

Google buys shopping comparison site Like.com

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Shopping comparison website Like.com said Monday it has been bought by Google. Like.com specializes in visual search technology that lets people hunt online for bargains using pictures of clothing, handbags, shoes or other items they might desire.

Search giant Google has bought the shopping comparison website Like.com, the two companies said on Monday.

Like.com specializes in visual search technology that lets people hunt online for bargains using pictures of clothing, handbags, shoes or other items they might desire.

"We're pleased and excited to welcome Like.com to Google, where they'll work closely with our commerce team," Google spokesman Andrew Pederson said in an email response to an AFP inquiry.

"We're excited about the technology they've built and the domain expertise they'll bring to Google as we continue to work on building great e-commerce experiences for our users, advertisers and partners."

Like.com websites will continue to operate separately from Google operations, according to Pederson.

Google's acquisition of Like.com, launched in November of 2006 by startup Riya, was seen by some as a competitive response to Bing, the Microsoft search engine touted as a "decision engine" for shoppers.

"We were the first to bring visual search to shopping; the first to build an automated cross-matching system for clothing, and more," Riya chief executive Munjal Shah said in a message at the Like.com home page.

"We see joining Google as a way to supersize our vision and supercharge our passion."

Financial details of the deal were not disclosed.

Bing last week started powering Internet searches at Yahoo! web pages in North America as the technology firms combine forces to take on Google.

Yahoo! will control how results are presented and has vowed to give users relevant data customized to their tastes or interests.

Yahoo! and Microsoft unveiled a 10-year Web search and advertising partnership a year ago that set the stage for a joint offensive against Google.

Under the agreement, Yahoo! will use Microsoft's search engine on its own sites while providing the exclusive global sales force for premium

advertisers.

Data released by industry tracker comScore showed that US search engine rankings changed slightly in July, with Google's dominant share slipping less than half a percent to 65.8 from 66.2 percent in June.

The comScore rankings were based on "explicit" searches in which people entered specific queries to scour the Internet for information.

Google's loss was apparently a gain for Yahoo!, which had a 17.1 percent share of the search market as compared to 16.7 percent the previous month, according to comScore.

Bing remained in third place with its search market share unchanged at 11 percent, according to comScore figures.

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