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Lycos Goes Contextual with Google

By Brian Morrissey

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Terra Lycos said Tuesday it will use Google's contextual paid listings on 11 sites in its network.

The multiyear agreement calls for Google's paid links to be delivered on a number of Terra Lycos U.S. properties, including Tripod, Angelfire, HotWired, Lycos.com, Matchmaker, and Raging Bull. Terra Lycos joins [Village](#), Weather.com and Switchboard as major distribution partners for the seven-month-old AdSense program, which is also distributed via thousands of small sites.

The entire Lycos U.S. network drew 31.2 million unique visitors in August, according to Nielsen/NetRatings.

Google already provides contextual [paid listings for Lycos Europe's member-generated Web pages](#) in eight European countries.

The exact length of the deal was not disclosed. Like other AdSense deals, Terra Lycos and Google will share the revenues generated each time a user clicks on a link displayed on a Lycos content page. Google uses its search technology to match the content on the page with its database of 150,000 advertisers.

Contextual paid listings have caught on as the next frontier for the booming search industry. However, some search engine optimization experts have complained that the listings do not convert as well as those on search results pages. Google, like rival Overture Services, allows advertisers to opt out of AdSense, yet does not offer a separate bidding system like Sprinks.

Many top sites have experimented with contextual paid listings. Overture has distribution deals with Edmunds.com, the Away Network, and parts of MSN. Yahoo! plans to roll out more Overture contextual listings once its deal to acquire the search company is finalized in the fourth quarter. Sprinks, another contextual listings provider, has distribution deals with Forbes.com, CBS MarketWatch, and AOL properties like Netscape and CompuServe.

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