

Google says 'Cerf's Up' (Update)

September 9 2005

Behemoth search engine Google signaled an even further climb to the top of the Internet mountain Thursday with its announcement that Vint Cerf, one of the founders of the Internet, is joining the company as its "chief Internet evangelist."

Vinton (Vint) Cerf, the longtime technologist, is widely known as one of the "founding fathers" of the Internet. Along with Robert Kahn, Cerf co-designed the TCP/IP protocols that were used to develop the Internet's underlying architecture.

"Vint Cerf is clearly one of the great technology leaders of our time," said Google CEO Eric Schmidt. "His vision for technology helped create entire industries that have transformed many parts of our lives. We are honored to welcome him to Google."

According to the company, Cerf will continue his leadership in the Internet community and help Google build network infrastructure, architectures, systems and standards for the next generation of Internet applications.

Cerf joins Google from MCI, where he led technology advancements since 1982, with a break to return to research at the Corporation for National Research Initiatives from 1986 to 1994. On his return to MCI in 1994 he helped to put MCI on the Internet map. With Robert Kahn, he recently received the ACM's A.M. Turing Award, considered "the Nobel Prize for computing," for his achievements in computer networking.

Cerf is also working on the Interplanetary Network, a project of NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab, which aims to extend the Internet into outer space for planet-to-planet communications. He will also continue in his role as the chairman of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers.

The hiring of Cerf for an undisclosed sum comes after a series of rapid recent upward moves by Google that included the introduction of the increasingly popular VoIP telephony through its network, the launch of instant-messenger service and the sale of \$4.2 billion in stock in order to raise a war chest for possible large-scale acquisitions.

Created in a Stanford University dorm room in the late 90s, the dot-com had its first public stock offering in August of last year and is currently worth an estimated \$84 billion.

Google is primarily an advertising-driven company during an era when Net advertising has been strongly on the upswing. The company also benefits from holding a nearly 50-percent share of the search market, being the search engine of choice for many Netsurfers, according to a Nielsen/NetRatings report released in July.

Started seven years ago by two enterprising Stanford students -- the same school that brought the world Yahoo! -- Google quickly gained in the search ranks by virtue of its so-called page-ranking system, which its creators say makes for more successful and accurate searches. Founders computer-science Ph.D. candidates Sergey Brin and Larry Page formulated the page-ranking algorithm while still in school, surmising, among other factors, that pages linked to more often (more popular) were greater sources of information.

According to company history, Page's Stanford dorm room became Google's data center while Brin's room served as the business office. The

two students put their studies on hold and raised \$1 million in funding from family, friends and angel investors to start the company.

On Sept. 7, 1998, Google was incorporated and moved to its first office in a friend's Menlo Park, Calif., garage with four employees. Initially, Google answered an average of 10,000 search queries per day.

The search engine has worked its way into popular vernacular with the verb "to Google" someone, meaning to look up their background information -- with "Googling" becoming a popular facet of the dating ritual and among ego-battling colleagues who want to see who has more Internet listings.

Google closed moderately up in Thursday trading, gaining 52 cents a share, or 0.18 percent, to close at \$295.39 share.

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