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## Google launches news service

News Story by Tom Spring, PC World

SEPTEMBER 23, 2002 (PC WORLD) - Google Inc. is beefing up its Web site by using its search engine technology to add breaking news services this week.

Google News scans 4,000 news sources in real time, creating a dynamic news page displaying top world, U.S., and business news. Today's launch cuts the ribbon on the service, which has been in beta-testing for the past six months.

The service is completely automated, said Marissa Mayer, Google.com product manager. It relies on the same information-ranking technology used in the popular Google search engine to deliver relevant results. The same technology is used to let users search a 28-day index of news stories.

The service is similar to existing offerings from news

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aggregators Northern Light, NewsEdge, Columbia Newsblaster and Moreover Technologies Inc. (which provides the news service to Ask Jeeves Inc.).

Google News will be ad-free at introduction, and the company plans to eventually license the Google News Service to other sites, Mayer said.

The news service gives a new look to Google, which has long taken a minimalist approach to Web design. The site serves up photos mixed with headlines and news reports. A news channel bar at the top left side of the main news page provides links to pages with headlines in seven news categories: world, U.S., business, science and technology, sports, entertainment, and health.

But the channels refer only to the news service, and are not a topic tree for searches.

"In no way are we trying to become a portal," Mayer says. However, Google executives have said the service is continually evaluating new features and opportunities to expand.

The front page of Google News offers brief headlines and synopses of news stories accompanied by photos. When a reader clicks on a news headline, he is taken to the news source's Web site. When a reader chooses a related link, Google displays a list of stories on the same subject from competing news outlets.

"People can now pick a story and then decide the source, instead of picking a source and finding a story," Mayer says.

Google News ranks news stories using three different criteria: how recently it was published, the volume of material on the topic and the caliber of the news outlet.

One fun feature is called "In the News," an automatically generated real-time list of the most frequently reported

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instances of people, place and things.

The breaking news service builds on Google News Search, which became available earlier this year. It listed links to news sources and performed searches of the news sites by topic.

Competing news aggregation services have shied away from completely automated news feeds. Representatives of Moreover and other services argue that human evaluation is required for 100% accuracy when it comes to news relevance.

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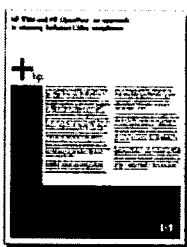
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