

Wolin aims to build a better portal

Everyday Health co-founder and CEO Ben Wolin is out to build the biggest online health audience, and by some estimates, his Everyday Health is already there. January comScore results put the site in the driver's seat with unique visitors exceeding 28 million (WebMD is number two with 22.6 million).

In December, the company gained access to about one-third of all healthcare providers after acquiring MedPage Today. A five-year partnership with AOL takes effect April 1, when AOL will begin driving all users seeking health content to Everyday Health. Wolin expects the deal will deliver 5 million-10 million additional monthly users.

"We're definitely looking at other acquisitions," Wolin says. "We're going to stay aggressive."

He can't disclose the financial terms of the AOL deal, but AOL will receive payment and Everyday Health will retain ad sales responsibility. The company's portfolio includes 35 sites, and Wolin reports ad revenue increases "north of 30%" for the last five years.

An IPO was filed last January but was withdrawn in November after Technology Crossover Ventures and existing investors Rho Ventures and Scale Venture Partners provided \$20 million in Series G funding (with the potential to increase the round to \$50 million to support growth initiatives). Part of that money was used to acquire MedPage Today. Wolin says he has no immediate plans to reinstate an IPO—the company doesn't need capital, he says, and he's focused on integration and growing business.

Mobile has really taken off, and Everyday Health has launched 16 apps since August 2009. They recently topped 3 million total downloads. Some, including What to Expect When

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Ben Wolin

Co-founder and CEO,
Everyday Health

2002–present
Co-founder and CEO,
Everyday Health

1999–2002
VP technology and operations,
Beliefnet.com

1998–1999
Producer, Tribune Company



You're Expecting, are as big as their websites. Wolin says utility type apps that people integrate into their lives, such as a pregnancy tracker, work best.

Though he considers any online provider of health information and marketing solutions a competitor, WebMD is the most formidable.

"I have a lot of respect for WebMD," says Wolin, who calls the site "a great health encyclopedia."

"It's a great property and a great brand," he says. "They've been around longer than we have—we were in a kitchen in 2002. We have different approaches. We run a portfolio. I believe it's the best way to provide breadth across the health spectrum. Also, the internet is highly fragmented. If you don't have multiple sites, you're working against fragmentation."

Wolin and Everyday Health president Mike Keriakos founded the company as Waterfront Media in 2002 when they were both in their twenties. As colleagues at Beliefnet.com, they had witnessed the power of health experts with respected offline brands, such as Dr. Andrew Weil, to attract large online audiences. Wolin says the idea for Everyday Health was sparked by a recognition that he and Keriakos could vastly improve consumer experience and create a valuable marketing platform by combining health experts with the web's power to personalize content and build communities.

"We partnered with great brands like Dr. Weil and What to Expect When You're Expecting and started running a portfolio of sites," Wolin explains. "We took the economic risk of building the sites. We brought content know-how and marketing know-how to bear against a brand, and we did that over and over again."

Wolin, who just turned 36 in February, spends "every waking moment" when not working with his wife and children, ages three and nine months old. He grew up in Washington, DC and graduated from Bowdoin College with a degree in Middle Eastern History.

The internet's power to deliver information and to bring people together drew Wolin to online properties, and healthcare is a natural fit as he's been surrounded by it his entire life—his father is a doctor, his mother and sister work in healthcare, and his wife is also a doctor. —Tanya Lewis

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