

Europe Crafts Own Search Engine

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Europe is planning to introduce its own Internet search engine, reports the Associated Press. Dubbed Quaero, the engine is considered Europe's answer to Google, but the chances of it making the same global impact as Google are slim.

Quaero is currently a scattering of top technology minds across France and Germany. Companies behind the initiative include Thomson, France Telecom and Deutsche Telekom. Their plan is to create the planet's most advanced multimedia search engine

Quaero represents French President Jacques Chirac's ambition for Europe to create alternative solutions to the U.S. dominated multimedia industry. "We must meet the global challenge of the American giants, Google and Yahoo," Chirac said last week. "Today the new geography of

knowledge and cultures is being drawn. Tomorrow, that which is not available online runs the risk of being invisible to the world," he continued.

Europe, however, faces an uphill task in challenging the well established, hyper-rich and talented American rivals, so fierce is the battle between the U.S. giants Microsoft, Google, Yahoo and AOL.

The European designers claim Quaero would have multiple functions such as tools for translating, identifying and indexing images, sound and text. The technology would work on all platforms - computer desktops, mobile devices and even televisions - and be sold to television companies, filmmakers, post-production facilities and anyone who creates or uses audiovisual content, according to the French electronics giant, Thomson.

Elsewhere, California-based Google Inc. is expanding its range of services. As well as introducing new software and telecommunications services, it will soon be incorporating books and television shows into its Internet search engine.

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