



LookSmart Launches Australia's Biggest Internet Search Directory

New Search Partnership with Netscape positions LookSmart Australia to capture large share of local traffic

Melbourne, Australia, Thursday, November 6, 1997 - Australian Internet leader LookSmart International today launches LookSmart Australia (<http://www.looksmart.com.au>) the biggest and most comprehensive online Internet directory yet seen in the country. The launch heralds a major development for the Australian Internet market from a company which has already created one of the most successful non-US owned internet sites in the world.

Containing over 25,000 category-organised local listings and links to over a quarter of a million international destinations, LookSmart Australia is launched in Melbourne by Senator The Hon. Richard Alston, Federal Minister for Communications, the Information Economy and the Arts and the Hon. Alan Stockdale MLA, Victorian Treasurer and Minister for Multimedia.

Prior to the launch, Senator Alston said that he wanted to emphasise the significant economic consequences of LookSmart's position as an "entrepreneurial success story" in Australia's most important new industry.

"LookSmart is showing the rest of the country, and the world, that Australians are capable of providing some of the most creative and effective tools for navigating the information highway," said Senator Alston. "LookSmart has shown its preparedness to take on the world and succeed."

LookSmart today also announced that Netscape Communications Corporation has selected it as a Premier Search Partner for its Australian Netsearch program, a decision that positions LookSmart to capture a prime share of the Australian market. LookSmart is already a marquee search partner with Netscape in the US.

Evan Thornley, LookSmart co-founder and CEO, said that Australia had emerged as one of the world's leading markets.

"We are entering our home territory with a product and position that reflect our experience in developing our products in the world's most competitive market. LookSmart Australia will provide local users and business with instant access to the best Internet content Australia and the world has to offer."

"LookSmart Australia's superior local search and navigation tools are purpose designed to bring Australian sites from out of the shadows of US and other international content and into popular view. This dramatically increases the capacity of Australian sites to attract advertising revenues, which in turn acts as a catalyst for the growth of more high quality Australian content.

"Coupled with Netscape's potential to drive huge amounts of traffic to local sites, LookSmart Australia will provide Australian businesses and advertisers with a truly formidable platform," Mr. Thornley said.

Mr Julian Quinn, Netscape Managing Director (Australia and New Zealand) said that Netscape was continually looking to provide users with increased choice and enhanced levels of service.

"The relationship with LookSmart will allow us to provide users with access to one of the premier search services in Australia," said Mr Quinn.

Mainstream consumer advertisers Ford Australia, Crown and JB Hi-Fi have already signed on as foundation advertisers on the LookSmart Australia site. In the US, LookSmart advertisers include major brands such as Johnson & Johnson, Microsoft and AT & T. LookSmart's international site achieves one of the highest revenues per visitor of any search service, and LookSmart Australia is expected to parallel this in the local market.

LookSmart has also been chosen to provide customised local and international directory services for the main content areas of NineMSn. LookSmart will also be offered as a search facility to NineMSn subscribers, and on the NineMSn free access site.

Tracey Ellery, SVP of Product Development and co-founder, said that LookSmart's Melbourne based team of editors, designers and technical staff had developed a homegrown directory that would be extremely difficult for any other international or local search engine to match.

"LookSmart was designed for the new generation of Internet users who find traditional search services frustrating and

bewildering," said Ellery.

"It is extraordinarily easy to use but delivers sophisticated and powerful results. Our Australian product builds on this but has been developed from the ground up to meet the need of local users," said Ms Ellery.

As well as utilizing its own comprehensive database, LookSmart harnesses the power of trusted search engine AltaVista to deliver worldwide search results to users.

Chief Operating Officer Mr Martin Hosking said that LookSmart Australia was determined to actively promote the best Australian content both locally and internationally through it's new "Best of Oz" program.

"LookSmart Australia reflects the great diversity and creativity of Australia on the Web. The Best of Oz program brings together Australia's most accessible, useful and innovative companies on the Web. Together these sites illustrate the capacity for Australian content to match and surpass any in the world," Mr Hosking said.

The launch celebrates the growth of quality Australian content on the Internet, with LookSmart's "Best of Oz" - 15 of Australia's top 25 web sites - presenting live demonstrations of their sites. Participating in the Best of Oz program are Qantas, Fairfax/CitySearch, The Age/The Sydney Morning Herald, Employment Opportunities Australia, The Trading Post, Cadability, Sofcom, Australian Personal Computer, RealNet, Hyperactive, Lonely Planet Publications, VicNet, Weightwatchers Australia and Channel V.

Technical support for the launch has been provided by Cisco Systems, Inc., Gateway 2000 and Sun Microsystems.

LookSmart is a technically advanced navigation service for the World Wide Web that provides highly relevant information to web users in an easy-to-use format. LookSmart International is a privately held Australian company with its head office in Melbourne and branch offices in San Francisco. For further information:

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