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# Yahoo HotJobs brings automation and a business model to vertical search

BY JOHN ZAPPE

The entry by Yahoo HotJobs into the recruitment search arena has changed the dynamics of vertical search and positioned the search giant to take advantage of coming changes in the way companies look for employees.

“I think it’s a very smart move,” said Peter Weddle, an HR and recruitment consultant. “Employment sites are going to have to expand what they offer and Yahoo is doing that. I give them credit.”

Analysts and the players in vertical search say that while it is premature to write the obituary for paid listings, it wouldn’t be wrong to say that dramatic changes are in store for the commercial job boards. Vertical search has the potential for leveling the playing field by providing as much visibility for a job posted to a niche or corporate site as to Monster, CareerBuilder or HotJobs. If that happens, then recruiters who now pay \$395 for a single posting to Monster would have to wonder what they’re getting for their money.

But Monster and HotJobs and CareerBuilder have spent and continue to spend millions advertising their sites. It’s money that the vertical search startups Indeed.com, SimplyHired.com and WorkZoo.com can’t come close to matching. Until Yahoo entered the field, the three recruitment vertical-search sites got all the attention, but, despite their rapid growth, none had enough reach to pose any immediate threat.

That changed July 4th weekend when HotJobs quietly launched its own vertical search. (*See CI Alert, July 5.*) As part of Yahoo, HotJobs has more potential reach than all the sites combined; the Yahoo network is the most trafficked in the world.

“This is the beginning of the end for Monster and

**‘This is the beginning of the end for Monster and CareerBuilder. ... This is really Monster’s worst fear.’**

— William Warren,  
former president of Monster.com

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## HotJobs

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CareerBuilder,” said William Warren, executive director of DirectEmployers Association and a former president of Monster.com. “This is really Monster’s worst fear.”

Just before the long weekend, and without any announcement, Yahoo began indexing the job openings from dozens of corporate job sites, niche boards and small commercial job boards. Noticeably missing, however, were job listings from Monster and CareerBuilder.

Job-seekers who search HotJobs will now find the paid HotJobs listings presented first, followed by relevant listings from other sites. Though the number of sites being indexed is still small compared to the thousands of job boards just in the U.S., the number is growing daily. Yahoo’s launch puts it in direct com-

petition with Indeed.com, SimplyHired.com and WorkZoo.com. Unlike HotJobs, these sites don’t sell postings and they aggregate more sites, including Monster and CareerBuilder.

What makes Yahoo HotJobs such a formidable competitor – besides the brand name and the traffic it brings – is a base of recruitment advertisers and a computer code that ferrets out where the jobs are on corporate sites and can distinguish a job title from a company name.

It’s that technical innovation that makes the HotJobs search more powerful than its competitors and gives it a tremendous edge.

Dan Finnigan, general manager of HotJobs, said indexing listings from other job boards is relatively simple. “The much more challenging technology for us is crawling all the company Web sites,” he said. “That really is where we think in the long run the opportunity lies anyway.”

Here’s the issue: Job boards generally present the listings in a relatively standard format. This so-called structured data typically will present the job title, company, location of job, date of posting and so on in a reliable form that is discernible by a machine. Corporate Web sites often don’t follow a standard. For example, there’s no real need for them to name the company since the listing is on their own site. If the company has only one job site, a location may not be included. Or, worse, if a company has multiple job sites, but the location to send an application is different, how is a machine to tell which is the right job site?

The three other vertical sites generally have to manually tweak their job scraping code for each site. Imagine doing that just for the Fortune 500 sites and you have a sense of the magnitude of the problem.

Yahoo has found a way to tame it, explained Finnigan. HotJobs is leveraging the search index that Yahoo has built up over the years. At some point, the company’s search spiders (bits of code that exam and index pages on the World Wide Web) have discovered and indexed nearly every corporate site and job board that exists.

“Second, we’ve built a crawler that is getting smarter over time,” said Finnigan. “When it finds Web sites that it thinks have jobs, it figures out how to dive into them and pull the job content out.”

When the crawler makes mistakes, a quality control process corrects them and adds some additional programming to the crawler. So when it sees a similar format in the future, it can deal with it automatically.

“We’re still in a steep learning curve,” Finnigan admitted, adding that the technology is new and that Yahoo has a patent pending on the process. It was developed by engineering teams in California, New

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America.

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## HotJobs

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York and India. He declined to describe the quality control process, but it is a safe bet that humans are involved in the process at some stage.

Its heuristic quality means that as time goes by, the crawler will encounter fewer and fewer unique situations until, at some point, it will have mastered almost any situation it encounters.

As slick as the technology, HotJobs has also figured out a business model, up to now the Achilles heel of recruitment vertical search.

Having the ability to index thousands of accounting jobs, say, in New York City presents a problem as well as an opportunity. As any Google user – and every marketer – knows, search results beyond the first page or two are worthless. So until job descriptions become more descriptive allowing for more pinpointed searching, how will employers get job-seekers to see their listing?

HotJobs' answer is premium position. Search for those New York accounting jobs and the first ones to turn up are the paid HotJobs ads. The vertical startups present results by relevancy. HotJobs presents its own relevant ads first.

That's only part of the revenue picture. Finnigan suggested that recruiters will look to other means to reach both the active and passive job-seekers.

"The combination of algorithmic-crawled content surrounded by paid listing content is not new," he offered, a reference to Yahoo's and Google's contextual ad placement programs. "Serving up job opportunities to the right person at the right time when they are not on a job board but instead e-mail, maybe sports content, news content, or in a more community-oriented place will be an opportunity to drive good candidates."

Finnigan noted that it is foreseeable that job ads could be served up just the way those contextual product ads are now. Indeed, many observers and industry analysts believe Google is working on just such a product as part of its entry into the classifieds market.

However, Yahoo HotJobs already has a suite of recruitment products in place, including e-mail delivery and applicant tracking systems for small and medium sized businesses. Finnigan suggested that all these tools will come into play as the struggle to find top quality job candidates intensifies.

Those comments ought to cause some anxious moments among the vertical search sites, which have been insisting that to build value and make money, more than just a robust search is necessary.

Dave McClure, marketing director for SimplyHired.com, said "job listings are only a part of

## Jobster to buy WorkZoo.com

WorkZoo.com, one of the Web's earliest vertical search sites, is being acquired by Seattle-based Jobster.

Mark Maunder, who co-founded the vertical search site with his wife, Kerry Boyte, said talks in recent weeks between the two companies lead to today's formal announcement. The price was not disclosed.

"We are excited about the sale," said Maunder, adding that he was impressed with the caliber and inventiveness of the Jobster team.

Jobster is a relative newcomer to the recruitment field. The company combines elements of a social network with targeted job announcements to create a viral distribution network to reach high quality passive candidates.

Jobster's plan for WorkZoo is to integrate it into the company brand later in the year and incorporate the new Google Maps into the technology.

what we do. You need to have a community. You need to offer the kind of services that people looking for a job want. We're doing that and that's a big differentiator."

He also doubted the wisdom of HotJobs mixing in their paying customers with free ads scrapped from secondary sources. "They're straddling both sides here. It'll be interesting to see what their customers say."

Paul Forster, CEO of Indeed.com, seconded those comments. "I'm not too concerned about Yahoo. ... The user experience is very different." Indeed.com is moving toward a pay-per-click model with job ads presented in a manner similar to Google ads. It will be a while before that program launches, but Forster said it present a sales model that doesn't mix organic and paid results the way HotJobs does now.

Warren, who is credited with building the first online recruitment site, said despite the bravura of the recruitment verticals, "They are to have trouble competing with Yahoo. Yahoo as a portal offers everything for the job-seeker and an audience of others who might be interested in a job."

Weddle put it this way: "If the job boards don't become career portals, they will be dinosaurs by next year."

Yahoo HotJobs, whose DNA, Finnigan said, is to provide comprehensive search results, may just escape that distinction.



## RECRUITMENT

# Loose ends wrap up SHRM coverage

BY JOHN ZAPPE

We should have mentioned a few more developments from the big SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management) conference of a few weeks ago. Frankly, we flat ran out of room. (See *CIR 6.12, June 29.*) Mostly these are for-the-record items, but then CI tries hard to be the record for the classifieds industry.

So we want to make sure you know that the dot-jobs domain is now open for business and accepting applications. You won't be able to actually launch the site publicly, but you can begin the registration process now and get ready to light up your .jobs site in September.

The rules are more complicated than for a typical .com, .net, or .org site. For openers, the only thing a company can post to a .jobs site is its own job openings. HR news can also be posted there. Staffing agencies will be allowed to post their jobs and it looks like recruiters may be able to post also, although that one's subject to some extra screening. A second restriction is that the company must adhere to ethical conduct, which means the job site has to have real paying .jobs and not be a scam site set up to harvest personal information from the unwary.

The fee is \$150 and right now, the process is sort of a pre-registration system, open to all companies, but really a process for companies with popular or branded names to get their paperwork in. Screening will be rigorous to prevent cyber squatting, promises Employ Media, the administrator of the program, which was developed in conjunction with SHRM. Go to [www.EmployMedia.com](http://www.EmployMedia.com) to get more details and for a list of registrars. You don't actually apply through the company.

\* \* \* \*

There weren't many recruitment product announcements made at the show, but one we wanted to mention was Monster's new HR Alliance Program. In this program, Monster works with other companies that offer HR recruitment software to help them integrate their products with Monster's backend. Monster identified three initial vendor areas: Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS), Job Distribution, and Candidate Assessment Providers.

