AOL Anywhere

PRODUCT VISION

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Overview

The goal of the AOL Anywhere initiative is to deliver the content and services that AOL members need and want, whenever they wish, wherever they are. This fulfills core company objectives by:

- Increasing time spent on AOL,
- Increasing revenue per household,
- Retaining and attracting new members; and ultimately,
- Increasing the overall convenience and value of AOL.

AOL Anywhere services accomplish these objectives by:

- *Aggregating* the content and services the member depends on, then
- *Personalizing* the information into the specific content and services that the member prefers, and finally,
- *Disseminating* the data to the various devices the member utilizes.

While not all content and services are appropriate to every device, AOL Anywhere is designed to provide members with a seamless, integrated experience to the maximum degree possible. For example, a member's e-mail, stock portfolio, sports scores for favorite teams, and daily calendar, should all be accessible from the AOL client, from the Web, from AOL-TV, from a WAP-enabled cell phone, and via speech over any phone. Changes made via one device should be immediately accessible via any other. The same AOL screen name and password should be used to access via each device.

Likewise, delivery of the information needs to be as flexible as the choice of device. At times, the member will want to access her content and services on demand, perhaps by checking her PC in the evening or browsing via a WAP-enabled phone. At other times, she'll want the information to find her by setting stock alerts to deliver a page or instant message to her phone.

The promise of AOL Anywhere is to dramatically raise the value of our services to our members and build a much closer and more frequent relationship between AOL and its members. We are very close to the vision described here becoming reality. Much of what is described already exists; for the rest, the technology is now available and the various components are being assembled.

The following sections elaborate on the building blocks for the AOL Anywhere vision: Content and Services, Devices, Authentication, and Personalization. From this we hope to illustrate the value to each of the various teams at AOL – across functions, devices, services, and geographies – of working together to achieve something much bigger than any of us could accomplish alone. [1]

Platform Services

The following set of services are necessary platform capabilities so that the application level services have the necessary characteristics and provide the necessary user experience.

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[1] This is a public version of a product strategy white paper created with and for John Ayers, VP of the AOL Anywhere business initiative.

Screen Name-based Authentication

Convenience is key to the AOL Anywhere product. One thing that could very quickly diminish the power and user experience of AOL Anywhere is to have each device require a different user id and code or PIN or password. AOL has a tremendous asset in Screen Names, and AOL Anywhere is designed to ensure that the member can always use her AOL screen name and password to access AOL Anywhere from her various devices. On certain devices this is more difficult than others, and on all devices we must maintain the security and integrity of the session. Nevertheless, the Screen Name Service is a key, very visible integration point for AOL Anywhere.

Universal Member Profile

AOL should function as a five-star hotel, remembering members' preferences so that they do not have to continually tell us their zip code or other personal attributes. The Universal Member Profile ("UMP") serves this function, acting as a repository for information that members have given to us so that we can offer it to them anywhere on the service or a device. This added convenience to members means that they only have to tell us their preferences once.

Cross-Brand Infrastructure

The AOL Anywhere vision is meant to encompass both members (AOL subscribers[2]), and, through the Netscape brand, non-members. While the subscriber-based brands may feature additional content and services and be available via a broader suite of devices, the AOL Anywhere infrastructure spans both types of users.

Personalization Hub

A member should not have to travel to multiple locations across the service or device in order to specify her preferences. Since the AOL Anywhere page serves as the natural aggregation point for the member's favorite services, it is here that the user can most easily specify her AOL Anywhere related preferences. This includes the content and services she wants to see on her devices, and for each service, what specific features she wishes to use and what alerts she wants to have delivered.

Automatic and Progressive Personalization

AOL Anywhere's personalization strategy is designed around the concept of automatic and progressive personalization, whereby given even a small amount of information about a member from the UMP, we can deduce much about what that member would like to see. This allows AOL Anywhere or any part of the service to present a "pre-personalized" page tailored specifically for that member. For instance, from a zip code, we can serve up a member's local weather, local sports teams, local TV listings, local news, entertainment and directions.

