Yahoo expands sharing of stories through Facebook

The Associated Press

Yahoo is deepening its connections with Facebook's online social network.

The latest bond announced late Tuesday will enable Facebook users to share more of their activities on Yahoo's websites, including which stories they are reading.

Yahoo Inc. introduced the Facebook-sharing option in its main new section three months ago. The same feature will now be available in 26 other parts of Yahoo's site, including its "omg" service for entertainment news and sections devoted to television, movies and games.

By tying more of its services to Facebook's popularity, Yahoo is hoping to give people more reasons to visit and stick around its website. Yahoo ultimately wants to sell more online advertising. That's an area where Facebook has been gaining ground as its website has emerged as a top Internet hangout.

As Facebook has become more influential, Yahoo has been struggling to remain relevant among Web surfers and online advertisers.

It's been a daunting challenge so far. Yahoo has gone through three different CEOs in the past four years while its revenue and stock price have drooped. The difficulties have prompted a board review that culminate in a sale of all or part of the company.

Yahoo has been pleased with the results of Facebook-sharing so far. Traffic to Yahoo's news section from Facebook has tripled since that sharing feature was introduced, according to the company, which is based in Sunnyvale, Calif.

Apparently, a relatively small percentage of Yahoo's 700 million users want their online social circles to know what they're reading on the Web. Yahoo says about 12 million people have opted to share their tastes in news stories so far. The feature is particularly popular among young adults ranging from 18 to 24 years old, according to Yahoo.

Facebook sharing still isn't available on two of Yahoo's most popular sections, finance and sports. The company says those sections will be linked to Facebook early next year.

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