

Beyond.com reborn as Artemis' recruitment network portal

BY JOHN ZAPPE

What do you call it when you decide to do more on your Web site than just post jobs?

For Artemis HR, parent of the 4Jobs.com network, the answer was Beyond.com. Of course, it was more than just a lucky coincidence that the name of the defunct e-commerce vendor was available.

"We've been growing our business above and beyond the traditional job board," said Rich Milgram, founder and CEO of the jobs network. "Neither of them (Artemis or 4Jobs) quite encompassed who we are. When we saw that the name was available, we bought it." (He wouldn't say for how much.)

The name change became effective in late May, but changing the nature of the network began months ago. The network is a combination of thousands of niche sites – most different from each other in name only – owned by Beyond and hundreds more affiliates. Counting the total network traffic, Beyond.com ranks among the top 20 recruitment sites, though most of the 6,500 individual sites in the network have little traffic.

In the past, revenue has come primarily from two sources, job-posting fees and services, principally lead fees from magazine publishers. That's still the major part of the business model, but Milgram is looking to attract business professionals by offering more in the way of career and business services.

A key part of that is the SearchSimpleton network. A vertical directory that provides pointers to services and jobs within the Beyond network, SearchSimpleton links out to the job sites to pull in relevant results and especially jobs. Though editorial content such as the major recruitment sites offer is almost nonexistent, Milgram says in the coming months both the content and depth of the resources

will grow.

"We believe the business professional is where it's at," Milgram said. Right now, he acknowledged, SearchSimpleton and the Beyond network will appeal mainly to the professional who is looking for another job or just cruising to see what's available. In the future, as content and features grow deeper and traffic builds, the value will grow and with it, revenue.

SearchSimpleton results include free magazine subscriptions, technical books, and links to vocational schools among the jobs and resumes it finds. The results are a combination of natural and paid.

The books are on Amazon, which pays a commission to the referring site for each sale. Magazine publishers and trade schools pay for clicks.

Milgram's ambitious plan for Beyond.com is to build the network to a real power in the online recruitment sector. His goal, he said, is to "try to grow the career space so it is the clear No. 4 in the space behind HotJobs."

It's a tough job, he concedes. And not the least of the challenges is how to market the network. For example, Milgram said, do you promote PhillyJobs.com or Beyond? And many of the affiliate sites promote their own brand, even as they provide a feed to Beyond. The dilemma is that promoting Beyond.com as a job site pits it against all the other national brands that have high name-recognition. Promoting the niche does nothing for Beyond.

"We have to almost be the business professional network before we do anything else," said Milgram. A tough order, especially for a company that is self-funded.

Milgram said SearchSimpleton launched at the end of the first quarter of the year. The Beyond name change was officially announced in July. The ArtemisHR site now forwards to Beyond.com, but the 4Jobs.com brand and site remain.

