

Waitrose and Faith latest to add a presence on SkyNet platform

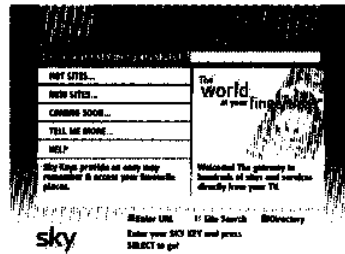
BY GARETH JONES
AND SAM MATTHEWS

Supermarket giant Waitrose and high street fashion brand Faith are the latest major retailers to launch on the SkyNet Internet-on-TV platform.

Both brands have been working with interactive TV consultancy Glued Technology to launch branded home pages on the service, which is free to Sky's 8m digital satellite subscribers.

Just months after making its first foray into iTV advertising (nma.co.uk 06.01.06), Waitrose is rolling out a SkyNet site to provide viewers with information about the company and the products it sells.

The supermarket chain is planning to expand its SkyNet presence over the coming months with the addition of a store finder and a range of enhanced functions. It says it won't rule out the launch of a full trans-



actional iTV presence.

"We're interested in using emerging technologies to develop our brand," said Fiona Hall, marketing manager for Internet and ecommerce at Waitrose. "SkyNet is a great way for us to communicate with viewers in a highly interactive, low-risk environment."

Women's shoe retailer Faith will launch a similar SkyNet shopfront giving consumers the chance to

browse its latest range of products and order a brochure.

Digital record company Craze Productions is also rolling out on SkyNet later this year. The label is planning to launch a full-track music download service allowing viewers to use their mobile phones to buy the music they hear on channels including MTV and VH1.

Craze, which owns the exclusive UK rights to artists Aaliyah and Kool and the Gang, is set to launch on SkyNet to sell music ringtones and videos in September. The full-track music service will be operational by the end of 2006.

It intends to advertise its offering in consumer magazines and *Sky Magazine*, which reaches 25m users a month. It will also run TV ads on Sky music channels.

sky.com

Dixons boss calls into question the value of search marketing

Dixons and Currys boss John Clare, who controls a £100m annual marketing budget, has expressed scepticism of search marketing's role in multi-channel retailing.

"In the multi-channel space we want the brands to benefit from main media advertising, in brochures, TV and flyers. We want them to benefit from having 300 stores labelled Currys or 150 stores labelled PC World around the country," he said. "That means we will limit how much in addition we're prepared to put into search engines."

Clare, who is also president of the advertisers' association ISBA, challenged the fundamentals of online advertising's most successful medium, which he suspects has grown because "a significant number of customers don't yet understand it".

"I'm a bit suspicious of paid-for search," he said. "Search engines are telling customers that the prices they see at the top of the list are the cheapest out there, but people don't realise these brands have paid to a significant amount of money to be there."

"That business model is going to have to change," added Clare.

dxns-group.com

SEE PROFILE, PAGE 18

Google AdWords now helps brands identify invalid clicks

Google has claimed that the launch of a feature within its AdWords reporting system enabling brands and agencies to see the number of invalid clicks on individual campaigns is part of a drive towards greater transparency.

The search giant said that recent reports on third-party click fraud have exaggerated figures, so providing results directly through AdWords will provide greater accuracy.

"Advertisers can now not only see the number of invalid clicks on their account on a campaign basis, but also the invalid click rate," said Shuman Ghosemajumder, Google's business product manager. "The figures can be measured annually, quarterly or daily."

Google has recently been involved in a high-profile nationwide class-action lawsuit in the US regarding

click-fraud, but Ghosemajumder maintained that the new announcement had nothing to do with that.

"We've been working on this for several months," he said. "It's an initiative to provide the transparency that advertisers have asked for."

Ghosemajumder hopes the reporting feature will provide the greater level of contact and openness from the company that associated parties have been calling for in the UK.

"I think that Google has had some success at getting more information out in the US, and as a result of that it seems there might be less information by comparison available in the UK," he said. "So I think that's one of the reasons it's important that this feature is available to UK advertisers."

google.com

Bebo headless in UK as Wasmund quits

Bebo has been left without a UK head following MD Shaa Wasmund's shock decision to quit the job after only one month in charge.

Wasmund has been reappointed strategic advisor, which will see her take a part-time role at the UK's second most popular social network.

The vacancy leaves chief safety

officer Rachel O'Connell and communications director Sarah Gavin as Bebo's most senior full-time UK staff.

Wasmund, ex-founder and CEO of Mykindaplace, cited the lure of opportunities that would put her in charge of developing start-up projects as the main reason for her leaving.

bebo.com

BREAKING

Lewis quits AOL for Yahoo!

AOL head of agency sales Miles Lewis has left after six years to join Yahoo!. Giles Ivey, currently sales director, replaces Lewis.

aol.co.uk

Dare revamps site for Woolwich Intermediaries

Dare has created a Web site for Barclay's Woolwich intermediaries. The agency reviewed the current site, which Barclay's admitted was "far behind its competitors", and changed the structure, navigation and design, adding 50% more pages and rewriting the site in a more conversational tone of voice.

woolwichintermediaries.co.uk

85% of travel searches lead to bookings

Online search drove 9.8m UK travel purchases in three months, according to findings from ComScore Media Metrix, Media Contacts and Yahoo! Search Marketing. The joint research measured 7,500 searches between December 2005 and February 2006. During this time, 7.5m people used the Web to plan trips, with 85% of their searches ending in an online or offline purchase within 90 days.

searchmarketing.yahoo.co.uk

mediacontacts.com

comscore.com

Dabble searches across major video sites

Video search engine Dabble launched this week. It's one of the first sites to offer video searching across multiple major video players including YouTube, Google Video and MySpace Video. The service also enables users to create profiles where they can store any videos they watch online by clicking on an 'Add to Dabble' bookmark.

dabble.com

Freestyle New Media hires head of creative

Digital agency Freestyle New Media has hired Daniel Birch as creative director. The ex-creative head at Twentysix London (formerly Incepta Online) has joined the Midlands-based agency after working for London agencies including AKQA and Oyster. Birch will work on accounts including recent wins Royal Bank of Scotland and Taylor Woodrow, and long-term clients Volvo, Jaguar and Simple Skin Care.

fsnm.co.uk

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