

Business on the Web



New sites, new services and web news

Edited by Rob Carter

New deals for advertisers with content

Websites are rapidly closing the gap between pure advertising space and value-added content. First Light Net in the USA (www.firstlightnet.com) has announced plans to continue the aggressive expansion of its network of over 350 fishing and outdoors websites.

The network provides fishing news, product reviews, niche social networking, online games and product giveaways. It reaches over one million unique monthly visitors, but it is its range of services that makes it particularly enticing to advertisers.

First Light Net offers banner ads, Retailer Showcase ads, textual ads, opt-in email marketing, and, interestingly, special promotional packages that bundle together advertising and product reviews.

The company has been building, acquiring and managing its network since 1997 and its 2008 plans include more strategic acquisitions of outdoor websites, some internal site development and the increased use of web 2.0 technologies. It also plans ongoing development of its mobile internet (.mobi) outdoors websites. They include its mobile fishing forum bigfishtackle.mobi which had over 800,000 page views in December 2007.

In a similar vein, www.fishandfly.com has introduced a new trade partner programme aimed specifically at helping fly fishing businesses reach customers through the web. Says editor Paul Sharmar: "We have deliberately moved away from the traditional print relationship of a set ad rate for a set space and instead

we're putting together online packages for our partners. They might have some videos they want people to see, some regular podcasts that they don't have an outlet for, or they might have some valuable advice they want to deliver to consumers.

"In essence, we're offering the opportunity for them to supply content while also promoting their products. And within the package we can also include a set number of product reviews which include links to our partners' websites or any others that they nominate. We're making it as easy as possible for consumers to buy what they see as soon as they read the review, which is ultimately why our partners have come to us – to sell more product. We want to encourage anyone in the fly fishing business who has ideas and content to contact us. We can find a way of getting them regular exposure to fly fishermen."

Elsewhere, new consumer-facing US website my-fishing-report.com, which specialises in pinpointing recommended fishing spots on high resolution satellite maps, is offering a launch incentive to advertisers. Free ad space is available to clubs, guides, lodges and tackle shops that commit to marking locations in the same way as visitors to the site.

Says creator Kevin Sousa, "The aim of the site is to change the way fishermen interact online. Zooming in on a high resolution satellite map of the earth, you can mark the exact spot you landed your fish – right down to the lily pad under which he was hooked. You can then type in your story and upload your images."

As the site builds, visitors will be able to use it to find great places to fit, adds Kevin.

Finally, Serbia-based Mont Press publishing agency, the publisher of *Ribolovacki Magazin* and *Fishing Magazine International*, is inviting comments on its English language site (www.fishing-magazine-int.com). The

company sponsors a youth fishing programme in Serbia (see *Trading in Europe* p56) and owner and chief editor Stanko Popovic is particularly keen to make contact with other organisations supporting youth fishing initiatives.

STEVE LOCKETT, V2V ANGLING

MY WEB CHOICE

Angling websites

I frequently visit and contribute to angling website forums, and although it's perhaps pitched at the lower end than many other forums out there, I genuinely prefer www.maggotdrowning.com because there is less general bitchiness and less thread hijack there than elsewhere. They're a good bunch of people and I recently attended a social gathering for website



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regulars. Another is www.talkangling.co.uk which was founded by Gary Plant and now run by Simon Young, who happens to run a DVD manufacturing business.

Business websites As a freelance photographer, I am a regular visitor to www.epuk.org. This is a subscription site which first runs a verification check to ensure you meet the criteria of earning more than 75 per cent of your overall income in this manner. There's a useful forum which is all about business matters rather than the specifics of photography. Another essential is www.simplydv.co.uk

which reviews digital video systems and camcorders. **Down time** Away from fishing, I love music – both playing and teaching – and a very informative site for me is www.soundonsound.com.

Sound on Sound is an independent magazine and something of a recording industry bible, but all the pages are placed on their website two months later so you can keep up even if you're not a subscriber.

Have you updated your site? Tell us at news@angling-international.com