What's this mean? It's a marketing advantage for Monster, because it will enable the software vendor's programs to reach into Monster's system and exchange information conveniently. Though a recruiter with a Monster account can now post jobs,

collect resumes and receive applications, there's a manual component to most of the work. By partnering with Monster and getting access to some of its programming, more automation and flexibility are possible. That makes the vendor's product more attractive and helps cement Monster's relationship with the employer.

The deal announced at SHRM between Monster and WebHire is an example of the benefits of the alliance program. WebHire is an applicant-tracking system vendor that includes proprietary candidate screening. When a recruiter using WebHire adds their own candidate criteria, the program can search Monster's resume database and extract those candidates the program finds to be the best match.

Another feature, called Shared Apply, simplifies applicant data collection for WebHire customers. Here's what Monster had to say about it: "When a seeker applies for a job on Monster posted by a joint customer using WebHire Recruiter or WebHire Healthcare, the application automatically pre-populates information from their Monster profile, saving time for potential candidates and increasing the number of qualified applicants for employers."

Though all the larger job boards work with recruitment vendors, the Monster alliance program goes a step further and appears to involve some actual exchange of proprietary programming code.

\* \* \* \*

Finally, we want to fess up to what we now know to be a far too low estimate for the CareerBuilder shindig. You might remember that we sang the praises of this party for more than 2,000 of CareerBuilder's closest friends. Our back of the envelope estimate of the party's cost was \$250,000.

From what we have been told the cost of the band – Hootie and the Blowfish – was alone \$175,000. Our source, an editor with a prominent HR magazine, informs us that CareerBuilder spent in the million-dollar range for the party, the booth, the CareerBuilder monkeys (seen the TV ads?) with whom you could have your picture taken, and the reported 100 or so CareerBuilder employees in attendance.

Determined to get to the bottom, we asked CareerBuilder about the cost of the party. After trying twice, here's what we got: "As a policy, CareerBuilder.com does not release specifics on marketing spend."



## Trend: Online up, print down

If you have been watching the CIR Recruitment Forecast over the past six months you may have wondered why the Monster Index was rising while the Help Wanted Index just sat there or even declined.

From its high in February of 41, it is down four points and the May 2005 level is two points below May 2004. And this in a rising labor market. In June 2003, with the unemployment rate almost 30 percent higher than it is now, the ad index was at 38.

Time to consider the Conference Board's Help Wanted Index a gauge of the health of print advertising. It was started as a way to measure near-term employment growth, but with job postings fleeing to the Internet it now really just measures print job postings.

The Monster Index, meanwhile, measures the growth of job postings online; and not just on Monster.com, but on hundreds and hundreds of job boards nationally.

| CLASSIFIED INTELLIGENCE RECRUITMENT INDEX |      |         |         |         |
|---|------|---------|---------|---------|
|   | July | June    | May     | April   |
| <b>CIR RECRUITMENT FORECAST</b>           |      | ◀       | ▼       | ▲       |
| Monster Employment Index <sup>1</sup>     |      | 136     | 134     | 131     |
| Help Wanted Index <sup>2</sup>            |      |         | 37      | 39      |
| Non-Farm Employment <sup>3</sup>          |      | 133.537 | 133.391 | 133.269 |
| Unemployment Rate <sup>4</sup>            |      | 5.0%    | 5.1%    | 5.2%    |
| Consumer Confidence <sup>5</sup>          |      | 105.8   | 102.2   | 97.5    |

NOTES: 1) Monster's proprietary employment activity index derived from the number of jobs online at some 1,500 job sites. Monster re-scaled its index in October. 2) Compiled by the Conference Board from a survey of the employment ads in newspapers in 51 US markets. 3) Released monthly by the US Department of Labor it is the number watched by the economic markets. Numbers in millions. 4) Released at the same time as the employment numbers also by the Department of Labor. 5) Compiled by the Conference Board from a survey of consumer households. Previous month's number may have been adjusted.

So, with unemployment down, job creation continuing, both indexes should show increases, if all things were equal. But they're not. Print is losing ground to postings and the Help Wanted Index now looks like a good measure of that trend.

Guidance for our print clients: It may time to look toward selling online and upselling into print. Aggressive distribution deals can increase the value of your online listings, especially if look toward niche sites and target the ads.

## Making sense of Sensis' LinkMe recruitment venture

BY ROSS HODDINOTT

In our last issue, we barely had time to shoehorn Australian YP publisher Sensis' announcement of its move into online recruitment with LinkMe. (See CIR 6.12, June 29.) Since then we've had a little time to see how the market reacted and to consider the implications.

In precis, Sensis has formed a 50-50 joint venture with Morgan + Banks Investments to develop a job site where candidates can lodge resumes and employers can search them and download details at A\$50 per file. There will be no job ads per se.

The media and analyst presentation was held at very short notice and occurred only two days before the arrival in Australia of Sol Trujillo, the new CEO of Australia's major telco, Telstra, which owns Sensis. We can only presume that at least one of the parties saw some urgency to the matter. Things weren't helped when Sensis CEO Bruce Akhurst, who was due to lead the Sydney part of the announcement, was fogged in at Melbourne Airport. He returned to Sensis HQ to take part in the telephone hookup. (No videoconferencing from Australia's biggest telco!)

The reaction from both media and markets was underwhelming. Reporters and analysts were not excited by the move and the announcement failed to shift share prices of either Telstra or job site competitor Seek. Given both the overall concept and the

vagueness of the numbers behind it, that should not have been unexpected.

LinkMe claims that the total Australian recruitment market is worth "more than" A\$2 billion (\$1.5 billion US). Perhaps true, but even taking into account job ads placed by government and public institutions, the advertising component is only about one-fourth of that. Much of the rest is taken up by recruitment consultants for their services. LinkMe partner, Geoff Morgan, says that the site will not be competitive with these recruiters and, indeed will assist them. That's a bit hard to see, as the product will be marketed to all employers as a cost-saving tool for recruitment. Likewise, if successful, LinkMe must affect both newspaper and competitor Web site revenues and market share levels. Yet Morgan holds by his "in a rising tide all boats go higher" maxim.

This is not the first time that Morgan + Banks have had to try to forestall reaction from the recruitment community. When TMP first launched Monster in Australia, and then bought Morgan + Banks, it was a very hard sale convincing the other consultants there was no conflict of interest. Interestingly, at the presentation, Morgan said that he and partner Andrew Banks (who previously headed up TMP HR services worldwide) would retain their interest in HR consultancy, Talent2.

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## Recruitment

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Perhaps Sensis knew that they had to go into this area (they already have auctions, real estate, autos and a search engine) and there were few areas to look. Certainly, in their two new partners they have access to most likely the best-known names in the business. Beyond that, we have yet to see how LinkMe will fare. Because there are no published ads, it is not possible to get a feel for volumes. With a forecast that the site will fill some 140,000 jobs within the next two years, there is a lot of territory to be covered.

Finally, Morgan+ Banks is most likely the best-known name in the recruitment business. While TMP bought the recruitment business, it failed to bring all similar names under its wing. Maybe that doesn't matter any more, as Monster has come to these shores and departed.

### Aussie job ads slow in June

Both newspaper and Internet jobs ads decreased in June according to the Australia-New Zealand Bank Job Index.

Newspaper ad volumes fell 1.9 percent in June, resulting in the lowest level since May 2003. After a healthy rise in May, Internet volumes were down 2.5 percent. The bank sees the decline caused by a slowing market economy, with job growth expected to ease to 2 percent.

### Who: Research center With: Monster.com

The nonprofit National Center for Construction Education and Research is partnering with Monster.com to create a co-branded job site for the construction industry.

Affiliated with the University of

Florida, the Center is an education and construction training foundation. The site will be available from both the NCCER site and from Monster.com.

### Who: JobCentral.com What: More metro areas

JobCentral.com, the job board run by a consortium of employers organized as the DirectEmployers Association, has added six more metropolitan areas to its national network.

The sites are Austin, Texas, Cincinnati, Ohio, Denver, Detroit, Nashville, Tenn., and San Diego. With the new cities, JobCentral's network now has 215 metropolitan areas, and a total of 6,237 cities throughout all 50 states.

### Who: MonsterIndia What: Expanding beyond IT

Dhruvakanth B. Shenoy, VP for marketing, Monster Asia, told an Indian computer technology Web site that Monster's goal for MonsterIndia.com is to expand its job postings beyond the IT sector, which accounts for 42 percent of its listings.

Manufacturing accounts for 18 percent and banking and finance account for 13 percent of the listings. Shenoy, according to ExpressComputerOnline.com, said MonsterIndia has 7 million visitors a month who submit 140,000 job applications every day. Some 200,000 resumes are posted monthly.

### Who: Landed.fm What: Internet radio job site

A 6-month-old career site is attracting notice for its innovative blending of recruitment, the Internet and broadcast ideas.

Peter Clayton, a corporate communications veteran with a background in radio, launched Landed.fm with seed money from

accounting firm Deloitte and Touche.

The program features interviews with such recruitment heavy-hitters as Jeff Taylor, chief monster of Monster.com, Jason Goldberg, founder of Jobster.com, and others. Audio interviews are archived and available on demand. They can also be downloaded to an iPod or other device for listening later.

### Who: JobPilot.de Now: Monster Deutschland

At least in name if not as a company, Germany's biggest job board JobPilot.de has finally ceased to exist. On July 4, JobPilot and Monster Deutschland merged under the name Monster Worldwide Deutschland GmbH.

