

# Los Angeles Times

May 20, 2010

## Dictionary.com 'Very Excited' About Apple's iAd

By Mark Milian

Apple still has an abundance of questions to answer about iAd, the iPhone advertising platform the Cupertino, Calif., company announced last month. But at least one major developer is a believer.

Dictionary.com President Shравan Goli said he's "very excited" about Apple's ad platform. InterActiveCorp makes one of the most popular reference apps for the iPhone and iPad in Dictionary.com.

iAd is Apple's competitor to AdMob, which was acquired by Google. Much of the underlying technology is based on the work of Quattro Wireless, a seemingly defensive purchase in January by Apple.

Although many of the specifics behind Apple's first venture into the advertising space are unknown, it has already come under criticism. Apple leaves no wiggle room for revenue-sharing negotiation -- it takes a 40% cut. And some app makers have expressed concern that Apple will lock out competing ad platforms, such as AdMob.

Goli's only concern is whether the system can meet the demands of thousands of iPhone developers. The ads Apple demonstrated during its presentation were complex websites, with games and videos. That's an upfront investment for advertisers that have grown comfortable supplying just a link, a banner graphic and some cash to other ad companies. How stringent will Apple be in accepting less-than-stellar ads?

Some reports have suggested that Apple will attract only a small group of elite advertisers willing to pay an estimated \$1 million to buy into the program. If every free app sticks an iAd banner at the bottom of the screen, will Apple have enough ad inventory to keep the money flowing?

If you buy into Apple Chief Executive Steve Jobs' hype, all of these barriers to entry could mean a much improved experience for users.

"Most of this advertising sucks," Jobs said about competing ad platforms during the unveiling of iAd. "We want to change the quality of the advertising."

Goli echoed Jobs' sentiments. "We've been experimenting with advertising on our mobile apps for the past few months with a variety of ad networks," Goli said on the phone recently. "I have to agree with Steve Jobs that the advertising experiences on mobile aren't that exciting yet."

Dictionary.com, the website, gets nearly 10 million U.S. visitors a month, according to metrics tracker Compete. Across all platforms, including the site, Dictionary.com has 50



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million users, according to Goli. More than 10 million have downloaded its mobile apps, including 6.7 million iPhone users and 180,000 on iPad.

Those nearly 7 million iPhone and iPad shouldn't be surprised to eventually see an iAd at the bottom of Dictionary.com apps.

"I'm actually very positive and upbeat about it," Goli said of the ad network. "It's going to be fairly revolutionary."



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