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COMPETITIVE INDUSTRY HIGHLIGHTS

ADVERTISING

Google offers pay-per-action ads *Mar 20*

<http://www.informationweek.com/internet/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=198100271>

Concerned about click fraud? Google has an answer. The company on Tuesday launched a beta test of its new pay-per-action (PPA) advertising program.

"Pay-per-action advertising is a new pricing model that allows you to pay only for completed actions that you define, such as a lead, a sale, or a page view, after a user has clicked on your ad on a publisher's site," explained Rob Kniaz, a product manager for Pay-Per-Action, on Google's AdWords blog. "You'll define an action, set up conversion tracking, and create ads that publishers in the Google content network can then choose to place in new ad units on their site."

PPA advertisers set the price that they're willing to pay for specific actions, which could be a click, a purchase, or a sign-up, for example. Because advertisers are buying actions, which by definition conform to business goals, click fraud becomes far less of an issue.

PPA ads will appear only on AdSense sites, which is to say the sites of publishers in the Google content network.

Yahoo to offer a network for web ads on cellphones *Mar 27*

http://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/27/technology/27mobile.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

Yahoo is moving to secure a position on the next Internet battleground: Web search and advertising on cellphones.

The company plans to announce on Tuesday that it is creating a mobile advertising network that will allow marketers to place ads not only on its mobile services, but also on those of other online publishers. And Yahoo is offering tools to help publishers customize their content for easier use with its mobile search service.

Yahoo's network of publishers at this point is tiny — three Web services, including MobiTV, a video service to be used with cellphones; Opera, a maker of Web browsers; and Go2, a Yellow Pages site. But the company said it planned to expand the network quickly over the next few months.

DIGITAL MEDIA

Eisner launches Internet video studio Vuguru *Mar 12*

http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20070312/film_nm/eisner_vuguru_dc_2

An investment firm run by former Walt Disney Co. Chief Executive Michael Eisner has launched a studio that will produce and distribute videos for the Internet, portable media devices and cell phones, as Hollywood strives to reach tech-savvy viewers online.

The studio, Vuguru, has signed for its first project, "Prom Queen," a scripted 80-episode mystery consisting of 90-second installments described as "a blend of love, gossip, and betrayal" during the final two weeks of high school.

Tivo, Amazon launch video download-to-TV service *Mar 7*

<http://www.reuters.com/article/internetNews/iciUSNO718709120070307>

Amazon.com Inc. launched on Wednesday a service that lets users watch video purchased on the Internet and sent to a home television hooked up to a TiVo set-top box.

Originally announced last month, "Amazon Unbox on TiVo" extends the online retailer's Unbox download service to more than 1.5 million TiVo Inc. subscribers whose boxes can access the Internet via a high-speed connection.

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Under an introductory offer, TiVo is offering \$15 in free movie and TV show downloads to those who sign up. Television show episodes go for \$1.99, and most movies cost between \$9.99 and \$14.99. Amazon and TiVo are jointly shouldering the marketing cost for the new service's introduction.

Online Tabloid Sets Its Sights Inside Beltway Mar 14

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/03/13/AR2007031301815.html>

When it comes to delicious gossip, Washington is a far cry from Hollywood. But the hottest purveyor of juicy tidbits in Tinseltown is betting that there is an untapped market for the backstage shenanigans of the Beltway elite.

TMZ.com, the 16-month-old venture that has grown into an online behemoth by chronicling the antics of Lindsay Lohan, Paris Hilton and other boldface names, is setting up shop in the nation's capital.

Harvey Levin, the former television reporter who started the operation, plans to launch the spinoff site in about a month. People familiar with the effort say that Levin plans to focus on the foibles of members of Congress, administration officials and media personalities.

Disney growing its online family Mar 14

<http://www.reuters.com/article/internetNews/idUSN1421693720070314>

Citing healthy growth for the relaunched Disney.com, the Walt Disney Internet Group on Tuesday announced a new online effort targeting parents.

DisneyFamily.com, an online community and one-stop resource for parents, launches this week. The site, located at <http://www.family.com>, will include a mix of content, search and community features spanning family topics from education to tips on traveling with children.

The site is being introduced in the wake of a makeover that has re-energized Disney.com, according to Paul Yanover, executive vp and managing director at Disney Online. He said Tuesday that the site is now streaming 1 million videos per week since video was added in January.

He added that Disney.com has seen a 9% increase in total page views and registration to the site has increased tenfold. Yanover pledged to add more channels to the site based on a large supply of current and past franchises, dating back to "Zorro."

SpikeTV.com and iFILM to align Mar 22

<http://biz.yahoo.com/prnews/070322/clth315.html?v=1>

iFILM and spiketv.com both divisions of MTV Networks, a unit of Viacom, will team-up to create the leading Web platform for men under the SPIKE brand, it was announced today by Doug Herzog, President, MTVN Entertainment Group. This new integration among the MTVN Entertainment Group properties brings together iFILM's broad-based online viral video presence with SPIKE TV's broadband and television assets which will further strengthen its reach to the coveted male 18-34 demo.

As part of the integration, MTVN Entertainment Group plans to leverage SPIKE TV's brand and on-air promotion power to elevate iFILM in the Web video landscape. In turn, spiketv.com will draw on the iFILM platform to stake out a position as the go-to viral video site for guys. The combined traffic of iFILM and spiketv.com will immediately give the site millions of impressions to sell under the SPIKE brand. The new destination will also tap into SPIKE TV's filter for developing leading male-branded content and create a site that will be visited on a daily basis.

NBC rebooting Web plans, media player Mar 22

http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/hr/content_display/news/e3i4b9ba971311ed450541fc51f3ff10987

NBC is taking its "TV 360" approach for another spin.