Davide Villa, CEO Monster Worldwide Central Europe and former CEO of JobPilot GmbH, will serve as CEO of the new company. JobPilot had been acquired by Monster in April 2004 from Adecco S.A.. The two German Web sites still coexist although the migration of the JobPilot brand to the Monster brand is on its way.

### Who: Recruitment alliance What: broadens base

JobScout24.de, German representative of the European Recruitment Alliance that was built by major European job boards earlier this year, has announced a major enlargement of the network. In addition to the existing partners JobSite (U.K.), Cadremploi (France), InfoEmploio (Spain), CareerBuilder (U.S.), TrovoJobs (Italy) and RecruitIreland.com (Ireland), four Eastern European job boards will join: Jobs.cz from Czech Republic, Pracui.pl from Poland, Profession.hu from Hungary and Profesia.sk from Slovakia.

Last October the four Eastern European boards launched the Onrea.net alliance.



## NEW INDUSTRY

# Classified Ventures pay-per-lead

## ■ No immediate plans to integrate HomeGain, HomeScape sales or technology

Although Classified Ventures acquired real estate Web portal HomeGain Inc. – see *CI Alert, July 1* – don't look for HomeGain to be integrated into HomeScape, Classified Ventures' ASP private-label real estate Web technology and data management service. At least, not anytime soon.

Deal terms weren't disclosed. Both Chicago-based Classified Ventures and Emeryville, Calif.-based HomeGain are privately held. HomeGain provides marketing-based pay-per-click Realtor referrals and has raised \$53 million in venture capital financing. HomeScape serves 150 newspapers across North America.

This was the first of two Classified Ventures acquisitions of a pay-per-click lead-generation technology in the course of a busy week, coming only a few days prior to a deal that pairs search engine marketing technology NewCars.com with CV's Cars.com (See accompanying article.)

When we asked Mitch Golub, Cars.com's CEO, if we should read anything into the timing of the two acquisitions, he said it was just coincidence. But Brad Inman, founder and chairman of HomeGain, told CI that for newspaper-centric media companies like Classified Ventures, there's no time left to hesitate. (Inman is also the founder of real-estate centric Inman News Service.)

Classified Ventures is a joint venture by six leading media companies: Belo, Gannett, Knight Ridder, The McClatchy Company, Tribune Company and The Washington Post Company. In addition to its HomeScape ASP offering, the company operates two main consumer brands – Cars.com and Apartments.com.

Given Classified Ventures' roots and its continuing emphasis on print, Inman told us that the acquisition of HomeGain “shows they understand that the economic foundation of the newspapers is at stake here and that they must make major investments to protect that. The acquisition of HomeGain is a great example that in the end will be good for journalism.”

Sam Sebastian, HomeScape's GM, agreed with Inman's assessment.

Stories by  
**BRIAN BLUM**

## ■ NewCars.com adds strong lead-gen ability for Cars.com dealers

Classified Ventures' acquisition of NewCars.com shares a similarity to CV's purchase of HomeGain, just days prior: Both are Internet pure-plays purchased by a media company with strong roots in print. And both of the acquired companies focus primarily on search engine-initiated lead generation, which Classified Ventures sorely needed to complement its listings-centric technology and business model.

Advertisers currently are able to place listings on CV's Cars.com, which then appear both online at some 170 newspaper and TV Web sites, and in co-branded print magazines distributed by the partner newspapers. Adding NewCars.com's online lead-generation functionality allows Cars.com to offer a “more complete online marketplace and product suite,” Cars.com CEO Mitch Golub told us.

Given that Classified Ventures' two acquisitions were announced so close together, we wondered whether the timing was part of a grander strategy or simply serendipitous? Golub told us not to read too much into it.

“It was opportunity, that's all,” he said, pointing out that Classified Ventures last acquisition was nearly five years ago with the purchase of MarketDrive. “We decided in 2003 to make one of our key goals a win in the new car business. That meant we had to enter the pay-per-lead business.” And NewCars.com, Golub said, was the best of the bunch.

In addition to picking up a not-too-shabby URL, NewCars.com had two assets that Classified Ventures wanted, Golub explained: a lead-tracking platform and a proprietary search engine marketing technology owned by a NewCars.com subsidiary called CPC Logic.

Put together, the two systems automate the analysis of keywords, on-the-fly best pricing and the placing of pay-per-click ads on Google, Yahoo and the other major Web search engines. Potential car buyers are driven to the NewCars.com site which generates trackable leads that are, Golub said, “fresher, less passed around, and as a result, more valuable.”

We did a quick search on Yahoo for Toyota

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## HomeGain

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“Over the past few years, we have seen the online lead-generation side of the market grow very successfully and profitably,” Sebastian explained. “We get questions from local advertisers all the time asking if we have those types of products. HomeGain has a great team and great brokers. It was a complementary and natural fit.”

Sebastian will report to HomeGain CEO Richard Sommer, who will head up all of Classified Ventures real estate efforts as president and general manager. While HomeScape and HomeGain will now be part of the same real estate unit, Sebastian cautioned us not to expect the two services to be integrated at any point soon.

“The main headline is that we felt we needed to offer more choice for advertisers,” Sebastian said. “Whether an advertiser wants to buy a listing enhancement or wants to buy leads or traffic, we’ll be able to do that.”

Sebastian said that he expects HomeScape and HomeGain to continue to operate as separate brands and divisions with separate sales forces. HomeScape primarily has local sales reps talking to local advertisers, while HomeGain has a national telemarketing and e-mail staff.

The two sides will be educated about the complete new Classified Ventures product offering, so “if a local broker says he’s interested in HomeGain, we’ll send him there, of course,” Sebastian said. “But we’re not pushing. We’re not integrating sales channels.”

HomeGain provides direct links to various MLSs across North America and, as a licensed broker in the state of California, is able to accept referral fees in all 50 states. With about 25,000 participating real estate agents, the Web site tracks some 3 million visitors a month. The company says it became profitable in 2003 and that revenue grew 50 percent that year.

Homescape, on the other hand, relies on its newspaper partnerships to power its estimated 1 million listings. The deal is expected to give a boost to Classified Ventures’ reach, while providing additional resources to help HomeGain continue its aggressive growth.

So why HomeGain in particular, we asked Sebastian. “Other than HouseValues, there are not many bigger players out there focusing on online lead-generation in real estate,” he said. “HomeGain has been doing this for six years now. One of the advantages of pure-play Internet products is they really know the space.”



## NewCars.com

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Corolla and a NewCars.com pay-per-click link came up at the top of the sponsored results box.

The quality of the leads is critical, Golub said. “Too many leads get passed around between three and four different competitors because there wasn’t a dealer or manufacturer in the buyer’s area to initially sell the lead to. Leads from consumers who have been in the space a long time are a lot less valuable.”

While leads generated by NewCars.com may get “passed around” ultimately as well, Cars.com and its partners will get first crack at what Golub calls true “automotive intenders” fresh from the search engines.

Cars.com already generates leads for new vehicles; however, so far it’s been all mixed together with its used car leads. The acquisition gives Cars.com its own system for new cars leads in an increasingly important market space.

“The new car pay-per-lead market is currently \$300 million a year,” Golub claimed, and according to Cars.com’s analysis, is set to grow to \$600 million in the next three years.

NewCars.com has been in business since 1995 but mostly under the radar, collecting leads and performing search engine marketing services for wholesalers and manufacturers including Chrysler, Ford, GM, VW, Volvo, Jeep and several others. “They’ve been working quietly with companies that don’t generally broadcast who their vendors are,” Golub pointed out.

NewCars.com generates 2 million leads a year today, Golub said. (Cars.com generates 1 million new car leads on its own and even more for used cars, its bread-and-butter business.) NewCars.com has only been selling leads direct to dealers for the last nine months, however and a modest 200 local dealers receive NewCars.com leads today.

Golub says Cars.com will be testing the NewCars.com technology in the coming months and may eventually roll it into Cars.com proper. Certainly with Cars.com and Classified Ventures behind it, NewCars.com will be able to expand its dealer network, Golub said.

NewCars.com will operate as a division of Classified Ventures and will maintain its headquarters in Santa Monica and offices in Birmingham MI. The company currently has 22 employees. NewCars.com president Martin Schmitt will report now to Golub.



# WAN report: New storm warnings for papers

BY KATJA RIEFLER

It's always dangerous for an analyst to stick his or her neck out and recommend anyone else's report, but this is just what I'm going to do here: If you are in the newspaper business, read the just-released *Classified Models Revisited Strategy Report No. 4.3*, of the Shaping the Future of the Newspaper project of the World Association of Newspapers.

It's the second time that Jim Chisholm, strategy adviser to the WAN, and his team focus their attention on classifieds. The result of this year's research goes far beyond stating that the migration of classified advertising is inevitable, as we all knew anyway. What's new is a forecast on how quickly that inevitability is likely to come to pass, and a heightened sense of urgency for newspapers.

"If publishers do not move fast to transform their business models, they will lose a lot – if not most – of their classified revenues over time. In some markets, this could be as quickly as in the next five years. In others, it could take up to 15 years."

SFN warns publishers of a false perception of reality. For example, seeing online advertising as just another potential source of revenue could distract the attention from the devastating influence that the pricing of digital-only competitors might have on print advertising.

In Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands, the report states, print advertising rates have already been slashed by up to half, as newspapers found themselves priced out of the market. Even being the market-leader online will not save the newspapers from the need to restructure their whole business model: "None of the newspapers in the survey has managed to replace lost print revenues from online sales. With online prices at about 5 percent of 10 percent of print prices, volume online would need to grow, depending on a newspapers exact prices, between 10- and 20-fold for digitalization to be revenue neutral."

