

Yahoo, Google turn up volume on video search battle

Published: May 4, 2005, 9:00 PM PDT

By [Stefanie Olsen](#)

Staff Writer, CNET News.com

Yahoo and Google's ongoing rivalry turned to video search this week, with each company touting more searchable content and marquee partnerships.

Sunnyvale, Calif.-based Yahoo on Thursday is releasing a finalized version of its video search engine, after five months of [testing](#). The company will also announce alliances with CBS News, MTV, Reuters and others to include their video clips within its searchable database.

Google, based in Mountain View, Calif., announced late Tuesday a string of new liaisons with TV programmers, including the Discovery Channel and CNN, so that people can find still images and text of their shows in Google's index. The company, however, is continuing public tests of Google Video, which launched in [January](#).

Also, Yahoo said that it will allow video creators to send links of their content via Really Simple Syndication for inclusion in its database. In recent weeks, Google [introduced](#) a program in which independent and professional video producers can upload their shows into Google Video. (But those shows have yet to become searchable.)

"Yahoo and Google are inelegantly taking steps toward what will inevitably be a consumer-friendly, video-searchable world," said Tim Hanlon, senior vice president of ad agency holding company Publicis Groupe Media, referring to the companies' public prototypes and recent moves.

Broadband adoption in U.S. households is driving consumers' appetite for watching video online. And search technology is quintessential to sifting through what is a mounting array of video available over the Internet and Internet Protocol (IP) networks, which connect to television, handheld devices, PCs and other consumer electronics.

Yahoo, Google, Blinkx, ShadowTV and a cadre of others are jockeying to bring consumers the most useful service to locate and watch video online. But many of them are also aiming to [bridge the Web](#) with TV so that consumers will eventually be able to search for and watch digital video via TV set-top boxes, PCs or mobile devices.

On the road to achieving that goal, search technologists like Yahoo and Google must work through many business issues before making money from the projects, however. Securing licensing rights to broadcast full video on their Web sites is one major hurdle. Google and Yahoo have yet to offer video playback on their own sites. Yahoo

points visitors to third-party sites for viewing video, and Google shows only still images. More important, they must develop a business model that makes sense for broadcasters, advertisers and their operations. Jeff Karnes, director of media search at Yahoo, said the company is still exploring options, but those could include Yahoo's existing revenue streams from advertising sales and subscription fees. For now, the company is focused on making the product complete for the consumer's benefit, he said.

"We've spent the time to make it comprehensive," said Karnes, who declined to quantify the volume of video in Yahoo's archive. "We felt like the product is ready for prime time."