

Yahoo Finally Makes the Move To Social Media With “Project Rushmore”

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SUNNYVALE, Calif., Dec. 2, 2009 – Continuing its commitment to be the center of people’s online lives, Yahoo today announced further integration with Facebook that unites social experiences from across the Web to provide a place for consumers to enjoy meaningful content and stay in touch with the people they care about most.

Last month Yahoo decided to make its move into social media after years of procrastination. The code name of their venture is “Project Rushmore,” – presumably named after the famous Mt. Rushmore sculpture. The project has been described as a massive integration of major social media networking sites across the big Internet portal.

During the first phase, Yahoo will integrate Facebook with many of their own properties – Yahoo News, Yahoo Sports, Flickr photo service and Yahoo email which has almost 500 million users.

Once deployed, Yahoo users will be able to see their full Facebook feed on Yahoo and Facebook users will have their Yahoo activity displayed on their news feed. Yahoo intends to have similar integrations with Twitter, LinkedIn and either YouTube or MySpace. This is a major step for Yahoo because they completely missed the social media boat and needed to figure out a way to be part of it.

Yahoo had 1.575 billion visitors in 2008. The global network of all Yahoo websites received 3.4 billion page views per day in October 2007. It was the second most visited website in the world in May 2009 after Google. Now it is in fourth place behind Google, Facebook and YouTube – so you can see why Yahoo was frantic.

Things were different back in August. Yahoo made a deal with Microsoft and exited the growing online search business to focus on the competitive, online media business. Yahoo's mistake was that they were continuing to fight for traditional search and traditional "portal" control. They missed the hottest part of the Internet - the social web - which takes tiny amounts of capital and is getting all the attention. What Yahoo missed in 2009, they hope to gain in 2010.

Cody Simms, a director of product management at Yahoo, sums it up like this: “Yahoo’s integration of Facebook will provide their users with richer experiences across all Yahoo products. In the future, you will be able to choose where you want to update your status message – from destinations across Yahoo – or directly on Facebook. This relationship pushes us really far forward and it helps our users be more social.”