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Spock, The New Search In Town, Seeks Advertisers

by [Tameka Kee](#), Monday, August 27, 2007, 6:00 AM

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Since its commercial launch two weeks ago, a reported 2 million unique visitors have checked out Spock, the vertical search engine aimed at indexing "everyone in the world."

In addition to crawling publicly available information such as articles, images and social networking profiles, the Redwood City, Calif.-based newcomer relies on community-rated relevance tagging to deliver search results.


Casual users can vote on whether a search result is appropriately tagged (Leo Burnett is tagged with "advertising," "Tony the Tiger," and "Marlboro Man," for example), while registered users can add relevant content to their own profiles and the profiles of others. Typical search results include a brief biographical summary, photos, and links to other sources of information like Wikis and blogs.

The blend of technological and human-influenced search has sparked a surge in curious traffic, as on Aug. 20, Spock.com was ranked as the Top Mover and Shaker (with a 1500% spike in traffic growth) by the Alexa Web measurement firm. But the search company is banking on a similar growth in advertiser curiosity to develop into a strong revenue stream.

According to Jaideep Singh, Spock's co-founder and CEO, the company's take on people search offers marketers "a unique and powerful advertising proposition," because there are three sources to target by--the terms of search query itself, the results page, and a registered user's own profile.

Spock is currently running Google AdWords links alongside search results, with plans to include banner and display ads in the short term. Singh added that the company is in talks with various ad networks and will experiment with different combinations of ad servers, affiliates and direct brand sponsorship to find the optimal mix.

Spock currently has 30 employees, and plans to integrate video and news listings into the search results within the next three months. The company cleared \$7 million in Series A financing from Clearstone Venture Partners and Opus Capital last December.

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