

# No Empty Bucket

Has ibibo captured the imagination of netizens?

**I**BIBO'S THREE-TV COMMERCIAL SERIES *Lon Balti Nahi Bolti* (the bucket doesn't speak!) may take some time to sink in with Indian audiences who are still trying to figure out the connection between a bucket and this social networking site that's backed by Cape Town (South Africa)-headquartered media conglomerate Naspers. But ibibo's CEO is upbeat. "We touched a million

the company is also optimistic about serving targeted advertising on its various social platforms; this entails ad placements in blogs, polls, games or other such community-based platforms. Similarly a 'call me' application enables ibibo friends to make free local and STD calls to each other. According to Kashyap, more than 45,000 users have currently installed this application, which will have a 10-second advertisement before the call connects.

users in January and now that we have reached a critical mass and build a brand that is both quirky and unique, we have decided to take things forward," claims Ashish Kashyap. At the time of writing, ibibo had "1,190,365 friends, 283,702 questions, 728,041 answers, 4,076,184 blogs and 437,995 photos" prominently displayed on the homepage.

Apart from new products and services, Kashyap has envisaged a three-pronged revenue model that will reduce the portal's dependence on advertisements. So, while traditional advertising will now be measured on a performance-based matrix,

Over the last few months, the social networking site has increased its offerings to include numerous 'local social utilities'. So, apart from features like blogs and photos, ibibo has now added a social search product called *Sawaal*, which enables users to find things and answers by asking questions within the social graph.

Local Opinions, another social search application, enables users to find products, services, businesses



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ibibo's Kashyap: One million & counting

and the like in a hyper-local vicinity and also read, write and solicit opinions and reviews on the same. Ibibo also has a feature called Polls, which enables users to start up a poll, invite friends to vote on the same and also publish the poll on their myibibo or export the poll as an application on any other web property.

The website also claims to offer a number of 'first of its kind' services in India. One of them is OneFamily, which enables extended family and family friends (spread across the world) to connect and collaboratively manage their family network. Another feature is *Dwaar*, a collection of verticals that enables users to find and compare across various categories—all with a single-door access.

Ibibo, which made news last year for awarding bloggers a total of Rs.1.5 crore in prize money to create content under the "Great Indian Blogger Hunt", is also betting on applications. The company's in-house team is ready with nearly 120 widgets and Kashyap says 100 would be uploaded in March. "Most of these applications," he says, "would have a marketing alliance with brands."

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