The peacock will announce a broad set of bold changes to its Internet strategy at its annual program development presentation to advertisers Thursday.

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NBC.com will become the first broadcast Web site to adopt social-networking tools similar to those on MySpace, including the ability to embed NBC video clips outside the site.

In addition, the network is fine-tuning its media player, NBC Rewind, and revealing new online content to accompany its summer series, including a continuation of its multiplatform expansion of the hit "Heroes" even after the freshman season ends in May.

The social-networking tools will be available only via registration, a key selling point to advertisers looking for users' demographic and behavioral-targeting data.

DIGITAL MUSIC

Bolt Settles with Vivendi *Mar 9*

<http://www.imediaconnection.com/news/14001.asp>

The social networking site Bolt has agreed to pay Vivendi's Universal Music Group millions of dollars in damages, settling a lawsuit brought in October regarding illegally uploaded UMG music and videos.

Within the next two months Bolt will institute technological safeguards to prevent users from posting unapproved UMG content. This move comes in advance of GoFish Corp's acquisition of the company. GoFish is a licensed partner of UMG.

Entertainment companies are grappling with how to handle the reposting of their content on social networking and video-sharing sites. YouTube has faced numerous complaints on this score, as...outline[d] in "YouTube Responds to Criticism."

Slacker.com Announces Portable Internet "Personal Radio" Service *Mar 14*

<http://www.allheadlinenews.com/articles/7006741782>

A startup consisting of experts in the digital music field is offering Internet "personal radio" allowing users to chose songs, genres or artists. The service also allows listeners to listen to their favorite tunes on the go by using a wireless portable device.

The new service is a combination of Internet radio, portable music and satellite distribution.

The basic Slacker radio service is ad-supported; making it free. A premium service due to launch in the second quarter will cost \$7.50 per month. The subscribed service will get rid of advertising and enable more flexibility and features to users.

Copyright Board agrees to reconsider web music fees *Mar 20*

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601204&sid=aPwFudwJ0oMo>

The Library of Congress Copyright Royalty Board agreed to reconsider a decision to increase royalties for music played on the Internet after radio broadcasters complained the new prices were too high.

EMI, Apple partner on DRM-free premium music

http://news.com.com/EMI%2C+Apple+partner+on+DRM-free+premium+music/2100-1027_3-6172398.html

EMI Group will soon sell digital music with better sound quality and no digital rights management restrictions through Apple's iTunes Store. EMI's entire digital music catalog will be available in premium DRM-free form via iTunes in May, the music label said Monday at a press conference in London. Beatles tunes under EMI's control, however, are not part of the plan.

Higher-quality music files, which will play on any computer and any digital-audio player, will not replace the copy-protected EMI music currently sold through iTunes. Rather, they will complement the standard 99-cent iTunes downloads and will be sold at a premium: \$1.29 per song.

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Consumers who have already purchased EMI tracks containing [Apple's FairPlay copy protection](#) will be able to upgrade them to the premium version for 30 cents, EMI said. Full albums in DRM-free form can be bought at the same price as standard iTunes albums.

Napster, AT&T in wireless music tie-up *Mar 26*

http://www.billboard.biz/bbbiz/content_display/industry/e3i16a9e623559cc9c8bc1db80852056f04

Napster Inc. and AT&T Inc. said on Monday (March 26) that they had agreed to a deal to provide some of the top U.S. phone company's wireless and high-speed Internet customers with free digital music.

The service will be available beginning April 1 and will enable qualifying users unlimited access for one year to more than 3 million song tracks through Napster To Go. Those customers can transfer some tunes to compatible wireless phones and music devices.

The offer is available to qualifying new or existing AT&T wireless customers outside of the AT&T's traditional 22-state territory who agree to a two-year wireless agreement with purchase of the SYNC phone by Samsung, or the BlackJack phone.

GAMING

Site wants to become YouTube of games *Mar 22*

http://news.com.com/Site+wants+to+become+YouTube+of+games/2100-1043_3-6169583.html?tag=cd.top

When video game maker Jim Greer approached Silicon Valley investors to give him nearly \$1 million for his start-up, he used this pitch: "It's video games meets YouTube."

He named the site Kongregate.com and in June began inviting game developers and players to test it. At the end of 2006, he opened the site to people of all stripes, who can create, submit and play games free of charge. So far, the advertising-supported site offers 300 games that are rated by players, who chat online as they play.

MOBILE

MSNBC unveils windows mobile app. *Mar 27*

<http://www.broadcastingcable.com/article/CA6428223.html?display=Breaking+News>

MSNBC, already available on mobile devices via mobile Web browsers and through mobile TV services like MobiTV, Tuesday introduced another way to take its content on the go.

In partnership with Action Engine and uVuMobile, the cable news network launched a Windows Mobile-only application called Multimedia on Mobile, which allows consumers to find and save MSNBC video, photo, and text content to their phone. Content from NBC's *Today* show will also be available. The content will be sharable via SMS and e-mail.

Content on Multimedia on Mobile will be advertising-supported and launches with Windows Mobile as the sole sponsor.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Creator of tween social network nabs Disney VC investment *Mar 23*

http://news.com.com/2061-12645_3-6170187.html?part=rss&tag=2547-1_3-0-20&subi=news

Industrious Kid, creator of tween social-networking site Imbee.com, has attracted an investment from Steamboat Ventures, the venture capital arm of the Walt Disney Company. According to Industrious Kid co-founder Tim Donovan, the company quietly raised about \$2.5 million from Steamboat Ventures late last year, in its first Series A round of funding.

Industrious Kid was launched in early 2006 with \$6 million in private funding from co-founder Jeannette Symons, among others.

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