How winning strategies might look is examined in the four parts of the report. The first one looks at a survey of 78 executives at press groups representing more than 200 newspapers and classified magazines in 45 countries, with a combined circulation of 73 million copies and print classified revenues of \$2 billion. Around half of the executives interviewed also participated in last year's survey, so trends could be followed on a case-by-case basis. The researchers concentrated on changes in market share rather than

revenue in order to neutralize the effects of the economic cycle. The sobering results: Newspapers overall have lost 13 percent of their classified market share since the "pre-Internet era" and 4 percent of their market share between 2003 and 2004. The trend is continuing and accelerating, but the effect in various regions of the world very differently.

Chapter 2 takes a close look at the U.S. market;

Chapter 3 is dedicated to the Netherlands. Both chapters focus on successful initiatives of newspapers and contain a bunch of good ideas which can assist other publishers in adjusting their online classified services to the needs of their markets.

However, the most startling part of the report is Chapter 4, which deals with strategy. Chisholm encourages publishers to take a fresh look at long-term shifts in the market that are going to seriously influence the newspaper's business in the years to come. For certain, "disintermediation" is one of the most important trends changing the way we conduct business in general and the way that personal transactions are undertaken: "In the disintermediated world, buyers and sellers bypass the middlemen, namely the medium which makes the introduction or the trader who makes the sale. In so doing, they save time and money on the transaction." It's only logical that buyers and sellers are going to take this route, if they find an efficient and safe way to do so.

With this trend obviously on its way, newspapers not only have to wonder how they can stay relevant to the current and prospective advertising customers, they'll have to rethink their whole business model: "It is not the challenge of performing in the classified arena that it the issue, but how we continue to fund the rest of our activities through our classified revenues as we have done in the past."

Chisholm suggests that publishers try to get a share out of transaction revenues rather than advertising: "Instead of thinking of advertising as a unit cost for each line of inventory, we have to justify our value in terms of our contribution to the transaction process, and therefore find a means of attracting as much of the costs of the transaction as possible." This could mean that newspapers stop charging for advertising of inventory and start participating in sales results. It also could mean that newspapers diversify into activities offered by traders. In effect, the newspaper becomes the estate agent or travel agent.

The report discusses a wide range of strategies, implementation and tactics. As an absolute essential point of implementation do the authors see measure-

**'You can win. But you will have to play by someone else's rules.'**

- Jim Chisholm,  
WAN adviser

# Print2Web's integrated ad search making inroads

BY DEANNA SHEFFIELD

Plain text ads just don't cut it anymore when it comes to transitioning from print to online. That's why Print2Web ([www.Print2Webcorp.com](http://www.Print2Webcorp.com)) introduced a service that converts retail ads and display classified ads into sophisticated, reader-friendly products.

Print2Web provides functionality that the company hopes can translate into big online dollars for newspapers that have found themselves struggling to compete against formidable competition such as EBay, Craigslist and a growing number of free classifieds sites.

And with its most recent product debut – integrated search functionality, which brings together a gamut of online revenue services – the company hopes to further solidify itself as a force in the field.

"We probably run a company differently than our competitors. We raised a small amount of money from friends and felt an obligation to investors to keep the company on tight financial reins. We don't like to spend money unless we have it," said Print2Web President and CEO Al Corey. "There has been some pretty intense competition over the last year and a half. But we think we've built a very nice niche and will continue to pick up business and grow the company."

Last year the company brought in between \$1.5 million and \$2.5 million in revenue, Corey said. Additionally, the company has consistently posted 20 percent monthly gains.

The integrated search, also called MAX, appears as a single simple search box on a newspaper's home Web site. Then if users searched with the keyword "lawnmower," they would pull up classifieds for lawnmowers for sale, garage sale listings where lawnmowers are being sold, display ads for lawnmowers and even news and feature stories related to lawn care. The searches also pull ads from special homes and auto sections.

MAX also features e-mail alerts, shopping lists, links to maps and directions.

"Initially newspapers had different sales units so they created different classifications. But most readers don't know or care whether ads come from retail or classified," said Pam Baird, southeastern sales director for Print2Web. "There's more cross-selling going on between departments now. In the beginning some newspapers had online departments. Those lines are hazy now. Most are bundling now and selling online with print."

In addition to dealing with the transition to online, increasingly newspapers have had to contend with new online competitors chipping away at their revenue.

"Some large search companies are taking aim at local advertisers, which can erode newspapers' print revenue," Baird said. "Everyone is trying to best figure out how to sell online. It has to begin with a search that makes sense."

In addition to turning into a revenue booster for the company's clients, Corey is optimistic the new product, which Print2Web claims to be the first of its kind, will translate into big business for Print2Web.

"I think this will be a real growth item for us over the next year or so," Corey said, noting that the company has other developments in the pipeline, including

one or two that could be rolled out later this year.

Corey declined to discuss the products to avoid giving competitors a heads up. However, Print2Web also is looking to partner with companies that offer compatible services. Currently, Print2Web as an association with Adicio, formerly CareerCast, which produced private-label recruitment tools for major media and niche companies. The companies do not have a financial relationship, but mutually suggest the others' service, Corey said.

Corey and a small group of personal investors founded the privately held company six years ago. While the company has been up and running for some time, predominantly focused on retail and display ads, classified components were not introduced until last year. Now Print2Web boasts more than 150 newspaper clients, including small circulation weeklies, niche magazines, journals and large publications such as the *New York Post*, the *Orange County Register* and *Newsday*.

*Newsday* began using Print2Web for a large share of its advertising in 2001, though they don't use the company exclusively. The company mainly uses Print2Web for display and classified ads as well as special sections.

"Overall we've had a good relationship. We've absolutely seen revenue growth through upsells," said Katie Sala, advertising services manager for *Newsday.com*.

"We originally thought (Print2Web) was more for classifieds, but we've used it for ROP (retail) as well. We also use it for our Broadway program with display ads and advertisers are definitely getting hits," she said.



# 'Google and Weblogs are poisoning our business model'

BY KATJA RIEFLER

BERLIN – You'd think Craig Newmark from Craigslist had visited here. At least you could have this impression, for his photograph was projected prominently onto the opening screen at Zeitung Online 2005, the yearly conference of the German Newspaper Publishers Association BDZV and Ifra held in late June.

Dr. Richard Rebmann, VP of BDZV and publisher of the regional daily Schwarzwälder Bote, used Craig's image in his introduction speech to illustrate the challenges being faced by newspaper classifieds. In Germany Craigslist isn't that strong yet, but by eBay and other online only competitors are entering the market.

"Newspapers are not going to lose this market without fighting," Rebmann told the 180 newspaper executives that had come to attend the two-day meeting, "There are already companies around that are prepared to take that challenge. As an industry we are well prepared: we have good brands, good products and a good reach in the market."

\* \* \* \*

Dr. Horst Pirker, CEO of Styria Medien AG in Austria, also president of the Austrian Newspaper Publishers Association VÖZV and keynote speaker in Berlin, added more food for thought: "I think that Craigslist is being partly overrated" he said, "because everything is even to become worse." He quoted Amazon, eBay and Google as the companies that newspapers should watch most closely. Their existing and planned expansion into many different business fields constitutes a major threat to the newspaper industry. "The Internet combines all the strengths of older media and adds some more. It's almost a perfect marketplace," he said. He strongly urged his peers to take convergence serious and to rethink their business models: "The future doesn't need us."

\* \* \* \*

One of the companies that already announced that it is going to fight for its piece of market share is ISA GmbH & Co. KG. (See CIR 6.11, June 8.) Klaus Abele, former Holtzbrinck manager who was just promoted to COO of the joint venture between publishing houses Georg von Holtzbrinck, Dr. Ippen and WAZ, showed a prototype of new portal that will be available online in a beta version on Aug. 1. Official launch of Markt.de ("marketplace") is scheduled for the second half of September. It will start as a national portal covering all regions of Germany from the

beginning, although the ISA member newspapers only appear in certain parts of Germany. However, the member newspapers and cooperation partners (among them the ISA classified portals Immowelt.de (real estate), Stellenanzeigen.de (jobs) and autoanzeigen.de (cars)) reach 15 million readers/users a day – quite a base you can start from.

"Our benchmark is to beat Kijiji, Opusforum and Craigslist in Germany within one year," said Abele. "The first year will show us the proof of concept. We'll start for looking for revenue streams in year 2." Markt.de shall carry a lot of classified advertising from day one. The ads will be provided by the cooperating newspapers (general merchandise) and the existing vertical classified ISA portals. In addition other sources will be integrated, for example all the job ads from Arbeitsagentur.de – the database of the state-owned Bundesagentur für Arbeit that allows everyone to integrate its ads in order to provide the best possible service to job seekers and employers.

"We want to provide the biggest online classified platform in Germany from the start," said Abele. However, in the long run, markt.de is intended to a life of its own: "It will be a pure online platform. There is no way back to print".

\* \* \* \*

A little bit less spectacular was the presentation of Hans-Jürgen Theinert, Director Internet at Verlagsgesellschaft Madsack GmbH & Co. KG in Hannover, publisher of several regional dailies. He showed the results of a promotion of his papers designed to win back the automotive classified market in print and online that to a big extent already had migrated to competing media (the Madsack papers had lost 53 percent of its private car advertising since 1999). The papers cut the cost for a private three-line car ad in the paper €15.9 (\$19.2 US) to €6.9 (\$8.3 US) if booked online through their self-booking service and added an online component. Users can enhance their ads with photos and more information to be published online at no extra cost.

