

Google, Adobe in distribution deal

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Google's move to sign a multi-year distribution deal with Adobe to include the Internet group's toolbar in the installation process of Adobe products for Windows is raising eyebrows in the industry over the search giant's recent actions in its competition with Microsoft.

Adobe made the announcement earlier this week that it had signed the multi-year distribution agreement with Google to distribute the Google Toolbar with Adobe's Macromedia Shockwave Player, among other of the company's products. Financial terms were undisclosed, but the agreement with Google bumps off its rival Yahoo!, which previously had the bundling agreement since 2004.

"As leaders in our respective market categories, it's fitting for Adobe and Google to work together to improve the ways customers engage with ideas and information," Shantanu Narayen, Adobe's president and chief

operating officer, said in a statement. "Our customers will benefit from the power and convenience of the Google Toolbar, and the popularity and reach of Adobe technology gives Google even broader exposure to a growing base of consumers. We expect the agreement to represent significant revenue to Adobe over a period of years."

According to Adobe, the company has had more than 200 million downloads to date of its Macromedia Shockwave Player, "with hundreds of thousands of Shockwave Players downloaded each day," and the "Shockwave Player is installed on more than 55 percent of Internet-enabled desktops."

"Adobe customers are some of the most savvy, enthusiastic consumers of Web content, and we think they'll love the fact that Google Toolbar will let them take the power of Google search with them anywhere on the Web," added Omid Kordestani, senior vice president of global sales and business development at Google. "Adobe and Google are teaming up to help users more easily and quickly find the ever-increasing sources of information that are important to them."

Similarly, Google signed another such deal last month to further expand its distribution capabilities via a distribution agreement with Dell Computers, after the two companies were in talks earlier this year. The agreement, in which Google paid an undisclosed amount, had the PC maker bundle Google's desktop software for searching content of a user's hard drive and e-mails as well as to install a Web browser search tool bar with laptops and PCs purchased from the Dell store. Dell computers also had personalized Google homepages for Dell, which included typical Google and Dell widgets.

As of October 2005 Google and Sun Microsystems agreed to "promote and distribute their software technologies," including having the Google Toolbar bundled with the download of Sun's Java Runtime Environment,

as well explore other opportunities with OpenOffice.org and OpenSolaris, the companies had said.

Google's move to gain distribution agreements could prove beneficial to the company as it continues to position itself to move ahead of its competitors in other arenas, namely Microsoft -- while grasping the search market realm it currently dominates.

According to comScore Networks' monthly qSearch analysis released Wednesday of search engines' activities, Google maintained its status as market leader with 44.1 percent of searches conducted on its sites from the 7.4 billion searches conducted by Americans for May 2006. It also gained search market share for the tenth consecutive month. Behind Google came Yahoo! with 27.9 percent and MSN third with 12.9 percent, followed by Time Warner Network, Ask Network and MySpace.com Search.

comScore also reported that Google registered the most search queries performed with 3.3 billion, followed by Yahoo! with 2.1 billion and MSN-Microsoft with 963 million. Additionally, it reported that Google grabbed 49.1 percent of toolbar searches vs. 46.2 percent of Yahoo!.

But Google continues to have a busy week in the news. The company also announced this week it is currently testing a new type of online ad that would protect advertising partners from paying additional funds due to click fraud and is also testing a free ad-supported video model on Google Video for a limited time.

It also said Friday it had sold its stake in Baidu.com, a Chinese search engine, in a move to concentrate on its own search engine in the country, Google.cn, also known as "Guge."

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