



Investing in the Custom Internet Experience

July 30, 2021

We make a bold claim to our investors: if you believe the internet will be accessed and used in increasingly different ways by the billions of people around the globe who go online every day, you should invest in Opera.

Why?

First: it is in our DNA to create the tools that allow our users to customize their own internet experience, rather than forcing them to adopt someone else's standards. We've been doing it since our inception, and many of Opera's innovations including browser tabs are now standard offerings across the browser space.

Second, our tech and approach to the market is *working*. There's a reason Opera has been downloaded from the Google Play store [over 1 billion times](#), and hundreds of millions of people actively choose Opera to manage their online lives. Our process of decades-long innovation in our core browser has delivered continuous improvement and a unique, personalized user experience.

Not only is it working, but we're seeing some very exciting results from our focus on customizable tools to access the internet. While each is designed for specific environments and to enable specific experiences, their utility has meant these tools have far broader applications than anyone expected.

Consider the business we built in [Africa](#). We noted that Africa was a key focus for Opera, because the demographics of the continent were so promising. Of the well over 1.3 billion people living on the continent, roughly 60% are aged 25 or less and broadband penetration is just [39%](#) (compared to more than 90% in North America and Western Europe). Ongoing investment in communications infrastructure and the adoption of smartphones, alongside less developed traditional business infrastructure, point to continued growth in mobile internet adoption.

The challenge, of course, is that standardized internet browsing tools, developed to serve the "average" consumer in developed markets with ubiquitous internet connectivity, cheap data and powerful compute resources (modern smartphones are now more powerful than IBM's Deep Blue supercomputer) don't map particularly well to many developing markets.

In response, Opera developed Opera Mini, a mobile browser that provided the tools that consumers needed and wanted to manage their online lives, while solving for the challenges they face. The Opera Mini browser - one of the most popular apps in the world - provides users with up to 90% data savings thanks to our unique data compression technology. And, we have entered partnerships with local telecom carriers so that our users can browse the internet for free. As a result, across Africa, the Opera brand is literally synonymous with the internet.

We continue to innovate. We created Opera News to serve our African markets, providing curated news feeds to our users (who may not otherwise have access to up-to-date news) and launched the Opera News Hub so that our users can publish their own stories relevant to their interests, friends, and larger communities. We have taken the news feed even further, launching a popular dedicated news site for football (or, soccer for those reading in the U.S.) with additional verticals and markets to come.

Most recently, we also [launched Hype](#), a messenger built specifically for the African audience, aimed at growing user engagement and time spent in Opera Mini. As a result, our penetration and engagement continue to grow in Africa, a market that holds enormous potential for Opera, and our shareholders.

But the most interesting (and arguably, most under-appreciated) consequence of our hard work is this: our focus on solving some of the most difficult use cases means we build better browsers for everyone, in any market.

Developing products that work better in low-bandwidth environments that maximize the user's available compute resources have a clear application to other markets and categories: for example, consider the Opera GX Browser which we developed to meet the needs of gamers. Our privacy controls are best in class, something an increasing number of people value when it comes to their own digital lives. The truth is that our UX and features continuously set (and, re-set) industry standards - for example, how good is your current browser at managing video calls? (Hint: [try R5](#) [LINK to download]).

We are seeing a "trickle-up" migration in these and other features that were first developed in Africa: Opera News has been launched in multiple geographies, for example, and we are investing in initiatives to support in-browser commerce functionality.

Song Lin, our co-CEO, recently observed that many people think the history of the browser has already been written, when in fact it has only just begun. Whether serving consumers in underserved but fast-growing markets, or providing consumers with a truly customizable way to access and operate online the way they want to, we believe Opera has an extraordinary opportunity ahead.