The core design principle is that the member should not be forced to go through an onerous personalization process in order to view personalized content and services.

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[2] All references to AOL subscribers and AOL client functionality include CompuServe.

Reflection

While AOL Anywhere does offer members an aggregated place from which to set and view their preferences, members should not have to go there as the only place to see or set their personalized information. Thus, members can travel across the service and set their preferences in the areas they are interested without ever going to the AOL Anywhere product, e.g. the portfolio in the Personal Finance Channel, their news preferences in the News channel, or the list of their favorite sports teams in the Sports channel.

The core design principle is that whether a member enters information at the aggregation point or at individual channels, any new settings must be immediately reflected in the member's AOL Anywhere page and AOL Anywhere devices without additional steps.

Flexible Content Delivery

Content and services can be delivered either on-demand from the various devices based on a user-request, or proactively provided to the member in the form of alerts, reminders, notifications, or scheduled summaries. An example of a scheduled summary might be a report of your portfolio immediately after the market close, or lottery results. An event-driven alert might be flight schedule changes or auction activity.

Global Services

The high priority countries for AOL Anywhere outside the US are Germany, UK and Japan. The plan is to ensure that the full breadth and depth of AOL Anywhere is available across these countries, and then to work to spread AOL Anywhere to the rest of the AOL world. In many ways, the AOL Anywhere strategy is more critical overseas than in the US due to the increased penetration of alternative Web devices such as Web-enabled cell phones. For many users overseas, their initial Web or instant messaging experience may occur on a phone.

Content and Services

Cross-Device Core Services

The AOL Anywhere strategy and product is only useful if there are content and services that AOL members want and need across the various devices. There is an endless list of potential services, but what follows is the set that was selected based on features that members use most frequently on the PC and that take best advantage of the AOL Anywhere world. Further, this is the core set that we plan to have available across all top tier devices.

The cross-device core services are:

E-mail – E-mail is today's most critical and stickiest application. Many members are eager to get their e-mail wherever they may be.

Instant Messaging – In certain geographies and among specific demographics, this is already the killer application for a new class of devices. Soon you will be able to reach the people on your buddy list even when they're away from their computer.

Calendar – A big part of integrating the calendar into a member's life is providing reminders and schedules delivered to their favorite devices.

Address Book – Increasingly Address Book is a key part of the AOL Anywhere strategy. Members need access to their critical e-mail addresses and phone numbers from wherever they are.

Stocks – A great many members want to check the status of their portfolio, receive notification when specific stocks experience major price changes, or receive a portfolio update immediately after the market close.

Weather – Members want to check the weather forecast for their city, get forecasts for their travel destinations, and receive storm alerts.

News – Whether it's breaking national stories, or the reasons behind stock fluctuations, members want to access their favorite news topics. The key here is letting the members choose categories of interest for daily viewing or headline alerts.

Sports – Sports fans like to check game results for their favorite teams and may want periodic updates (especially when they've got a little something riding on the outcome).

Horoscope – Horoscopes is still one of the most popular services. Many members want to check their horoscope or have the daily predictions sent to them in the morning.

Movies and Tickets – Moviefone provides access from phones and PCs to local movies, as well as the ability to purchase tickets.

Directions and Traffic – Mapquest allows the user to track road conditions and traffic congestion in specific cities. They can also get door-to-door directions and maps tailored to their destinations.

Local Events – Digital Cities has complementary local services and events.

 TV Listings – Members can get the latest TV listings delivered to their favorite devices, based on their viewing preferences and their local provider.

 Community – Members can keep abreast of the activity levels in their favorite message boards, chat rooms, and community groups.

 Shopping – AOL Anywhere will allow you to use your wireless device to compare the store prices - while you are in the store. Members can also set up alerts to inform them when specific products are available at specific prices. Also, the shopping services will permit use of the AOL Wallet to ease the purchasing process.

