

MySpace's new CEO promises innovation

May 28 2009, By ELLIOT SPAGAT , AP Business Writer



(AP) -- The new leaders of News Corp.'s MySpace said Wednesday they need to innovate to rejuvenate the social networking site, which has suffered from stalled user growth.

Owen Van Natta didn't detail specifics but indicated that the ability to make changes to the site was a reason he took the job of [MySpace](#) chief executive last month.

"When I look at MySpace there's just so much opportunity to build," Van Natta said at The Wall Street Journal's D: All Things Digital conference. "I took the job because there's a lot more that can be done around innovation."

Though praised for its substantial entertainment content, MySpace has been criticized for falling behind rival Facebook when it comes to technology. Its worldwide user base has also stagnated at about 130

million, compared with Facebook's 200 million.

"Certainly we're not the darling of the press right now, I think that's pretty clear," he said.

Van Natta, a former Facebook executive, said success would require trial and error, with failures along the way. He said it's starting from a strong place with millions of users.

MySpace, based in Beverly Hills, Calif., has distinguished itself from Facebook by allowing users to be "super-creative" in designing their pages, Van Natta said.

"I'm a big believer in personalization," he said. "Our job is to make MySpace really, really great for everybody, and that means that the experience has to be different for everybody."

Van Natta fielded questions for nearly an hour with Jonathan Miller, a former chief executive at [AOL](#) who was recently named chief digital officer of News Corp., the New York-based media conglomerate that also owns the Journal.

Miller acknowledged Facebook is a rival but that the growth in social networking leaves plenty of room for both.

"Yes, I think [Facebook](#) is a competitor but it's also fine to have competitors," Miller said. "I don't think it's going to be a winner-take-all game at all."

A substantial amount of MySpace's revenue comes from a \$900 million, three-year ad-sharing deal it began with Internet search leader Google Inc. in 2007. That deal expires in August 2010.

Miller said a new agreement with Google might involve other [News Corp.](#) Web sites.

©2009 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Citation: MySpace's new CEO promises innovation (2009, May 28) retrieved 11 September 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2009-05-myspace-ceo.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.