

Start-Up OpenX Touts Burgeoning Ad Traffic.

It may be that the technology and advertising industries are curtailing spending in the current painful economic environment, but one start-up, OpenX, is happy to report progress in establishing its new business.

OpenX sells support and consulting services around an open-source software package geared toward publishers that need to serve ads on their online properties. The Pasadena, Calif.-based company also has been expanding online, first by hosting the software on its own site, free to lower-traffic customers, and second through a pilot test of a marketplace that lets advertisers buy ads across a larger group of publishers.

Among the milestones the company is announcing Monday: The OpenX software, installed by customers or hosted by OpenX, currently delivers 300 billion ads per month. About 2,500 customers are using the hosted version now, with a growth rate that sees customers double each week.

"This is some pretty phenomenal growth," crowed Chief Executive Tim Cadogan, a former Yahoo search and advertising executive.

Next comes the more difficult process of converting the free products and services into revenue-generating operations. The vast majority of the ads served by the installed software were from freely downloaded versions, and few of those using the hosted service are premium customers.

But Cadogan said the company has just launched the support products and online services, and that revenue generation is a priority. "We are all over the revenue side and pushing that really hard. I expect more news on that in the next one to three months," he said.

More than 10,000 customers installed version 2.6 of the OpenX software since its July release. The company plans to release 2.7 into beta testing soon, a version that will add a plug-in system that will enable customers to customize the software with specific modules for tasks such as specific targeting, video ads, or mobile ads, Cadogan said.



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An aside for consideration are the the distinct segments within the field of Search Engine Optimization. Clarification and separation are required in terms of paid search marketing, sponsored search advertising, pay per click, email marketing (spam), and the foundation of strategic internet marketing: Organic Search Engine Optimization (Organic SEO) are also referred to as Natural Search Engine Optimization (Natural SEO).

Key Organic Search Engine Optimization Facts:

- Keyword search is the 2nd most popular online activity, rapidly approaching the popularity of email retrieval.
- 90% of all new website visitors are delivered by a major search engine and/or directory.
- 98% of all keyword search activity results are powered by the big 4 search engines: Google, Yahoo, MSN and AOL.
- Keyword search results on Google, Yahoo, MSN and AOL are determined by search engine spiders and/or robot crawlers.
- Recent internet marketing studies confirm that keyword searchers prefer the organic results at a 6 to 1 ratio vs. pay-per-click sponsored search advertising listings.

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