The campaign started in October 2004. Meanwhile the self-booking quota across all classified markets (the offer had been expanded to include more categories) has reached 25 to 30 percent. Until October 2004 it has been 15 percent. Between May 2004 and May 2005 the numbers of private car ads raised 165 percent, the general merchandise category grew by 279 percent. Revenue numbers were not given.



**Who: Metro Mojo**  
**What: second year bash**

Eclectic free classifieds site Metro Mojo spent last Saturday celebrating its second-year anniversary with music, camping and even a hot dog eating contest in its home city of Louisville, Ky.

Mojo's second birthday bash included Tug-O-War, a balloon toss, prizes and live music from Rednails, Dead City Rejects and 9voltRevolt. The site's users (who had to be at least 18 years old) also were invited to camp over at the Louisville party.

**Who: comScore Networks**  
**What: U.S. search data**

U.S. search data recently released for the month of May by comScore Networks, a third-party Internet measurement service, revealed that Google continues to boast higher monetization rates than its key search competitors. Google generated 1.9 billion searches on its Web sites in May, 37.5 percent of total U.S. queries. This share is up from 36.5 percent in April and 36.8 percent in May 2004. Yahoo generated 1.6 billion searches, 30.1 of total, and MSN generated 788,000, 15.2 percent of market share.

**Who: Ilta-Sanomat Oy**  
**With: Huuto.net**

Ilta-Sanomat Oy has acquired popular Finnish online auction service Huuto.net from TeliaSonera Finland.

Huuto.net will be part of the service offering of classified ad publication Keltainen Pörssi. After the acquisition, *Keltainen Pörssi* will likely become Finland's top online classified service measured by the number of visitors.

Plans include developing Huuto's useability and technical platform to improve safety and

## Trader Classified Media moves into India

Trader Classified Media has announced that it will move into India via a joint venture with IndiaMart InterMesh Ltd.

Trader will take two-thirds of the equity. InterMesh is a diversified Internet business and its subsidiary, InterMesh, operates a B2B site including auctions of a wide range of Indian manufactured goods. Other services include yellow pages directories.

Complementing this is the company-owned online payment system, ABCpayments.

The new business will be city based and will aim at Trader's traditional C2C market. In its announcement, Trader said that the move was dependant on board approval. No date has been given for commencement.

user trust in Web purchases, and also increase buyers and sellers. The deal will also strengthen Sanoma's position as a top classified service provider both in print and online, said Mikael Pentikäinen, president of the Sanoma Corp. *Keltainen Pörssi's* share of the classified ad paper market is estimated at 75 percent. KeltainenPorssi.fi has 70,000 items on sales and about 76,000 unique visitors each week.

**Who: Love.com**  
**What: Love lost**

AOL's Love.com is discontinuing its service effective July 31, but the company also is teaming up with Match.com to provide enhanced dating tools through Love@AOL. The company boasts singles will have more choices – more than 15 million singles to choose from, dating advice and a new reverse-lookup tool that allows users to see who has been looking at their profile. Love.com is hoping to get users to join Love@AOL by offering a 15-day trial for \$15.

**Who: Amazon**  
**What: Delivering celebrities**

Amazon is celebrating its 10-year anniversary in a rather unique

way – by randomly sending celebrities to personally deliver products ordered through the Web site. UPS partnered with the company to conduct the service over the next 10 days. Special deliveries include Moby, expected to personally deliver his new CD *Hotel*, and Jason Alexander, who played “George” on popular sitcom *Seinfeld*, who will deliver *Seinfeld* DVDs.

**Who: Seniors**  
**What: Finding dates online**

Finding a soul mate online isn't just for the young.

According to a recent report by SeniorFriendFinder, the largest seniors dating site on the Web, the number of people joining its site has increased 476 percent since 2001. The site now has more than 400,000 members, up from 91,847 in June 2001.

“We find many seniors are increasingly comfortable with the Internet and jumping into online activities, from planning trips to sharing photos to meeting new people,” says Andrew Conru, president and CEO of Various Inc., the parent company of SeniorFriendFinder. “The growth

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## New Industry

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of the senior segment has been tremendous and shows that age doesn't have to be a barrier to adopting useful technology."

Senior FriendFinder was launched in 1999 and includes tailored interests such as chat rooms titled "Single Again" and "Cat Lovers Unite." The site does not restrict younger or older users from joining.

### Who: Trader Classified Media Buys: Toronto's Buy&Sell

In case you missed our July 1 alert, Trader Classified Media NV acquired the Toronto edition of Buy & Sell, the only title in the Canadian Buy & Sell franchise Trader didn't already own. Trader owns and operates more than 570 publications and 56 Web sites in 20 countries.

Terms of the deal weren't immediately disclosed. Trader Classified Media is based in Amsterdam and Paris.

### Who: Kijiji Germany Buys: OpusForum

Also in our July 1 alert: Kijiji Germany acquired OpusForum.org, a popular free-classified site that operates virtual communities in 55 German regions and towns, as well as 10 locales in Austria and Switzerland. Financial details weren't disclosed.

EBay-owned Kijiji operates free-ad sites in 91 cities in nine countries, including Germany, France, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Canada, Japan, Taiwan and China.

In May, Kijiji bought U.K.-based Gumtree.com, which has 42 city sites in eight countries. Kijiji also bought Spain's Loquo.com, which has free-ad community sites in 10 Spanish cities.

## Fairfax in chats with PBL's Nine network?

Fred Hilmer, the eventually departing CEO of John Fairfax Holdings, has for some time expressed an interest in moving the Australian-New Zealand publishing company into television. The only thing holding him back has been strict cross-media ownership laws. However, with the return of the conservative government, those laws look likely to be weakened. Latest market rumors are that Fairfax and Publishing and Broadcasting Ltd, owner of the leading Channel 9 TV network have been having friendly chats.

Suggestions range from a capital-raising of \$3 billion to buy Nine, to a share swap, which would leave PBL supremo Kerry Packer with just under 50 percent of Fairfax (a company he coveted for some time). With the balance of Fairfax investors mainly institutions, this would give Packer effective personal control.

It's not all that simple, however. PBL has other media interests ranging from the NineMSN Internet joint venture to the recently acquired 25 percent interest in Fairfax employment competitor, Seek.com.au.

Packer has had previous success selling his Nine Network. In the 1980's he got over A\$1 billion for it, only to buy it back a few years later for around A\$300 million.

For Fairfax, the talks might be another reason in delaying the appointment of a CEO until the future structure of the company is known.

OpusForum was founded in 2002 by Dr. Klaus-Peter Gapp of Wiesbaden, a computer scientist specializing in artificial intelligence.

### Who: Norway's Orkla Media Buys: Germany's Netzeitung

We also reported in our July 1 alert that Orkla Media, the fifth largest media company in the Nordic region, bought 100 percent of Netzeitung.de, a German online-only news and advertising site that reaches about 1 million unique visitors a month.

Orkla operates newspapers, magazines, TV and radio, as well as direct marketing and online ventures in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine – and now Germany.

In a recent conference, Netzeitung's chief editor, Dr. Michael Maier claimed profitabili-

ty. Terms of the deal weren't disclosed. Maier will reportedly stay with the company and also represent Orkla media in Germany.

### Who: John Fairfax Holdings Buys: RSVP.com.au

John Fairfax Holdings Ltd., Australia's second-largest newspaper publisher, purchased online dating site RSVP.com.au Ltd. for A\$38.9 million (U.S. \$29 million) to increase its classified advertising revenue.

RSVP is expected to earn at least A\$4 million (U.S. \$3 million) before interest, tax, amortization and depreciation in the fiscal year that began July 1, Fairfax said. Classified advertising in Fairfax's newspapers, including the Sydney Morning Herald and Melbourne's Age, has fallen almost 25 percent by volume the past five years as

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## New Industry

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advertisers migrate to the Internet. Sales at Fairfax Digital, the publisher's online unit with sites including MyCareer.com.au, rose 51 percent in fiscal 2004 on demand for Internet classifieds.

**Who: Eniro**  
**With: Miva / ESpotting**

Performance marketing network Miva Inc., has announced its first private-label deal in Europe with Eniro AB, the directory company in the Nordic media market.

The agreement covers all four Nordic markets – Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland. Eniro acquired Miva's assets in Scandinavia – which fall under the Espotting brand – as the two companies join forces to establish a leading position in the Scandinavian pay-per-click sector.

Miva's private-label partner program gives large corporations, such as Eniro, a foothold in the performance marketing sector under their own brand name. Miva currently provides private-label technology for Lycos and Verizon in the U.S. and to the giant trading company Mitsui in Japan.

Pay-per-click is one of the fastest-growing areas of online advertising in Scandinavia. "The licensing of the platform will strengthen Eniro's overall customer offering. Eniro has identified paid search advertising as an area with strong growth potential. During 2005, the total market in Sweden is expected to double from 78 million Swedish crowns (\$9.9 million US) in 2004 to 153 million Swedish crowns (\$19.5 million US) this year," said Cecilia Geijer-Haeggstrom, head of products and market, Eniro AB.

Miva will be providing the technology, resources and expertise for Eniro's branded pay-per-click ad service that is expected to launch

## FREE-AD SITES SCORECARD

**Craigslist:** 195 cities – up from 170

(New locales: Budapest, Cairo, Caracas, Champaign-Urbana, Chennai, Chico, Costa Rica, Delaware, Helsinki, Humboldt, Hyderabad, Johannesburg, Kolkata, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Puerto Rico, Quebec, Redding, San Luis Obispo, Saskatoon, South Dakota, Tallahassee, Tijuana, West Virginia and Wyoming.)

