Goodbye Flash

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Adobe announced an [End of Life for the Flash Player](#). I've written things in [defense](#) of [Flash](#) in the past and thought it would be worth it to revisit those statements today.

Who Am I?

If you came across this without knowing me, I am arguably one of the best Flex Developers in the world. I tied my business and professional life to the Flash Platform, and Flex, more than a decade ago. Here are some of my credentials:

- I produced two Flex podcasts. a href="http://www.theflexshow.com">The Flex Show presented highly edited community interviews. and [The Flextras Friday Lunch](#) was a live demo with Q&A.
- I created [Flextras](#), a business selling Flex components.
- I was editor in chief of the short-lived Flex Authority magazine.
- I spoke at dozens of Flash based user groups and conferences.
- I answered a ton of questions on StackOverflow and still retain the top spot in the [Flex user charts](#).
- I became an Adobe Community Professional due to my work in the Flash community.
- I was one of the founding PMC members of the [Apache Flex team](#).

Back then, I bet that Flex would provide a better application building experience than anything HTML could offer. I thought it would rule the world. I wanted to get in early and ride the wave to success. I took a calculated risk that turned out to be wrong.

Why Does Adobe's Decision Makes Sense?

Browsers have slowly been shutting down their plugin APIs and Flash Player was a plugin. Flash was able to get around this because it is widely used and Adobe was able to negotiate to add Flash directly into the browser. Both Microsoft Edge and Google Chrome are distributed with Flash. These APIS have slowly become more restrictive over time and the future of the web will be plugin-free.

Since HTML is finally adding a [native form of DRM](#), the bulk of the major content providers no longer need Flash's proprietary nature to protect their content. This removes the last commercial obstacle which I suspect has been keeping the Flash player alive.

Jeffry, How does this Affect You?

Personally, I spent a couple hours last night playing [Bloon Tower Defense](#) one of my favorite casual browser games. I hadn't touched it in years, but I'll miss it when it is finally gone.

Professionally, this doesn't affect me all that much. I refactored my business more than five years ago to focus on alternate technologies. In the HTML world, I really like Angular, but I've touched on a lot of different technologies.

I never turn down the Flex work that comes my way, and people still find me based on my past history. But, I am not actively pursuing it. If you need help migrating your Flex applications to an HTML5 platform, I'd be glad to help, so reach out and we can discuss.

How does this Affect you?

Adobe will stop distributing the Flash Player in 2020, but the Adobe Flash Platform will live on through Adobe AIR. Given AIR's use as a cross platform mobile app development platform I expect that to be around for a long time.

If you still have Flash applications in production, now is the time to start planning a migration of sorts. You have, roughly, 2 years to plan your strategy.

What migration strategies can you use?

- **Distribute to the Desktop** as an Adobe AIR application. You can use all your existing code and the migration will not take long.
- **Distribute as a Mobile Application** with Adobe AIR. This has the benefit of using the same code base, but you'll probably need some UI rework to accommodate for the different screen sizes.
- **Rework to HTML5**: You can rework your application into an HTML5 application. You should be able to reuse a lot of your services and database code, which means you'll just be writing a new UI. Some technologies such as FlexJS or Haxe allow you to use your ActionScript skills in the process

I'll be more than happy to help you with any of these tasks, so give me a call.

What Next?

I had a fun ride with the Flex community and met some new lifetime friends. I'm sorry to see Flash go, but the world has moved on. This is just a last reminder that we all have to move on.

What do you think? What do you remember most about Flash or Flex?