

Music video website in the works

YouTube announces plans for Vevo.com to launch later this year

by Erica Che
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A new Web site, Vevo.com, may soon be the online destination for students seeking music videos of their favorite artists. Last Thursday, YouTube, which is owned by Google, and music company Universal Music Group, announced a joint plan to introduce Vevo—a Web site which will provide music videos of Universal's artists and other related content—this year.

The two companies have begun discussions with other major labels about joining the site, which will be owned by Universal and implement YouTube's technology, Google CEO Eric Schmidt '76 said in a news conference last week. Vevo will also have its own channel on YouTube.

Though the idea of the site appeals to some students, others said they were unsure it would be widely used, especially if its content was already available online or the site posted too many advertisements.

Jonathan Giron '12, who explained that he uses YouTube almost exclusively to watch music videos, said he thought he would definitely use the site, but Liyan Zhao '12 said she doesn't think the new site will have a clearly defined purpose for users.

"It's on YouTube anyway," she said. "I don't think there's a point."

Jon Feyer '09 also called into question Vevo's ability to compete with other sites while focusing on turning a profit.

"The site appeals in theory, but if it has any significant amount of advertising, which it will, my patience will run dry very quickly," he said in an e-mail. "The market is so saturated with video sites, they would have to offer a lot of exclusive content for me to stay interested, and even then, it would probably not be from artists I'm interested in."

Ellen Kim '10 said that while she might visit the site, she does not expect it to appeal to her since she does not currently use

YouTube to watch many music videos.

"I usually watch home videos," Ariana Vera '12 said, explaining that she usually uses YouTube to view comedic clips and unprofessionally produced videos.

In an interview with The New York Times, Schmidt explained that the site could serve as a model for generating revenue for both Universal and YouTube by serving Universal's content to YouTube's audience.

"The music industry has been struggling with how to structure these things online in the right way," Schmidt said.

The partnership is an effort by YouTube to provide more professionally produced content to its audience to attract more advertising.

Though some music companies licensed their content to YouTube in 2006, the revenue generated by posting the music videos and clips was lower than either YouTube or the music companies had hoped.

Since then, the negotiations to renew recently expired deals have been held up by ongoing discussion about whether YouTube would offer better terms to music companies.

Warner Music removed its content from YouTube in December following a dispute over the terms of its licensing deal.

There are four major labels that dominate recorded music: Sony Music Entertain-

ment, EMI, Universal Music Group and Warner Music Group. Together, the "Big Four" make up about 82 percent of the U.S. music market, according to a 2005 report from Nielsen SoundScan, an information system that tracks sales of music in the U.S. At that time, Universal accounted for about 32 percent of the market.

Though the site will only offer a slice of all music available in the U.S. market, Vera said that the site might still be valuable as an alternative to YouTube. She added that she thought more free media services would be welcome on campus.

"I'm tired of the whole concept of 'we'll let you keep your file-sharing network so long as you pay,'" she explained.

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