**Cityopoly:** 66 cities (unchanged)

**Kijiji:** 91 cities (unchanged)

**Intoko:** 4 cities (unchanged)

**Gumtree:** 43 cities (New city: Exeter)

**Oodle:** 9 cities (New city: Washington D.C.)

**MetroMojo:** 7 cities (unchanged) Pending launches in 50 cities

**Recycler:** 13 cities (unchanged)

in Sweden, Denmark and Norway later this year, and in Finland in 2006.

**Who: Speurders.nl**  
**What: Selling newspaper ads**

In a soft launch, Dutch general merchandise Web site Speurders.nl has started selling newspaper ads.

Advertisers who want to place an ad on Speurders and who are selling items worth more than €200 are offered to place an ad in De Telegraph for just €5. The regular price for a classified ad in the printed newspaper is € 35. Speurders MD Michiel van der Meer said promotion of the new service is scheduled to begin this fall.

The newspaper ads are listed within the regular classified section of the paper. With the help of a special ID number, newspaper readers can quickly find additional information online.

Within the nine months since its start, Speurders.nl has grown its ad base from 600,000 to 1.3 million. In an interview with the Dutch Internet magazine Planet Multimedia, van der Meer revealed that part of the success of the site is due to a cooperation with Qoop.nl, which has contributed about 35 percent of Speurders' ads

from the site's inception.

He said he expects Speurders to reach profitability within 2 and a half years.

**Who: ISA GmbH**  
**What: Shareholder gamble**

The German online classified holding company ISA GmbH & Co. KG intends to widen its base of owners. Its current owners, the publishing groups Georg von Holtzbrinck, Dr. Ippen and WAZ Media Group announced that they were willing to reduce their share of the company to 60 percent. Forty percent shall be offered to German newspaper companies interested in joining forces to win back the online classified market.

ISA GmbH & Co. KG was founded in 2003. At the moment it operates five classified portals: Stellenanzeigen.de (jobs), Immowelt.de (real estate), Autoanzeigen.de (cars), Freundeszeit.de and DZF.de (both dating). It will launch a free-ad general merchandise marketplace (Mmarkt.de) as its sixth activity soon.



## REAL ESTATE

# 192.com launches photo and house price tools

The race for the best local search product in the U.K. is obviously on.

The beta version of Google local already includes maps, driving directions and for example restaurant reviews and the average price of a meal in a restaurant. The service also has satellite photographs, but not with high-resolution maps in all parts of Great Britain.

U.K.-based directory service 192.com has extended its local search services with high-resolution aerial photos and house price services. The firm has also announced to also add shop-front photos for around 80,000 retail businesses, integrated with further information on the nearest transport links, Web address and disabled access, among other criteria. Each record will also link to images of neighboring shops, creating a virtual High Street.

For local searches on residential information, Land Registry data details the price of all houses sold in

England and Wales since March 2000. This will be combined with data from the British Telecom directory enquiry database and the Electoral Roll, allowing 192.com users to see who lives in a property, how long they have lived there and who they live with, as well as what they paid for the house – data unavailable due to privacy protection rules in other European countries.

Alastair Crawford, CEO and founder of 192.com, told Netimperative.co.uk: “The recent boom in local services is a sham, as people are not getting a true depiction of what’s on offer in their area, nor is the information linked intelligently to give people the richer results they require. ... We have a different perspective on local than the big search engines,” Crawford added. “We believe that a local search tool has to offer real depth of information on the local area whether or not you’re looking for people or businesses.”

## Israeli “EBay-like Web site sues disgruntled client

E-mail etiquette rule No. 1: Be careful what you write, as you never know where it’s going to end up. In today’s case, a disgruntled client who sought revenge on an Israeli “EBay-like” Web site has landed in court, being sued by the very site he was complaining about.

Yitzhak Hochberg apparently bought a new wireless phone via the Israeli site Enet, but upon receiving it claimed he’d been supplied a used device in old packaging. Hochberg wrote an e-mail and posted it in a number of Israeli online consumer forums run by the Maariv newspaper Web site NRG. His e-mail, Enet claims, said, “You thought your trick would lose you just one customer. Wrong.”

Enet didn’t like that and has sued Hochberg for 250,000 shekels (\$55,000) for libel. On top of that, the small online auction site is suing the newspaper Web site for

another \$55,000 plus a demand for a written apology. The Web site, Enet claims, had a “duty to stop the libelous messages and they cooperated with the angry client” by posting its own message proposing a boycott in retaliation for attempts to “gouge customers.”

What was that old adage about the “customer is always right” again?

## CalSTRS, PwC near settlement

The California State Teachers’ Retirement System (CalSTRS) has reached a preliminary settlement of \$17.5 million with PricewaterhouseCoopers in a class-action lawsuit that accused the accounting firm of violating its professional responsibilities in its audits of Homestore.com in 2000 and 2001.

The accounting scandal at Homestore, which has been reported on extensively in CIR, resulted in CalSTRS filing suit in 2002 against the company, several of its

officers and

PricewaterhouseCoopers accusing the company and other defendants of falsifying financial statements and engaging in accounting irregularities to meet Wall Street expectations.

In August 2003, Homestore agreed to a settlement to reform its corporate policies, pay \$13 million in cash and turn over 20 million shares of stock. All but two of the company officers named in the suit also reached settlements, leaving legal action pending against Stuart H. Wolff, former CEO, and Peter B. Tafeen, former EVP.

The settlement, reached between the accounting firm PricewaterhouseCoopers and Sacramento-based CalSTRS, the lead plaintiff, was submitted to U.S. District Court Judge Ronald S. W. Lew of Los Angeles for review. If Lew grants preliminary approval, a final settlement hearing date will be set.

In agreeing to the settlement,

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## Real Estate

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PricewaterhouseCoopers did not admit to any wrongdoing.

“This settlement is another step forward in our goal to help compensate those who lost money they invested in Homestore,” said Jack Ehnes, chief executive officer of CalSTRS.

At \$126.6 billion, CalSTRS is the third-largest public pension fund in the U.S.

### Report: U.S. consumers worried about housing ‘bubble’

U.S. consumers are increasingly worried that the real estate market is overpriced, according to new data from Hitwise, an online competitive intelligence service.

Hitwise monitored consumer Internet searches for the terms “real estate bubble” and “housing bubble” and found they reached a 12-month high the week ending May 28. The market share of these terms across all major search engines like Google, Yahoo Search, MSN Search and others, skyrocketed 311 percent and 174 percent respectively versus the prior week.

The market share of total Internet visits for real estate sites is up 19 percent the week ending June 11, versus a year ago. Bill Tancer, VP of research at Hitwise, attributes at least some of this increase to “curiosity of rising property values and the possibility of a bursting bubble.”

Other data in the latest Hitwise report for the four weeks ending June 11:

- 25 percent of visits to real-estate sites originate directly from other real-estate sites; 22.1 percent from search engines; 8.1 percent from Web e-mail services; and 6.3 percent from portal home pages.

- Once on a real-estate site, 32.2 percent of visitors will depart directly to another real-estate site;

## Contest winner gets a new lease on life

We picked it right.

Two months ago we reported on Apartments.com’s second annual “Room to Move” contest, where 500 young people still living with their parents poured out their sob stories in an effort to win \$15,000 in prizes and a “room makeover.” (See CIR 6.09, May 10.)

Our choice for the saddest story: a 22-year-old woman named Val, who wrote that she shares a bunk bed with her 15-year-old sister in a room she describes as “smaller than the size of a minivan.”

And the winner is... Val!

Valerie Seimas of Tracy, Calif., captivated thousands of online voters with her compelling and humorous tale. Her room design will be provided by Karen McAloon of HGTV’s Design Remix. The remaining finalists each will receive a \$500 cash prize.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 18 million unmarried Americans aged 18 to 34 currently live with their families.

The winner was announced live on NBC-TV’s *Today* show. The winning essay and photos can be found at [www.apartments.com/roomtomove](http://www.apartments.com/roomtomove).



Valerie Seimas’ (bottom bunk) and her sister’s room, as shown in her entry in Apartments.com’s “Room to Move” contest.

5.5 percent to a search engine; 4.8 percent to an online bank or financial institution; and 4.9 percent will go to a portal home page.

- U.S. Internet users with household income between \$60,000 and \$149,999 are 9 percent more likely to have visited a real estate site in the four weeks ending June 11. Conversely, online users with household income less than \$30,000 are 14 percent less likely to visit a real estate site.

- Realtor.com remains the most visited real estate Web site, with a market share of 12.29 percent according to Hitwise. In second place is RentNet.net at 5.5 percent, followed by HomeGain (acquired last week by Classified Ventures) at 3.06 percent, Rent.com (now a part of eBay) at 2.68 percent and Yahoo Real Estate at 2.02 percent. Hitwise monitors how more than

25 million Internet users in the U.S. interact with more than 500,000 Web sites across 160 industry categories on a daily basis.

### Who: VisualTour What: New CD

Coral Springs, Fla.-based VisualTour is now offering a “Listing Presentation CD Packet” with its Agent Starter Kit to help Realtors explain the benefits of VisualTour to home owners during a listing presentation.

VisualTour allows Realtors to build 360 degree virtual tours themselves. Unlimited tours of up to 50 scenes each can be created for a flat fee of \$29.95/month

VisualTour says 45,000 Realtors are subscribed to their system.

