IAC to shutter Web site aimed at black community

June 11 2009, By RACHEL METZ , AP Technology Writer

(AP) -- IAC/InterActiveCorp will shut down the year-old RushmoreDrive, a search engine geared toward the black community.

Spokeswoman Stacy Simpson said Wednesday that the Barry Diller-led Internet services company will close the site Friday after an unsuccessful effort to sell it. She also said that Johnny Taylor, the site's chief executive, has resigned.

IAC rolled out RushmoreDrive with much fanfare in April 2008, calling it a "first-of-its-kind" search engine. It mixes search, news and job results with links to sites targeted specifically at the black community and user-generated content.

The site was the first under IAC's Black Web Enterprises Inc., of which Taylor was also the head. Simpson said Black Web Enterprises will also close.

Simpson said the closure was part of IAC's ongoing effort to streamline its emerging businesses unit, which includes a mix of Web properties like retail site Shoebuy and news site The Daily Beast.

RushmoreDrive is the latest Web property that IAC is shedding this year. It sold comedy site 23/6 and campground reservation site ReserveAmerica in January.

IAC's peers, including Yahoo Inc., Google Inc. and Time Warner Inc.'s

AOL LLC, also have been dropping some of their least popular services.

The shutdown will affect 17 employees, most of whom will be laid off. Simpson says the company notified RushmoreDrive employees on Monday of the impending closure.

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