 Travel – Members can view a travel itinerary, make a reservation, check flight status, or get notified of flight schedule changes.

Additional services which will follow include "You've Got Pictures", Music, Bill Payment, and Games.

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Devices

While the list of AOL Anywhere devices expands and changes with the rapid evolution of device technology, several important classes of devices stand out:

 AOL Client – The AOL client is a primary vehicle for AOL members to access content and services from a PC or Mac. The AOL 6.0 client, in particular, contains new functionality in support of AOL Anywhere.

Web – The Web is another major vehicle for AOL members to access content and services from a PC or MAC. It supports browser-based access to AOL Anywhere.

WAP Wireless Phones – WAP-enabled cell phones support wireless access to AOL Anywhere content and services. The keypad is used for input, preferably with T9 assistance, and results are presented via the phone's browser.

Voice – Any land line phone or cell phone, WAP-enabled or not, provides an interface to the new voice-activated version of AOL Anywhere. Voice recognition is used for input, and a combination of speech synthesis and audio feeds provide results.

AOL-TV – The Web-enabled television is another device providing AOL Anywhere access. An AOL-TV device must connect to the television and requires phone line access.

PDA – PDA's, such as the Palm or similar devices, can be AOL Anywhere devices in wireless form and also can dial up for connectivity or sync with the PC.

Two-Way Paging – The new generation of two-way paging devices, such as RIM/Blackberry, provides another class of device for AOL Anywhere, especially for Instant Messaging and e-mail.

One-Way Pagers – Traditional pagers are useful for the one-way delivery of alerts and notifications to members that are away from more interactive devices.

Gateway Devices – Coming this December, AOL and Gateway will introduce a new class of interactive, single-use Web appliances. These will contain many of the same functions as a PC (such as a wireless keyboard and monitor) but will lack a hard drive and other PC components. For purposes of AOL Anywhere, these devices will allow for the same level of interactivity as a PC in connected mode.

Additional devices, some of which have not yet been announced, promise improved connectivity and usability, and will support a variety of lifestyles from teens to mobile professionals to soccer moms.

For purposes of AOL Anywhere, the five top-priority devices are the AOL Client, the Web, WAP-enabled phones, voice, and AOL-TV. The immediate priority is to make the core AOL Anywhere content and services available consistently across each of these five devices.

Device-Specific Services

This core set of services is intended to be augmented with device-specific services. For example, the wireless devices need location-specific services, such as those that will tell

you where the nearest restaurant or service station is. Likewise, AOL-TV needs services which deeply integrate with the TV experience, such as a personalized electronic programming guide. The strategy is to combine the core services with the device-specific services into a compelling offering for each device.

Authentication

Screen Name Access

Convenience is key to the AOL Anywhere product. One thing that could very quickly diminish the power and user experience of AOL Anywhere is to have each device require a different user id and code or PIN or password. AOL has a tremendous asset in Screen Names, and AOL Anywhere is designed to ensure that the member can always use her AOL screen name and password to access AOL Anywhere from her various devices. On certain devices this is more difficult than others, and on all devices we must maintain the security and integrity of the session. Nevertheless, the Screen Name Service is a key, very visible integration point for AOL Anywhere.

ScreenName⊶ Sign In - The AOL Screen Name Service (SNS) is designed to support the various AOL Anywhere devices.

Despite the emphasis on Web security, many people use the same user ID and password at many Web sites because its simply too hard to remember which name to use where. The other prevalent strategy is to keep a list of user IDs and passwords for various sites in your wallet or on your PC. The Screen Name Service seeks to change this behavior, bringing convenience, personalization as well as added security to Web browsing.

With the Screen Name Service, members can use their AOL Screen Name to register at Web sites in the SNS network, reducing the need to remember multiple user IDs and passwords and therefore making it easier to browse the Web. Members sign in once - to an AOL Anywhere device or a site in the partner network, and then can browse from site to site, signing in with a single click.

Screen Names have been successful because they are convenient and easy to remember. The more we give members the ability to access information and communicate with each other via Screen Names the easier it will be to support community across devices.