## AUTOMOTIVE

# Megawheels picks up CanWest after parting with Globe

BY DEANNA SHEFFIELD

Online automotive services company Megawheels and longtime Canadian newspaper partner *The Globe and Mail* decided not to re-sign a contract for the newspaper's automotive offerings, leaving each to go their separate ways following a Canada-exclusive six-year contract. The companies parted on June 30. On July 1, Megawheels entered into a Canada-exclusive deal with media giant CanWest.

When Megawheels first signed a contract with *The Globe and Mail* in September 1999, an exclusivity clause forced the company to seek additional business abroad. But Megawheels had added several smaller Canadian weekly papers over the last few years as those restrictions loosened. It also picked up clients in areas the *Globe* didn't consider a threat, such as Halifax and New Brunswick. The contract between Megawheels and the *Globe* actually ended Jan. 1, in which case the exclusivity clause became null.

While *The Globe and Mail* has said little about the split, the decision was likely an economic one for the company, who chose to replace Megawheels with Strathcom Media, a company with which the newspaper had a pre-existing relationship.

Megawheels CEO and chairman Chris Bulger called it a "mutual parting." But he added that the company's new deal with CanWest MediaWorks, Canada's largest media group, should provide additional growth and revenue opportunities.

"Online advertising has become more important than print in automotive. Auto dealers need a strong online partner. We know auto dealers need a multi-media experience," Bulger told CI. "CanWest can clearly win the online war. CanWest is much larger with opportunities for incremental revenue and more robust online potential."

While the contract with CanWest also is exclusive, Bulger said CanWest could help the company achieve its goals: reaching a global audience through the international company, accelerating growth through a bevy of channels and expanding to real estate hosting, especially in North America. Megawheels already hosts real estate and property listings for NiceMove.ie, the Web site of the *Irish Times*. Additionally, CanWest's national portal is attractive to the automotive listings provider.

The contract with CanWest took only 30 days for Megawheels to bring the new agreement from concept to full-scale launch. Bulger could not disclose specific financial agreements, but noted the contract length was longer than the 6-year agreement the com-

pany held with the *Globe*.

While the Bell GlobeMedia-owned *Globe and Mail* operates just one daily newspaper – albeit a national one with about 1 million readers – CanWest has 11 major daily newspapers including the *National Post*, *Calgary Herald*, *Vancouver Star* and *Montreal Gazette*. The company also owns more than a dozen cable television stations in Canada, New Zealand, Ireland and Australia, several Web sites and a handful of radio stations.

*Globe* execs did not want to discuss the new arrangement or the former with Megawheels. However, Roger Dunbar, the paper's VP of advertising sales, noted the company's new automotive site would undergo some upgrades.

"There will be refinements to both our Web and paper products but these are not related or at least will not be a result of our partnership with Strathcom," Dunbar told CI. "We are responding to reader research."

The *Globe*'s new automotive site is now available at GlobeAuto.com. The new site features many of the same offerings – classifieds, automotive content and reviews. Additional features are scheduled to be rolled out in the coming weeks.

Much like when it worked with the *Globe*, Megawheels will produce a weekly classified section with CanWest, noted Megawheels president Robert Jolly, who added that Megawheels retained the vast majority of its contracts with auto dealers.

"As a measure of dealer acceptance, within the first week of operations with CanWest, there has been a 97 percent participation rate by dealers moving from the *Globe* to CanWest," Bulger noted.

Megawheels' relationship with CanWest MediaWorks will connect Greater Toronto Area used car inventory with Driving.ca, part of the Canada.com network and the *National Post*, to provide more media power for the marketplace. Auto dealers will continue to use Megawheels Showroom media software to place classifieds. Printed advertising will be published in Friday's *National Post*, which commenced with the July 8 weekly automotive section *Driver's Edge*.

"This positions Driving.ca as a leading used car research tool for buyers in Canada that we can promote across all the media assets of CanWest MediaWorks," said Laura Pearce, director of online autos for CanWest Interactive.

Megawheels has plans for improvements as well, but for now, they will remain under wraps. "Stay tuned for phase two," Bulger said.



## Experian and KBB.com release findings of new study

Kelly Blue Book has released the results of a new study conducted by Experian Automotive which reports that a solid 64 percent of consumers submitting vehicle purchase requests on the company's Web site KBB.com ultimately purchased a vehicle during the analysis time frame.

The Experian study was carried out during the first nine months of 2004 and looked at new car purchase requests generated on KBB.com. Other findings:

- More than half of KBB.com's 7 million monthly unique visitors plan to purchase a new vehicle in the next six months.
- 65 percent of consumers who submitted a purchase request and bought a vehicle did so within 60 days.
- 76 percent of shoppers purchased a new vehicle and 24 percent purchased a used vehicle.

## Primedia expands Auto Guide with Laser Group acquisition

Primedia launched five new auto and trucking guides in New England through an acquisition of Laser Group Publications and Affiliates (LGP). The guides cover Boston, Western Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Maine, and parts of Vermont. Financial terms of the acquisition were not disclosed.

Primedia's Consumer Guides division has been strongest in its apartments series with 80 *Apartment Guide* editions distributed in 75 regional markets with a combined monthly circ of 1.6 million.

Primedia has been aggressively expanding its *Auto Guide* titles; although so far only 12 publications are available covering 13 regions throughout the U.S., Primedia has added four new publications in the first half of 2005.

## Autobytel nabs 'Stevie' business award

We reported previously – *CIR 6.10, May 10* – that automotive Web site Autobytel had been nominated for one of the oddly named "Stevie" awards in the Best Product Development Team category.

Now it's official: the company has got its Stevie.

As part of the 2005 American Business Awards on June 10, Autobytel joined other Stevie honorees E\*Trade, Travelocity, Sprint, and Donald Trump who received a Lifetime Achievement Stevie.

More than 100 Stevies were presented in more than 40 categories. The full list of winners and finalists can be found at [www.stevieawards.com/aba](http://www.stevieawards.com/aba).

Who's Stevie? The statue is officially the Steven, derived from the Greek word for "crowned," according to the American Business Awards.

Primedia estimates the automotive advertising market at \$16.5 billion.

About 125,000 copies of the New England guides will be distributed in some 3,000 locations and will be available online at [www.cam-cars.com](http://www.cam-cars.com).

## AutoTrader.com TV campaign takes aim and names names

*Editor & Publisher* magazine ran an article recently highlighting a new television ad campaign by *Auto Trader* magazine and AutoTrader.com in the Chicago market which challenges its main newspaper classified competitor by name.

*E&P* editor-at-large Mark Fitzgerald reported that the ad series is running during late-evening broadcast news programs and shows a torn-out three-line, one-column classified ad from the *Chicago Tribune* looking small and gray in the middle of an otherwise empty screen. That image is then replaced by a full-color, full-screen shot of an ad with a photo in *Auto Trader* magazine. This is followed by a screenshot of an ad on AutoTrader.com.

The ad spots, which were created by the Donor agency in Detroit, feature a narrator who claims that a three-line Tribune auto classified ad with no graphics that runs for

three days would be \$10 more expensive than a much longer run with an ad and photo in *Auto Trader* magazine and AutoTrader.com.

*The Chicago Tribune* is partnered with *Trader* competitor Classified Ventures and publishes a variety of automotive products including *Cars.com*, *Cars* magazine and *Chicago Tribune Cars*, in addition to its own classified ads.

We've seen AutoTrader.com's TV commercials in Houston, which target the *Houston Chronicle* in much the same way.

AutoTrader.com, which is usually quite talkative to CI, would only issue a brief statement on the campaign.

"Our current advertising campaign educates consumers on the advantages of shopping for and selling their cars on AutoTrader.com," Louise Barr said.

"Only 8 percent of newspaper readers are in market to buy a used car versus more than 80 percent of the 9 million unique monthly visitors to our site who all come to us for one reason. Additionally, there is no comparison between a three line newspaper ad and an online ad on AutoTrader.com which offers the ability to list a car with multiple photos and a deep description," Barr said.

## AUCTIONS

# Chinese auction sites turn up heat in competition

By ROSS HODDINOTT

It's been auction action all the way in China, with product expansion, a new entrant and a war of words and outdoor advertising.

EBay EachNet kicked off by announcing a strategic relationship with U.S.-based Global Sources to commence by year end. The move will give Global Sources, which has had a presence in China for many years, access to EachNet's high-value local customers. While not quite B2B, there is fuzziness in the Chinese definition of this and C2C, mainly because many of the traders are quite small. Alibaba, owner of consumer site TaoBao, already allows users of each site access to customers across both. In fact, the B2B Alibaba site was the foundation for TaoBao. EBay's move can thus be seen as a move to get at the core customers of their major competitor.

Both EachNet and Global Sources were vague on the nature of the deal, commenting that not much investment or consideration was involved. For EBay, it offers the revenues of increased transactions; Global Sources gets access to a much broader Chinese market.

On Monday, EBay officially launched a Chinese PayPal, its payment service as an integral part of its growth strategy. EBay China's COO, James Zheng, told Reuters that he expected transaction volume to jump 30 percent or more this year. "Based on our first quarter simple calculation of \$100 million (in transaction volume), our full year should reach \$400 million," Zheng was quoted.

In a country where formal banking arrangements are new or relatively weak, a payment service is critical to ensuring that transactions can take place. TaoBao users already have access to the company's AliPay service, which also offers escrow. The local market is suspicious of payment (and delivery) certainty and this has not been helped by TaoBao offering its transaction services for free for at least three years. Indeed, there are claims that some TaoBao clients are registering under multiple names as buyers and sellers. They can then "trade" as much as they like, at no cost, and build their vendor rating through favorable volume and buyer reports – all of this without money or products changing hands. Other payment systems in China include SmartPay Jieyin which, for now, caters to the burgeoning mobile phone market.

