

Google, where are you taking Fuchsia and should Android care?

15 August 2016, by Nancy Owano



(Tech Xplore)—Projects or experiments at big technology companies go either way. Either they fail to materialize into actual products but turn up some interesting lessons learned for company developers and architects.

Those insights might even be re-used for different target applications, end of story. The other direction is that, down the road in a year or three, the project evolves into something real that the company sells.

Question of the month about Google now is which way, Fuchsia? But wait, let's figure out what is Fuchsia.

It's enough trying to spell it correctly, and you would not be alone if you actually do not know what the color looks like. You may get a definition suggesting purple sent down for pink rehab; or reddish [purple](#).

Now Google is re-inventing the word to mean something special, as the name of an operating system.

Corbin Davenport reported on what's going on in

Android Police. "There's a massive ecosystem of [operating systems](#) designed for embedded hardware, and Google may be working on their own."

Why would they call it Fuchsia? "When you begin to dig deeper into Fuchsia's documentation, [everything](#) starts to make a little more sense," said Davenport.

As with the Linux-Android relationship, the Magenta kernel powers the larger Fuchsia operating system.

Davenport offered some details about the rest of the system: "Google is using Flutter for the user interface, as well as Dart as the primary programming language. The icing on the cake is Escher, a renderer that supports light diffusion, soft shadows, and other visual effects, with OpenGL or Vulkan under the hood."

So where does [Fuchsia](#) sit on Google's OS food chain? Right now it is a project on [GitHub](#). This could go a number of ways, said Davenport.

It could turn out that Google treats Fuchsia "like Samsung treats Tizen OS; a lightweight [OS](#) used on hardware not suited for full-blown Android," Davenport wrote. Or, the writer added, Google might be treating this as an experiment and forget about it ever turning up in a commercial product.

Jon Fingas in *Engadget* said Fuchsia might make sense given that Google is branching out into small household gadgets. "It could be the platform that Google uses when it wants more flexibility and [power](#) than a platform like Brillo can offer, but doesn't need the deep feature set (and resulting overhead) of something like Android."

Many guesses are making their rounds as to what the future holds for Fuchsia. Some said it might be replacing Android or Chrome, while others see another path. Adam Westlake in *SlashGear* said,

"the most obvious difference between Fuchsia and Google's other OSes is that it's not based on the Linux kernel. Instead, it uses the new Magenta kernel, which is designed to power Internet of Things (IoT) [platforms](#)."

As long as one is making predictions, then why stop at IoT objects. Westlake took note that "Magenta is also designed to scale up all the way to things like smartphones and even desktop PCs."

Westlake said while there was no guarantee Fuchsia would be taken beyond anything but IoT devices, "there's a possibility that down the road it could be used to replace Chrome OS and Android."

Nick Mediati in *PCWorld* said Fuchsia may rekindle earlier speculation that Google is trying to unify Chrome OS and Android in some way. He said there was that the possibility "that the company wants to bring the two operating systems closer together."

How would Fuchsia bring the two together? Interestingly, Mediati saw Linux as being replaced as underpinning for [next](#)-generation versions of Chrome OS and Android. Mediati said, "both would use some form of Fuchsia—or the Magenta kernel—as the underlying basis of the two operating systems (as well as the operating system for other Google devices such as the Chromecast)."

Well, save your minutes trying to reach Google about this. Google told *Digital Trends*, according to the publication, that it had nothing to comment about at this time. And the Fuchsia OS, *Digital Trends* added, is still early in [development](#).

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