

Hearst unveils bill pay, subscription service

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Manilla.com, a free "personal account management service," was launched in beta, or test, mode on Monday, Hearst said in a statement.

Hearst said Manilla lets consumers manage their bills, finances, travel rewards programs and magazine subscriptions in one place using a single sign-on, eliminating the need for multiple passwords.

Manilla users are provided with an "organized view of all their current account information, reminders to pay bills and free lifetime storage of all their account statements, notices, offers and bills," Hearst said.

"Over time, Manilla will support all categories of business relationships for which a customer has an account relationship," Hearst said. Its launch partners are US cable giant Comcast and Citibank.

Hearst highlighted the savings it said Manilla will provide to both businesses and consumers who go "paperless."

Citing US postal service figures, Hearst said US businesses mail nearly 48 billion account notices, statements, offers and bills to their customers every year.

"Manilla's simple interface and organizational features help consumers save time and remove clutter from their lives," Manilla chief executive George Kliavkoff said.

"Manilla also serves as a powerful new way for businesses to communicate with their customers that is complementary to current online efforts and reduces the considerable costs that are spent on printed mail every day."

Hearst, a privately held company founded by legendary press baron William Randolph Hearst, is one of the biggest US media publishers.

Its properties include the San Francisco Chronicle, Houston Chronicle and San Antonio Express-News newspapers, 14 US magazines including Cosmopolitan, Esquire and Good Housekeeping and 29 television stations.

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