and Off, the extension that I was previously using in Opera.

So, there we have it. All of the functionality provided by Opera together with some useful additions available in Vivaldi. It's once again time to say "*Farewell past, happy dreams of days gone by.*" but, this time, perhaps we can add another Verdi quote – "*Let us turn to the past: that will be progress.*" (Letter to Francesco Florimo, January 5, 1871).

Bottom Line

Vivaldi
Version 2.3.1440.48
Vivaldi Technologies AS [NO]
<https://vivaldi.com>



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