

Google's potential divestment from Chrome is an opportunity for an OpenAI browser

Article

Around the same time the Department of Justice recommended a judge require [Google](#) sell Chrome, rumors stirred about OpenAI launching its own browser. If the DOJ's

recommendation becomes a reality, a [forced Chrome sale](#) would pave the way for another browser to compete for its users.

“If Chrome was sold to an independent company, there could also be pressure to improve user privacy standards, leading to competition from smaller, more agile players to provide the necessary tech to meet this demand,” said Stephen Upstone, CEO and founder of AI ad-tech company LoopMe. “For an ad industry that has been innovating for years, this change presents not a leap as such, but a natural next step forward.”

OpenAI is one such smaller and more agile player that could potentially rival Google.

Is a browser war coming?

OpenAI is a solid candidate for launching a browser. The ability to weave its GPT technology into an experience would make an OpenAI browser a potential competitor against Google’s Gemini. It could also be a smart move from OpenAI investor Microsoft’s perspective, considering its Edge browser captures just 5.7% of worldwide market share, per SimilarWeb. And since other alternative browsers like The Browser Company’s Arc have gained attention recently, there appears to be a growing market for Chrome disrupters.

OpenAI is already competing with Google over search and recently hired two people heavily involved in the creation of Chrome, per The Information. Meanwhile, it’s partnered with Apple to power Apple Intelligence. While [iPhone](#) users won’t soon be driven to an OpenAI browser (Safari remains Apple’s default, with Google the default search engine), the visibility will help OpenAI.

Closing the Chrome gap

A potential OpenAI browser faces a massive chasm to close if it wants to compete with Chrome—similar to the challenges it will face taking market share from Google Search.

Chrome had a 64.6% market share worldwide, according to October 2024 data from SimilarWeb. Its next closest competitor is Safari, at 21.0%. A forced Chrome divestment would leave the browser without the same access to Google’s capital and hardware. That could be the spark OpenAI needs to grab users.

OpenAI doesn’t have an ad business, which means it’s not competing with Google for ad spend—yet. There has been speculation this week over OpenAI launching a potential ad business, though founder Sam Altman has called ads “unsettling” and a “last resort.”

Impact on advertisers

For advertisers, a potential OpenAI browser wouldn't materially change anything, especially because the company does not yet run ads. And marketers should already be diversifying their [targeting strategies](#) across browsers and IDs.

Even without a forced Chrome sale and users pivoting to other browsers, third-party cookies are in decline. This has already led marketers to make use of alternative IDs and contextual targeting. An OpenAI browser would offer another place to test [advertising](#).

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