



And the winner is...

What would you choose—the much popular FB or the exciting new **Google +1**?

Shabbir Akhtar brings to you the latest updates of the sweltering race between Google and Facebook. Also **website of the month**.

What is common between Orkut, Dodgeball, Buzz and Wave? Each of them is Google's attempt at social gone wrong! Although Google is synonymous with search and is a success in email, browser and mobile markets, social is where the company has floundered and that's precisely what Facebook specializes in. Following the social evolution of Web 2.0, people now want to associate the data they share on the web with their real identities. There is a need for a platform that provides users with an identity that can be used across the web and which is in sync with the user's offline identity allowing him to interact with both his real friends and virtual ones. "De facto Internet Identity Provider" (DIIP) will not only simplify logging in but also provide users with an account of all the interactions carried out by them on the web, while allowing them to share it with their friends.

Facebook was the first to introduce a personalized web experience by allowing

its users to log in to various sites using their Facebook credentials. Facebook's biggest revolution was in the form of the Like button that allows users to share any information from the web with their friends. Thousands of websites currently use the Like button to allow Facebook's 600 million strong user base to share its content with their friends. The latest move by Facebook was to launch its Comments plug-in. It allows users to comment on various websites using their Facebook ids and share these comments with their friends. Presently, more than 50,000 websites use this plug-in which was launched just a couple of months back.

All these efforts by Facebook had sealed its spot as DIIP of the future but Google was not going down without a fight. A social product from Google has been launched a few weeks ago. Presently, only a small feature of the product has been launched in the form of the +1 button which functions like the Facebook Like button. Although the Like button has the advantage of a strong user base,

the +1 button counters it with the ability to sit beside every search result that appears on Google. This allows Google to automatically associate its button with every website that Google's bots crawl. This is something which Facebook can never attain as it depends on the webmasters to put the button on their site. +1 is also expected to bring in features like Loop, which is analogous to Groups, and a twelve-way video conferencing platform. These features would lure in users to build their social networks on Google Profiles, the central unit of the +1 platform.

Lot of action from Google is expected in 2011 as it launches the various features of +1. But, Facebook will not be overshadowed so easily as it keeps upgrading its products and launching new ones. The battle will heat up further as the web goes mobile and becomes more accessible to a bigger user base. The company which will be able to provide its social features both on smartphones as well as on feature phones, will bag the DIIP title.

Website of the month

Debate.fm



Debate.fm has been built by Web Prachar, a website improvement company based out of Kolkata. It allows users to debate with their friends and others on various topics. The website has used the Login and Comments plug-ins of Facebook to allow its users to seamlessly share their views on a topic with their friends through the News Feed and with others through the website. The product looks simple but has the potential to grow as an important Facebook App.