

# Broadband Report: YouTube plays with NBC

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It's amazing how far the social video Web site YouTube has come in such a short time. In less than 12 months YouTube has reportedly had 9 million people a month visit the Web site, making it one of the largest and most trafficked video sites on the Internet, only being beaten by MSNBC. That's a pretty big accomplishment and a sign that online video is the next big thing in the Web.

What accounts for this explosion of video activity? Credit must be given to the success of Apple's video iPod for opening people's eyes to the idea, that yes; people are willing to pay for online content. Who knew? For years, Web site content providers have struggled to come up with viable business plans or ways to monetize their static content, when the real money maker ended up being "old school" tech-video.

Other factors leading into the current video boom include further high-speed household penetration and providers like Comcast and Verizon need to be commended on making the process of obtaining broadband access so simple that even my mother can work with it. I remember back in the day (circa 2000) when I jumped at the first chance I could, to get high-speed Internet and back then the process was horrible and frankly cost a small fortune. Now high-speed Internet has almost become a commodity, something that every household either has, or wants to have.

Like high-definition television, users now have all this speed and capability and are desperate for opportunities to actually use beyond browsing static Web sites quicker. So it's almost no surprise that video is leading the Web 2.0 revitalization movement. These days, you just

launch any old video based Web site, you can generate enough buzz to get huge, quickly. But like the old Net, the new Net is having trouble making money off this newfound interest in the Web.

Credit can also be given to the lower cost of high quality video camcorders, increased resolution of webcams, and low-end editing software like Ulead's Video Studio, Adobe Premiere Elements, or Avid's Studio products.

YouTube has millions of download a day/month, but they haven't really made that much money yet. But they do have more than \$11 million in venture capital, and now own the mindshare of users, so it's no wonder a company like NBC is looking to partner with them.

The new deal will give YouTube, something that it craves and that's legitimacy from the big boys. They will create a new NBC page that will showcase a lot of NBC programming, and will include interviews with NBC stars, commercials for NBC's upcoming fall line-up and more. It's ironic because NBC was upset with YouTube for violating their copyright and spreading "The Chronic of Narnia" video clip from Saturday Night Live.

The suits at NBC were initially raving mad over this and sent the lawyers after them. But after calming down and thinking about how hugely successful that viral video was, they came to their senses and decided to embrace the technology and opportunity to work with this upstart company. Who says there can't be a happy ending when old media fights with the new? If only the RIAA could learn from NBC.

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