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Collect It, Cluster It: Tools for Unifying Information Access; Thoughts on the MuseGlobal–Yippy, Inc. Merger

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MuseGlobal, well known for its extensive collection of connectors to major information sources for the enterprise and the Web, announced on June 11 its intention to merge with Yippy, Inc. Yippy owns the rights to use Vivisimo's technology for search and clustering for Web-based search. Advanced tools that aggregate information and then allow users to filter, mine, and explore it are valuable commodities in enterprise and Web search. In fact, one of the dirty little secrets of search today is that it's the pieces around the basic search engine — not the search engine itself — that are the best differentiators among search products. Gathering information and normalizing it across multiple sources in real time, while making sure those connections continue to be up to date and continuous (MuseGlobal), are major challenges. Once information has been gathered and indexed, tools that enable users to explore a large collection easily by clustering results (Yippy) make the difference between searchers who find what they are looking for and those who have to slog through lists of search results with no help.

Vivisimo's Velocity search system has long been admired in the search industry for its clustering algorithm and capability. The Velocity search system was acquired by Yippy in May 2010 from Vivisimo, Inc. Vivisimo itself was acquired by IBM earlier this year. As part of the purchase, Yippy acquired from Vivisimo-IBM a transferable, unlimited lifetime perpetual license for Velocity for Web-based search applications. Velocity is an extremely capable enterprise search software solution with patented clustering methods. IBM currently holds a 10% stake in Yippy. The combination of Velocity and MuseGlobal's connector technology make Yippy-MuseGlobal well positioned to take advantage of the emerging market for unified information access solutions. In addition to this move, on June 4, 2012, Yippy announced that it was acquiring Macte! Labs, a leading developer of dynamic toolbars and Web applications for vertical search and client communication applications located in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

MuseGlobal has built a fully documented Source Factory that monitors, maintains, and updates the Muse Smart Connectors on a 24/7 basis and guarantees high sustainable and scalable use. MuseGlobal develops and maintains a library of over 6,500 prebuilt content connections that are known as Smart Connectors. Muse Smart Connectors are available out-of-the-box for content federation and harvesting of public and private and structured and unstructured data in any format and across any location, including enterprise applications, Web 2.0, social media, and proprietary content sources. The combination of MuseGlobal's Smart Connectors and Yippy's Velocity Web search system positions the company nicely to compete in at least four markets within the search and discovery continuum:

- **Site search —** The combination of Yippy, MuseGlobal, and Macte! Labs provides all of the tools necessary for Yippy to develop cutting-edge site search solutions for a wide variety of consumer, media, and even catalog Web sites. Yippy could become a very strong player in this market given their patented clustering technology, wide range of content connectors, and Web application development expertise.
- **Research portals —** An ever-growing roster of organizations is looking to combine its internal research repositories with published and open source research content to develop state-of-the-art research portals that can help researchers to identify, extrapolate, and visualize their knowledge assets for competitive gain. Organizations such as Northern Light, LexisNexis, Thomson, and Dialog have applications in this area, but MuseGlobal's

connectors could be a game changer in this category with their capabilities of extracting and normalizing content across a wide variety of sources.

- **Content aggregation/data feeds —** As the wave of Big Data continues to increase, organizations are looking for solutions where data can be sanitized, normalized, and fed in such a way that it will enhance and add to an organization's own internal repositories. Using the tools that Yippy has from MuseGlobal, combined with the clustering and indexing technology acquired from Vivisimo, Yippy could provide cloud-based data integration and feed solutions to organizations that are currently trying to do this on its own.
- **Unified information access platforms and InfoApps —** Unified information access platforms provide a single point of access that integrates and finds relationships in information across multiple heterogeneous sources of information. The market for unified information access solutions is just beginning to evolve in conjunction with the growth of unstructured information available to organizations internally and externally via the Web, traditional media, or social media. The amount of data, particularly from social media, is staggering. It requires a highly scalable approach with plenty of storage. The combined Yippy-MuseGlobal product could be an extremely strong system for handling a wide range of challenging information aggregation and access problems, such as unified information access or Big Data. Unified information access platforms form the foundation for a new category of software applications that IDC calls InfoApps. These applications are typically built on a unified information access and management platform such as the one that Yippy-MuseGlobal is building to create comfortable applications that:
    - Are tailored to fit a specific task or workflow
    - Combine multiple technologies and tools, particularly search, collaboration, authoring tools, content management, and analytics
    - Integrate information from multiple sources
    - Incorporate domain- and organization-specific term lists, taxonomies, and knowledge bases
    - Hide technical complexity below an easy, compelling UI that may have dashboard-like qualities

These information applications (InfoApps) will often provide a unified or customized view of a particular domain, subject, or topic for single or multiple audiences.

Interestingly enough, Yippy-MuseGlobal has made moves in the InfoApp development area as well. Adding Macte! Labs to Yippy-MuseGlobal will significantly enhance the company's ability to develop and deliver highly tailored and customizable vertical search-oriented InfoApps for a wide range of audiences.

In addition, Yippy recently added new board members — Morton Fink, a media and broadcast veteran, who was the founder of Warner Home Video, and Debbie Sharken, CMO for the Direct Marketing Association, who is an expert in consumer direct marketing and advertising. It also added Edward Noel, former Chief Revenue Officer and Chief Strategy Officer of Lycos, Inc., to its board of directors. If you combine all of this together, it is clear that Yippy-MuseGlobal is making significant headway in developing a leading-edge unified information access platform with the ability to rapidly develop custom vertical search-based InfoApps for a wide range of consumer and media-based organizations.

These areas are competitive markets where existing solutions are being sold and implemented. Yippy will need to provide solutions that go beyond what the current vendors offer in order to compete effectively. They hold a significant technology edge in clustering, connectors, and aggregation, and in experience with returning results from them on the fly from large collections of data.

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