

VR dream builders at Google work on immersive browsing

1 July 2016, by Nancy Owano



(Tech Xplore)—How to bring VR to the Web? How to bring the web to VR? Double Hmmm.

Google is working on a VR version of Chrome for Android, said Billy Steele in *Engadget*—and it is going to work on all websites not just those specially designed for VR.

Ben Lang in *Road to VR* said users may anticipate an ability to browse *any* part of the [web](#) in VR, not just those sites that are specially built for VR.

Firstpost reported that "It's now come to light that Google is working on integrating WebVR APIs into Google Chrome for [Android](#)."

"Soon, you'll be able to jump into the web. Like, literally," said Elyse Betters in *Pocket-lint*. "The latest beta and developer versions of Google's Chrome browser app for Android includes support for the open-source WebVR standard, which allows developers to create websites you can use/watch/view in [VR](#)."

So what is happening at Google to make this possible? Steele said that the latest versions of

Chrome Beta and Chrome Dev for Android both have features supporting your ability eventually to hop around the web in VR.

Chrome Beta now has a WebVR setting, said Ben Lang in *Road to VR*. This enables enhanced VR device compatibility with VR websites built against WebVR [standards](#).

(WebVR is an experimental Javascript API. It provides access to Virtual Reality devices, such as Google Cardboard in your [browser](#).)

As for Chrome Dev, Lang said it now has a 'VR Shell' setting.

France-based Francois Beaufort of Google talked about this last month. "The Chromium team is working on several features to bring the web to VR. They've recently added an experimental flag at [chrome://flags/#enable-vr-shell](#) to enable a browser shell for VR. This allows users to browse the web while using Cardboard or Daydream-ready [viewers](#)."

"The team is just getting started on making the web work well for VR so stay tuned," said Beaufort.

David Nield in *TechRadar* commented on what the WebVR capabilities mean for beta and developer [versions](#), letting you "make the most of websites designed with virtual reality in mind - websites as well as apps can then serve up some immersive content for you."

Nield added that while the feature is not yet actually functional, "it's a sign of what's coming down the pipe as the tech world goes VR crazy (or at least tries to)."

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