

Yahoo to support Facebook Connect

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Yahoo and Facebook have struck a deal that will allow people to log into Yahoo's vast stable of sites using their Facebook credentials.

The partnership marks a significant milestone for the Facebook Connect service, which is already used by sites including CNN and Yelp.

Facebook is investing heavily in Connect, which allows its users to log into other sites using their Facebook ID. By allowing its users to log into various sites around the web, taking their network of friends with them, Facebook hopes it will become the plumbing of a more social web.

"This will allow Facebook feed to be enriched by Yahoo content, and Yahoo to benefit from the Facebook network," said Jim Stoneham, vice president of communities for Yahoo.

Details on the implementation of the cashless deal are still being worked out. Yahoo said it expects to roll out the service in the first half of next year.

Already there is overlap between the two sites' audiences. According to ComScore, 52 per cent of Yahoo visitors are also visiting Facebook, while 84 per cent of Facebook users also visit Yahoo sites.

Yahoo missed the social networking surge, but has pledged under new chief executive Carol Bartz to put social tools into many of its properties. It has also attempted to become a more open platform, allowing users to customise their homepages with a variety of widgets and applications.

In recent months, Yahoo has begun integrating more Facebook features as well. Many of its sites now include a button that allows users to share Yahoo content on Facebook, and Facebook recently began allowing its users to comb their Yahoo address books for additional friends.

Yahoo maintains one of the most popular collection of sites on the web, including the photo sharing site Flickr, the careers site HotJobs, and its popular self-branded sports and finance sites.

Financial Times, London, Dec. 2nd 2009, Technology, online.