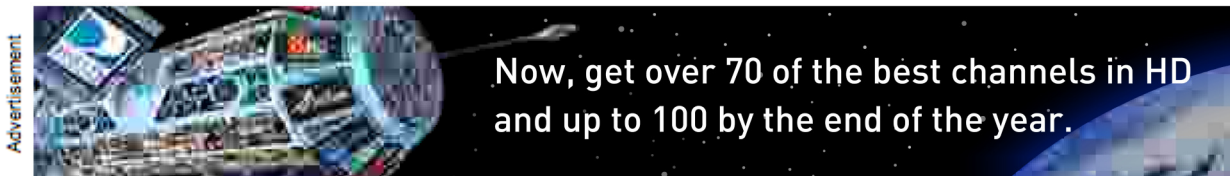


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TiVo expands search capabilities to encompass Net

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By David Lieberman, USA TODAY

NEW YORK — TiVo will narrow the gap between Internet video and conventional TV viewing today by introducing what it calls the first "TV-centric on-screen search tool" to find programming in both realms.

The DVR pioneer's system, called Universal Swivel Search, will let its subscribers who like a TV show or movie search for other programs they might like based on elements in common, including the title, actors and subject matter — as well as suggestions from other fans.

"It's like having all the answers to a television trivia game right in front of you," CEO Tom Rogers says.

It's unlike the current system on TiVo and other TV-based services. They require users to search databases for specific names or key words.

"They tend to be task-based — you already have in mind what you want to find," says TiVo product marketing manager Bob Poniatowski. "Swivel Search allows you to explore things that you don't know are on TV."

Or on the Internet. In addition to prime-time and other frequently recorded TV programs, the search will cover video on websites that now are TiVo service partners.

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That video includes about 5,000 movies for purchase or rental via download from Amazon's Unbox service, as well as material on 14 sites, including CNet, iVillage, The New York Times and Rocketboom. TiVo customers download videos to the DVR to view. Rogers says that search tool may prompt more websites to make video available via TiVo.

Poniatowski adds that searches with the new system can easily be expanded for things such as character names. Program data searched will be on a TiVo server, not limited to each user's hard drive. "We want to add more information about the shows, background about the actors, even episode guides, so if you're a fan of *Friends* or *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, you could tell your TiVo: 'The next time Season One comes around, record that for me,'" he says.

The Internet search feature will be rolled out in the next six weeks to nearly 800,000 customers who have a TiVo Series 2 or Series 3 box connected to an Internet home network.

Rogers is eager to highlight Internet video to distinguish TiVo's DVRs from those that cable and satellite companies offer. TiVo had more than 4.4 million subscriptions at the end of January, but growth has slowed to a trickle.

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