The intense competition between EachNet and TaoBao hasn't stopped new entrants to the mainstream C2C auction market. Hong Kong-listed com-

The screenshot shows the eBay China homepage with the following elements:

- Header: eBay 易趣 logo, navigation links (首页, 网站地图, 诚信与安全, 注册), and buttons for '买东西', '卖东西', '我的易趣', '社区', '帮'.
- Search bar: '快速搜索您想要的物品:' with a search button and '高级搜索' link.
- Hot keywords: '热捧 iPod 泳装 ZIPPO 闪存卡 戒指 特百惠 ¥1 首饰 更多...'.
- Promotional banners: '5元钱竟然涨上大用处!! 挑战最低价--回馈新老用户!', '¥1 专区' (listing items like 诺基亚手机, zippo打火机, 超实惠mp3), and '全场3折 只要98元'.
- Category navigation: '物品目录', '新到物品', '即将结束', '特色店铺'.
- Product categories:
  - 电脑网络/办公设备: 笔记本 | U盘 | 鼠标 | 摄像头 | 内存 | 显示器 | 硬盘 | CPU | 显卡 | 主板
  - 女装/童装/内衣: T恤 | 背心吊带衫 | 衬衫 | 半身裙 | 连身裙 | 裤 | 婴儿装 | 内衣 | 牛仔
  - 随身视听/音响/家电: MP3 | 耳机 | 家庭影院 | HIFI
  - 女士箱包/鞋帽/配件: 女包 | 女鞋 | 腰带 | 太阳镜 | 袜子

pany TenCent Holdings announced that it would join the fray. TenCent has a well-established customer base by virtue of claiming 150 million users on its mobile phone instant-messaging system. CEO Pony Ma said the company would use this base for promoting the new service, rather than directly challenging the \$100 million which EachNet will be spending this year.

But it's in the trenches where the real fun is taking place. Outdoor advertising is a huge medium in China, and both EachNet and TaoBao have been busy having billboards erected outside or near the opposition, apparently to make their respective market presence known to each other's staff as they arrive at work each morning. TaoBao CEO Jack Ma has not held back in his statements, either. Describing EBay as a shark in the ocean, he went on to say "we are the crocodiles in the Yangtze River. When they fight in the Yangtze River they will be in trouble. The smell of the water is different." He went further, claiming Meg Whitman's recent Chinese visit as "an admission of defeat."

Enthused by metaphor and simile, Ma describes EBay's introduction of new technology as "trying to land advanced jets in muddy rice paddies." We wonder if Meg has anything nice to say about him...

**Who: Reliabid Inc.**  
**What: Nonpaying bidders**

ReliaBid, Inc., a new service that offers online auctioneers options to deter and pursue non-paying bidders, has protected thousands of auctions since it was unrolled at EBay Live!

And it seems to be working. Users have clicked on auctions with a Reliabid membership seal about once every 15 seconds. The seal warns buyers that they must honor their bids and alerts them to possible legal and financial consequences if they do not.

In the event that an auction winner does not pay up, ReliaBid facilitates access to a nationwide debt collection agency which has set up a system to support auction sellers displaying the ReliaBid seal.

**Who: Dutch EBay**  
**What: Prepaid shipping**

Logistics still seem to be a field where you can invent and introduce new business ideas. Ebay.nl and the Dutch postal service TPG Post have agreed to offer prepaid parcels to the customers of Ebay.nl and Marktplaats.nl.

The boxes for items in three different sizes can be ordered and paid for online, and will be delivered at the customers doorstep with no additional cost. Every post office will accept them for transportation. TPG Post didn't invent the prepaid parcel product – a similar product is provided in Germany by DHL – but the idea of distributing it online is innovative.

**Who: Two lawyers**  
**What: Launch TWay.com**

Tampa personal injury attorneys Doug and Dean Burnett have launched TWay.com, an Internet auction site that features no listing fees and commission fees that are lower than EBay's. The site went

live on July 1.

“Our goal was to make online auctioning fun, user friendly and reasonably priced,” said TWay President Dean Burnett. “What Web shoppers and sellers are looking for is innovation, new ideas and more ways to expand their business opportunities.”

TWay plans to develop “shops” where entrepreneurs can create their own businesses in partnership with the company. It's also developing proprietary software that those partners can install on their own computers to help manage their TWay businesses.

**AuctionStoreBusiness.com**  
**Warns against drop-off stores**

Entrepreneurs are being warned by AuctionStoreBusiness.com president Taylor Dawne to stay away from EBay consignment store franchises because many are over-hyped.

“Nearly all of the EBay consignment store franchises in operation today will ultimately fail. They have poor business plans and their profit/expense ratios are extremely poor,” claimed Dawne, author of *How To Open & Run An EBay Consignment Business*.

“Seasoned EBay sellers know that EBay drop-off stores are no easy business to go into. To spend thousands of more dollars on an unknown EBay franchise is wasteful and will ultimately hurt EBay consignors in the long run.”

**Who: Motor Cycle News**  
**What: Auction Web site**

MotorCycleNews.com, Web site of Emap's biking magazine Motor Cycle News in the U.K., has launched an auction site to bring together buyers and sellers of bikes, bike parts, tools as well as memorabilia.

Although the auction service just started, there's quite a bit of activity and lots of options for buyers

and sellers.

According to Charles Davey, publisher at Emap, advertising in the printed weekly is still the most popular way to sell bikes. However, the management recognized that a growing number of readers wanted other choices. Motorcyclenews.com was relaunched last year with added online classified booking facilities. It recently won the 2005 PPA Award for Interactive Consumer Magazine of the year. The printed MCN has an average weekly ABC circulation of 139,105, according to figures for January to December 2004.

**Who: Marktplaats**  
**What: Stats**

Oscar Diele, director of EBay and EBay-owned Marktplaats in the Netherlands, revealed some interesting statistics to the Dutch Internet magazine Planet Multimedia.

According to Diele, Marktplaats' gross merchandise volume reached €2 billion (\$2.4 billion US) in 2004 – already 75 percent of the volume handled by the members of Thuiswinkel.org, the branch organization of mail order and catalog companies.

About €430 million (\$516 million US) is the total value of the general merchandise items (average price: €52 / \$62.4 US, calculated without cars, holidays and boats), the remaining €1.7 billion (\$2.04 billion US) can be attributed to cars (average price: €4,700 / \$5,640 US).

2004 saw 16.7 million new advertisements on the site. 70,000 new ads are posted on average on any single day. Ads stay usually online for 15 days. 84 per cent of the users delete their advertisements after the article is sold. Approximately 50 percent of the advertisements eventually lead to a sale. Diele didn't reveal revenue or profit.



## INTERACTIVE INSIDERS

## Monster appoints first head of U.K. campus recruitment

Mike Roberts has been named head of Monster Campus Solutions in the United Kingdom. Monster created the position in response to an upswing by students and graduates using online recruitment to find their first job. Roberts will be responsible for identifying opportunities in the sector, selling employers on using the channel to reach graduates and students and building products specifically for the near- and post-graduate student.

### Hugo Drayton joins Advertising.com

AOL-owned Advertising.com has appointed former Telegraph Group executive Hugo Drayton as European managing director. Drayton, who was the first senior employee to be affected by management changes with the Barclay brothers' takeover, previously had held the role of marketing and new-media director and was responsible for launching the U.K.'s first online newspaper. Drayton also previously worked as international director for Reed Telemedia, where he launched automated telephony partnerships across Europe.

Advertising.com was bought by America Online in August 2004 for \$435 million. It runs strategic direct response and brand marketing campaigns using tools such as Web advertising and search listings. Advertising.com's first European office opened in 2000. The company heads its European operation in the U.K. with offices across France, Germany, Spain and Scandinavia.

### Yahoo China's Zhou to step down

Yahoo China president Zhou Hongyi will step down effective Aug. 31. Zhou had sold the search engine business he founded, 3721, to Yahoo for \$120 million in

2003. Many of his old staff also made the move across to Yahoo/ Zhou says that he wants to spend more time with his family, but local comment suggests that his entrepreneurial spirit may shortly be seen again. For now, Yahoo China will report to North Asian managing sirector, Allan Kwan.

### Whitford, Robinson launch consultancy

Alan Whitford, managing partner of Abtech Partnership, and Keith Robinson, former director for TotalJobs.com, have formed a new European venture to offer consulting and technology advice across the advertising, technology and recruitment spectrums.

The E-Strategy Practice offers events, information and consulting services to the European publishing, media and business communities. ESP also is advising U.S. and European based Internet start-ups which have been attracting attention from the investment community.

### LJWorld's Rob Curley leaving Kansas for Fla.

The Newspaper Association of America's Online Publishing Update reports that Rob Curley and several members of his Lawrence, Kan., staff are leaving The World Co. for Scripp's *Naples (Fla.) Daily News*.

OPU said Curley begins his new job as new media director on Aug. 1.

Curley was new media director for *Lawrence Journal-World*, 6News and World Online. He and his staff have won numerous industry awards for online content convergence and presentation. With a reputation for innovation, Curley has been a featured speaker at – as OPU's Rob Runnett put it – every show you can think of at least once.”

## advanced interactive media group

The Advanced Interactive Media Group, L.L.C., works with media companies, software developers, application service providers and organizations to help develop successful interactive-media services. It is affiliated with Classified Intelligence, L.L.C. The AIM Group focuses on practical solutions. Our services include strategic business planning; corporate workshops and presentations about interactive media; advertising development and training; cross-media alliance support; Web site reviews; market research and analysis, and team-building seminars.

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