

Businessmen unveil plans for 'Muslim Facebook'

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An Indonesian Muslim woman using popular social networking website Facebook in Jakarta. A group of Muslim businessmen unveiled plans in Turkey on Thursday for a Facebook-style social networking site with "healthy values" for a young, Islamic audience.

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SalamWorld.com, which will make its internet debut next year, "will seek to unify the youth in a common vision and the healthy values of Islam while attempting to not diffuse any unhealthy information," said Akhmed Azimov, the initiative's vice-president.

Based in Istanbul, with offices in Moscow and Cairo and coordinators in 30 countries, the site hopes to attract 50 million users within three years, Azimov told about 150 journalists from Muslim countries at the company's luxurious Istanbul offices.

"The heart of the project is to create a network without any content that is prohibited by religion," said Azimov, a Dagestan native. "To achieve this, we will have a big team of moderators and there will be filters.

"We also count on users to moderate themselves and to filter the contents."

Azimov declined to discuss funding details but said "there's no problem with that," adding the investors were a group of businessmen from the Muslim world.

Beyond user-generated content, the site will offer services such as theological consultations and city guides that list mosque locations and halal food stores.

"We're going to try to create an <u>online encyclopedia</u>, a sort of Islamic <u>Wikipedia</u>," Azimov said.

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