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CORE DEBATE HOTS UP

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NEWS

"WHEN YOU COMPARE THE TAPTU EXPERIENCE TO YAHOO! AND GOOGLE, THESE GUYS ARE MILES AWAY"

TAPTU AIMING HIGH ON MOBILE SEARCH



A smiling Hintikka is looking to take NSN's OSS business forward

Mobile search company Taptu is aiming to have a double digit share of the mobile search market by 2010, Steve Ives, Taptu's ceo, has told Mobile Europe.

Ives said that by 2012, the mobile search market is predicted to be hitting volumes of 1-2 billion searches a day. With current mobile searches only at 5% of that upper number, Ives said that that meant "that the mobile search market is currently 95% unbuilt." Taptu receives about 55 million search requests a day at the

moment, Ives said.

So why does Ives think Taptu has what it takes to take on the established desktop giants?

Well, Taptu has been in operation for a few months with selected partners, but is now making a full launch to the market, having added new functionality and features to its tool. It makes a virtue of the fact that it is built specifically for the mobile environment, from mobile use cases to understanding how different browsers and network

conditions affect that.

Ives said that the typical search time is down to 30 seconds, and said that because the engine is geared towards content, entertainment, and social networking site results, it offers a much faster, more relevant mobile search experience that the likes of Google, Yahoo!, or Microsoft.

Ives said that being browser-based was a big advantage because it meant that the company doesn't have to deal with the operators to get embedded in the phone, or within the operator portal.

Of course, the downside is that you are then reliant on the performance of the browser itself, ease of use on the phone, discoverability and so on.

However, Ives said that when the browser, the UI and flat rate data all line up, the you see big increases both in the number of searches but also in user experience.

As for discoverability, Taptu has gone direct to the consumer, using mobile ads and marketing, as well as

hitting the bloggers hard, and it also works with partners, such as social networking site Moblr.

Christophe Hocquet, Moblr's CEO, said that the site used to use Yahoo! to provide its search, but found the experience unsatisfactory. With Taptu, he claimed that within two months, Moblr was saw the number of searches increase four times. Users are making three different searches each session, on average, with three sessions per day, at an average of 33 minutes per session per user.

Hocquet said he thinks there are several reasons Taptu is driving higher traffic.

"The first is the UI, when you compare the Taptu experience to Yahoo! and Google, these guys are miles away," he said. He added that Taptu's Social Graph Search, which delivers relevant search results based on your own social networking friends, and friends of friends, adds greatly to relevance. "Our users are actually using the search box now to find things out about their own friends," he said.