EXHIBIT 7

BOSTON.COMMENT Today's topic Shadow advertising

The Boston Globe

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Would you call it progress when advertisements start following you around like your own shadow? That's what's happening on the Web now, as advertisers seek to **target** users they believe are most likely to click into their site.

While targeted advertising is nothing new -- you're likely to get copies of the Sharper Image catalog as a consequence of subscribing to GQ, for instance -- the powerful technology of the Internet can take narrowly focused **ads** to alarming new levels. Try this experiment: go to **Yahoo** (www.**yahoo**.com) and enter in the **search** term, sex. On the results page, you'll see a banner ad at the top for "Amateur Hardcore, The Net's only XXX**search** engine." **Yahoo** has taken the liberty of identifying you as a dirty trenchcoat type, and served up an ad aimed at your kind. What if you're a legitimate researcher looking for information about the Kinsey Report? Well, you'd be lumped in with the other lascivious lurkers. This kind of banner targeting, based on a user's **search** criteria, is relatively innocuous. But many Web sites are beginning to build sophisticated databases of information about user demographics and preferences, which can be used to deliver dead-on **ads.** Microsoft's customized Start page (www.msn.com), for example, asks that you tell it where you live so that it can deliver daily weather reports relevant to you. A site like Firefly (www.ffly .com), which builds a detailed **profile** of your tastes in music and movies, can pitch even more accurate marketing messages at you. Firefly offers advertisers, a movie studio, for example, the opportunity to deliver an ad plugging a new Bruce Willis movie only to users who have rated previous Bruce Willis movies highly. None of Firefly's advertisers has elected to make such specific ad buys, presumably because when you cut Firefly's large audience into such small pieces, you wind up with very small numbers. And advertisers just beginning to dip their toes in the Internet are still thinking in terms of the mass media's cost per thousand models: How much are we paying to reach a thousand potential customers? Firefly's concept, which nearly amounts to selling incredibly qualified individual users by the handful, may take a while to catch on. Advertisers haven't yet grasped the value of targeting so precisely, simply because it hasn't been a possibility in any other medium. But just as advertisers have grown more savvy about the use of direct mail -- remember the envelope you got that looked just like your phone bill? -- it won't

take them long to learn the ropes of Web marketing. Imagine the on-line clothing catalog that uses a tracking technology called `cookies' to remember what you tend to buy (shoes), and then subtly offers you a discount on a related item (socks). What about Microsoft taking advantage of the hidden information your browser sends over the Web whenever you ask for a page? Microsoft can peek into this data -- which is sent whether you want to send it or not -- and see you're still using Windows 3.1. Of course, then they'd try to peddle a copy of Windows 95. Shadow advertising, which tracks you down and sticks with you whether you've asked for it or not, is destined to increase on the Web as the technology improves and as major advertisers gain a better understanding of the medium. But will it serve you, making purchase decisions easier and cutting through a lot of irrelevant marketing noise, or will it breach your privacy? Join the online debate at www.boston.com, keyword: comment.