



Blog



CLIE

Username

Password

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

EVENTS

RESEARCH & FORECASTS

ABOUT US

BLOG

February 24, 2009

Entrepreneur Watch: Cazoodle Crawls Vertical Listings

Cazoodle, a new listings-based service, has launched from the incubator at The University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana (yes, Marc Andreesson’s former territory). The site currently crawls for apartment listings and shopping. Additional vertical categories such as events are anticipated, notes Professor Kevin Chang, who is supervising seven graduate students on the project. “We have the technology and we want to use it,” he says.

The service started in San Francisco with apartments and added shopping afterwards. It now provides listings in those verticals in more than 20 markets. National coverage of apartments will begin shortly. The key to the service, says Chang, is a comprehensive set of crawled ads, and a better user experience that isn’t dominated by showcased ads.

The landing pages of many vertical sites are “2/3 ads, 1/3 listings,” he says. Cazoodle hopes to reverse the ratio (although it isn’t actively selling ads at this point). The site also has an elegant integration with Google Street View and Maps.

Looking forward, Chang hopes to build direct relationships with major listers, such as managers of apartment communities. Direct relationships provide much better information than what you can get by crawling, he says. Ultimately, he believes that’s a major differentiator. He also hopes to begin adding community information.

But the site is not without controversy (or maybe, there should be controversy). For instance, the site dives deep into the sites that it crawls. During mouse-overs, it highlights a picture of the product or apartments, and full listing information.

Chang argues that Cazoodle isn’t actually “deep linking” since the URLs of crawled sites are still highlighted, and only one picture is displayed. But in reality, there may not be much of a reason to visit the site of origination, given the easy “one stop” that his system provides.



Blog: Local Media Blog, Classifieds, Google, Verticals, Marketplaces

Posted by: Peter Krasilovsky at 2:22 pm -

No Comments »

No comments yet.

[RSS feed for comments on this post.](#)

Leave a comment

Name (required)

Mail (will not be published) (required)

Website