

NEWS - DIGITAL DOWNLOAD

BROADBAND

[BOOKMARK](#)
[Share on LinkedIn](#)
[Save](#)
[E-mail](#)
[Print](#)
[Most Popular](#)
[RSS](#)
[Reprints](#)

Page 1 of 2

MySpace Mojo, or No-Go? Buyers Suggest Revamps

June 21, 2009

-By Mike Shields



For one of the Web's biggest sites, there's a lot that needs fixing over at MySpace.

Buyers and analysts have varying ideas on just what News Corp. should do with its ailing social net, ranging from the philosophical (decide who you are) to the logistical (cut down the clutter). But no one doubts that change is needed, and is coming soon.

It's been a rough few weeks for MySpace. A new CEO replaced the site's founder. Analysts downgraded their ad revenue forecasts. Then last week, the company laid off 452 people, with maybe more to come.

So just what should be done with MySpace? First, the good news. Though the site's audience slid from 73.7 million uniques in May 2008 to 70.2 million this May, per comScore (while Facebook's audience doubled), it's "still an eyeball fire hose," said Dave Martin, vp, digital media at Ignited.

That said, the site has seen its white-hot buzz dissipate. "Are they still an effective marketing vehicle? Yes," said Craig Woerz, managing partner, Media Storm. "But they're not the bright shiny new ring anymore."

Beyond buzz, MySpace, which declined to comment for this story, has seen a sharp drop in engagement. Per Nielsen Online, its average monthly time spent per person is now one hour 20 minutes from two hours last year. Facebook exceeds three hours.

To wit, many contend that MySpace needs to better define itself—either by getting more social, or less. eMarketer analyst Debra Aho Williamson recalled that just a few years ago, MySpace came out with its Never Ending Friending study touting the power of social ads. "Then they stepped back and started calling themselves a social portal," she said.

In another switch of sorts, last year the site launched its Hypertargeting product, which promised to let advertisers target MySpace users based on their stated profile preferences. "That has nothing to do with social advertising," said Aho Williamson.

Given the recent innovation in the social media segment from Facebook and Twitter, many contend MySpace shouldn't try to catch up, but instead maintain its focus on being a high-reach content portal. However, that's not easy to pull off. "They are trying to be all things to all people," said Scott Shamberg, senior vp, marketing and media for the digital marketing agency Critical Mass. "They should really dig into their highest frequency users and carve out a niche."

Such as music, a longtime strength. Even so, despite MySpace Music's popularity, interest among advertisers is mild given its reputation as a background medium.

What about video? Long a strong No. 2 behind YouTube, in April Fox Interactive Media saw video traffic plummet. Plus, given that most of its content is user-generated, "MySpace Video has never been a consideration for our advertisers," said Chris Allen, vp, director of video innovation at Starcom. "You skip right over MySpace on those rankings."

MySpace also ought to deal with its design and overabundance of junky ads, agreed buyers. "The site got so bastardized so fast," said Shamberg. "As advertisers you're trying to break through the clutter—with MySpace you feel like you're adding to it."

Of course, it might be tough for MySpace to pull back on ads when monetization is one of its problems. That's where a strong sales organization would help, something else that's been lacking, said buyers.

Still, the agency community is rooting for MySpace, particularly given its potency as a reach vehicle. "I still believe in MySpace," said Ignited's Martin. "But they need to plug the leaky ship. If the numbers come down, we are less likely to work with them."

« [PREVIOUS PAGE](#) 1 | 2

[Save](#)
[E-mail](#)
[Print](#)
[Most Popular](#)
[RSS](#)
[Reprints](#)

Register now and SAVE up to \$200!

mention keycode: BIZ03

ADVERTISEMENT

BRANDWEEK B, R, A, N, D

VISIT OUR BRAND KEYS RANKINGS . . .

SPONSORED BY: Advertising Decision Solutions

THE **PROGRAMMING INSIDER**
By Marc Bernan

[NEWSLETTER](#)
[CHAT](#)
[PODCAST](#)
[COLUMN](#)

CBS Wins Thursday Overnights; Fox Expected to Dominate Among Adults 18-49

2009-07-17

Repeats of CSI and The Mentalist lifted CBS to another Thursday overnight win. But even a deteriorating So You Think You Can Dance should be enough for Fox to dominate among adults 18-49.

[More](#)

[MORE NEWSLETTERS](#)

paidContent.org
THE ECONOMICS OF CONTENT

• **paidContent Quick Hits: 6.17.09**

~ **Industry Moves: Current Media Replaces Hyatt; Mark Rosenthal Is New CEO**

~ **Quadrangle Hands Lad Mag Maxim To Creditors**

~ **New UK Journalism Investigation Unit Gets \$3.3 Million Grant, Google Backing**

~ **Judge Dismisses SEC Insider Trading Charges Against Mark Cuban**

ADVERTISEMENT