

Yahoo kills 'Livestand' just 6 months after debut

The Associated Press

Yahoo has killed Livestand, a tablet magazine, just six months after its debut on the iPad.

The decision announced Friday is part of the struggling Internet company's latest turnaround effort.

Last month, Yahoo Inc. told analysts it would close or combine about 50 services that haven't been performing up to expectations.

That housecleaning plan was drawn up by Yahoo's former CEO, Scott Thompson, who lasted at the company for an even shorter period than Livestand. Thompson's four-month stint at Yahoo ended two weeks ago when he stepped down amid a flap over incorrect information on his bio.

Yahoo interim CEO Ross Levinsohn hasn't said whether the company still plans to dump as many services as Thompson intended. A Friday post on Yahoo's corporate blog made it clear that more services will be closed, without specifying a precise number.

"When we discontinue products, it will be so that we can focus on opportunities where we lead and where we can create the most meaningful experiences for people using our products, and for our partners, developers and advertisers," the post said.

Yahoo began working on Livestand in 2010 after it became clear Apple Inc.'s iPad was going to be popular. But the tablet magazine didn't hit the market until last November, well after a similar iPad application called "Flipboard" had already attracted a large audience.

Nevertheless, Yahoo still had high hopes for Livestand. It was hailed as "sort of a re-imagining of what Yahoo can be," by Blake Irving, the company's chief product officer at the time of the tablet magazine's release. Irving left Yahoo last month after Thompson laid off about 2,000 workers and reshuffled management.

Livestand featured software that could be customized to pull content from Yahoo's own website, and other digital publishers to cater to each user's tastes.

It was the same concept pioneered by Flipboard, which was available shortly after the iPad's April 2010 debut. Flipboard became so popular that Apple named it as its "app of the year" for 2010.

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