A different Opera

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If you ask any Opera fanboy, he will tell you that Opera is the most secured browser. Well frankly, it really is a good and secure browser, implementing many restrictions that other browsers simply ignore.

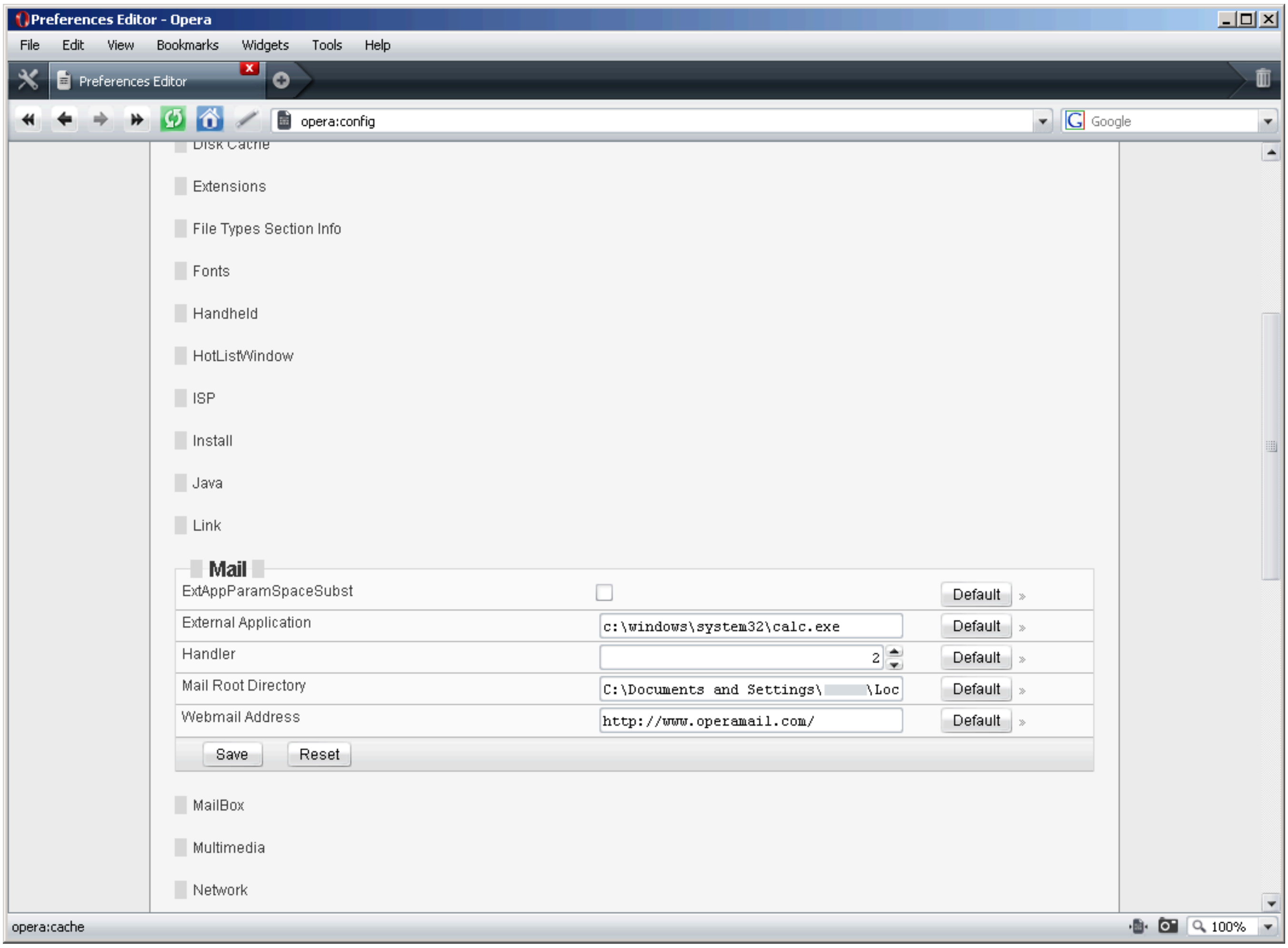
For example, while other browsers allow scripts running from local resources to access local files Opera doesn't. And by that, it is almost impossible to steal local files, or execute code by exploiting vulnerabilities local resources.

You probably noticed that I used the word almost. It is **almost** impossible, due to the fact that one, and only one local resource, does allow you to access local files and other browser settings. The local resource is opera:config.

One of the many settings this local resource can be used to change is the mail external application. The mail external application will be opened whenever you click on a "mailto:" link, or whenever your browser redirects to a "mailto:" URL. If an attacker can change this setting it means that he can automatically execute arbitrary code on the user's machine from remote.

This is of course irrelevant, unless you can actually change the settings automatically from remote, and unfortunately for Opera users, there was a way.

Today, Opera released a new version, 9.62, with a fix for a vulnerability in a different local resource - the "History Search" page (opera:historysearch). The problem was that Opera did not sanitize specific parameters correctly, and an arbitrary script could be injected to this page. An attacker could then execute a script that will create an iframe which will open the opera:config local resource. And then, it will call a script within the opera:config page, which will change the settings and execute arbitrary code on the user's machine as explained previously.



The vulnerability in the "History Search" page was found by Stefano Di Paola, during our discussion on the full-disclosure mailing about an older vulnerability in the "History Page" that was found by Roberto Suggi and was fixed by Opera in version 9.61. I've created proof-of-concept codes which demonstrate the vulnerabilities. Both can be found on milw0rm.com.

While both vulnerabilities in the "History Page" are now fixed, the core problem which makes it possible to execute code from remote, still isn't.

There is still no Same Origin Policy restriction between local resources in Opera. It is still possible for a script to access one local resource (e.g. opera:cache) from another (e.g. opera:config). In my submission to Opera I've asked them to fix this issue as well, and I really hope they will do so before other vulnerabilities will be found in more local resources.

Nevertheless, my recommendation for Opera users is still to upgrade to the latest version.
