Q&A

PEOPLE IN THE KNOW

David Mathison

David Mathison is chairman, CEO and co-founder of Kinecta Corp., which provides infrastructure that streamlines the content syndication process. A former vice president of global syndication for Reuters NewMedia, Mathison has used more than a decade of experience in the content syndication industry to create a global leader in content syndication and aggregation. The company's business model allows enterprises to extend their brands and build revenue from online content. Companies such as Reuters, Fidelity Investments and Media Metrix use Kinecta's software to deliver customized content to consumers.

Q: *How did you develop the idea for Kinecta?*

A: Back when I worked at Reuters, I was stuck with delivering content to Yahoo and AOL using either a satellite dish, FM transmission infrastructure or e-mail. There were all these different ways of delivering content and the consumers of that content all wanted it in different formats. There was so much friction that I realized that the benefit of having a standard way of delivering and receiving content would be huge. That's why I jumped out and started Kinecta, which is about connecting really robust content providers to robust subscribers.

Q: *Can you comment on your "King of Content" nickname?*

A: I've been in content my whole life, or at least since graduate school. My goal has always been to give people a frictionless content marketplace. What we believe at Kinecta is that you really can't see that market emerge until there is a standard platform.

Q: *Who are some of Kinecta's competitors?*

A: Vignette is probably the biggest brand name competitor. It shares the ICE authoring group with us—information content exchange group. ICE is a standard protocol that we also share with Adobe, Microsoft and Sun. Although we compete, we're also interoperable because we share a standard that we think is really important. In order for a frictionless content marketplace to emerge it really depends on standards and folks complying with those standards.

Q: *Where is the highest demand for Kinecta's services?*

A: We see it in three areas. One is in the commercial content space. Obviously, the Reuters and the Financial Times of the world have a need to get content to Yahoo, Lycos and AOL. The second is the non-commercial space, and there are several different verticals in there such as financial, pharmaceuticals and medical. For example, we have a customer at Fidelity that delivers 401(k) data to brokerages and banks like Citibank, GE Capital and SunAmerica. The last big content category is catalog content.

Q: *Some companies in the content business are having trouble turning a profit. How does Kinecta stay in the black?*

A: Kinecta isn't reselling content on behalf of the content provider—we're giving customers a direct pipe to their content providers. What Kinecta does is broader than just a commercial content space. If you think of Amazon.com, 50% of its revenue came from its 400,000 affiliate sites. So affiliate relationships are syndicated relationships. The question we answer is: How do we get content to our affiliate sites and have them link back to Amazon.com when a sale is made? So when we think of syndication and content, we think of it in a very broad sense. In essence, our main value proposition is that we provide a direct relationship—we are not the intermediary. We provide a direct pipe between a content provider and its subscribers.

USER EXPERIENCE

ABC.com gets interactive

ABC.com's recently relaunched Web site enhances the interactive experience it provides to visitors by offering more features and a more intuitive interface. The home page now has four main areas, representing primetime, daytime, news and sports.

For the smash hit "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire," users have access to a behind-the-scenes Backstage Pass, visitor polls, a Trivia Board and a "Hall of Fame," that features the show's big winners. In the most interactive portion of the site, visitors can actually become contestants in their own online games, playing along with Regis and offering their own "final answers." Other featured shows, such as "The Drew Carey Show" and "Spin City," offer puzzles, games and other activities.

Perhaps the most intriguing part of the Web site relaunch has nothing to do with ABC programming. The site provides new advertising and marketing opportunities for partners. Rather than a traditional banner ad, ABC.com features the "Big Impression," which is an ad box on the home page that is 30% larger than the standard ad banner.