

Lycos announces online TV deal

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In an effort to diversify its portfolio further, Internet group Lycos signed a deal with online television platform PermissionTV to deliver a variety of video content to Lycos users.

The service will offer episodic television, independent films and programming, long-form movies and other video content, according to Brian Kalinowski, chief operating officer of Lycos. David Graves, chief executive of Permission TV, said in a news release Tuesday that the two companies will be courting smaller video content providers.

"The combination of Lycos's reach and PermissionTV's advanced technology is an attractive proposition for video programmers who want to attract a large audience in the most compelling way," Graves said. "This platform makes it easy to get up and running, allowing content providers to build an audience for their own brands."

Additionally, Lycos plans to offer multiple payment models, including download-to-own, pay-per-view and subscription options, Kalinowski said.

"It will be very much like the cable network model," Kalinowski told United Press International. "Some programming will be free, some will be pay-per-view, and there will be some package-based subscriptions."

He added that the current plan calls for subscription plans that would cost less than \$15 per month.

Alfred Tolle, Lycos's chief executive, said in a news release that PermissionTV's advanced technology was a big reason for the agreement.

"We chose to work with PermissionTV because we considered it to be one of the most powerful broadband TV platforms available today," he said, "allowing us to offer high-quality video to our end users that is television-centric, while providing our content partners their own customized channels with a completely unique look."

"By teaming with Permission TV, Lycos is uniquely positioned to become a leader in the television Internet space," he added.

Doing so is a key part of Lycos' strategy, Kalinowski said.

"Over the next three to four months, Lycos will make a major push in the video distribution model online," he said. "We're moving from a flat model to a much more broadband model with music, video, games and other things online."

"This is one step of a number of technological steps Lycos will be taking," he added.

Though Lycos is months away from fully deploying the service, it has already begun some programming with behind-the-scenes coverage of the World Cup in Germany. The coverage, available at WorldCup.Lycos.com, centers on the culture surrounding the soccer tournament and all the things going on throughout Germany to celebrate the event. Kalinowski said that the World Cup coverage basically acts as a beta test of the technology.

"We're testing a lot of the paradigms from second- and third-tier content editors," he said. "It's a testing ground to see what we can do with

amateur and semi-pro content."

He added that what they figure out from this testing of the technology will help when they approach independent film creators, film festivals and film schools about hosting their content on Lycos.

Tolle said that Lycos is on the verge of a significant merging of powerful technologies.

"The era of merging the interactivity of the Web with traditional broadcast television programming is here," he said.

"Lycos can bring an instant audience, immediate distribution and traffic, and consistently re-engage our users with new content, making this platform particularly attractive to content partners and advertisers alike."

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