As AOL Anywhere devices proliferate and members use multiple devices throughout the day, it could be potentially more difficult for members to communicate with each other. Even today people need to have a series of numbers and addresses to reach their friends and co-workers depending on the device. The consistent use of Screen Names can help solve this problem. Members should not need to know another member's phone number, cell number, pager PIN, etc. Simply using a screen name should allow the sender to communicate, and the receiving member should be able to get the message regardless of the device. AOL manages the communication but all the user needs to know is the Screen Name.

Universal Member Profile

AOL should function as a five-star hotel, remembering members' preferences so that they do not have to continually tell us their zip code or other personal attributes. The Universal Member Profile ("UMP") serves this function, acting as a repository for information that

members have given to us so that we can offer it to them anywhere on the service or a device. This added convenience to members means that they only have to tell us their preferences once.

Screen Names are the key index into the Universal Member Profile. By authenticating using the Screen Name service from an AOL Anywhere device, members have instant access to their preferences and hence their personalized content, regardless of where they are. This tie to the UMP also means that members can also use the profile information tied to their Screen Name to quickly register for sites in SNS partner network. Any new information members provide in the course of registering and updating that profile can then be added to the UMP per the progressive personalization strategy and be used to automatically personalize other AOL content and services.

Cross-Brand Infrastructure

The AOL Anywhere vision is meant to encompass both members (AOL subscribers[3]), and, through the Netscape brand, non-members. While the subscriber-based brands may feature additional content and services and be available via a broader suite of devices, the AOL Anywhere infrastructure spans both types of users.

When non-members come to an AOL Anywhere site, every attempt will be made to communicate the value of an AOL subscription and the full benefits of AOL Anywhere services. However, for those that do not wish to subscribe to AOL, they will be directed to the Netscape version of the AOL Anywhere services.

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Personalization

The list of content and services above illustrates the degree to which AOL Anywhere depends on personalization to enable the delivery of content and services that each member wants and needs. Personalization, however, is not a widely adopted consumer behavior either online or offline. We know that while AOL members want personalized services, we also know that they generally don't want to take the time to personalize. The key then to selling personalization to members is not the value of personalization itself, but the convenience members gain by having access to *their* information whenever they want, wherever they are. This is also particularly important when you consider the smaller form-factor of many of the devices, such as a cell phone or pager. Members want their weather, e-mail, news, etc., not a general interest list.

Our personalization strategy is premised on three basic concepts explained below: a personalization hub, automatic personalization, and reflection.

Personalization Hub

A member should not have to travel to multiple locations across the service or device in order to specify her preferences. Since the AOL Anywhere page serves as the natural aggregation point for the member's favorite services, it is here that the user can most easily specify her AOL Anywhere related preferences. This includes the content and services she wants to see on her devices, and for each service, what specific features she wishes to use and what alerts she wants to have delivered.

Automatic and Progressive Personalization

AOL Anywhere's personalization strategy is designed around the concept of automatic and progressive personalization, whereby given even a small amount of information about a member from the UMP, we can deduce much about what that member would like to see. This allows AOL Anywhere or any part of the service to present a "pre-personalized" page tailored specifically for that member. For instance, from a zip code, we can serve up a member's local weather, local sports teams, local TV listings, local news, entertainment and directions.

Automatic personalization is premised on utilizing the profile for each member in the UMP to make educated guesses about what their interests are so they can get the benefits of personalization without having to do any work. Of course, a member can override this information so that, for example, a person living in Washington, D.C. can choose to follow the New York Giants football team rather than the Washington Redskins (God forbid!). We refer to this process of adding more personalized information over time as "progressive personalization".

The core design principle is that the member should not be forced to go through an onerous personalization process in order to view personalized content and services.

Reflection

While AOL Anywhere does offer members an aggregated place from which to set and view their preferences, members should not have to go there as the only place to see or set their personalized information. Thus, members can travel across the service and set

their preferences in the areas they are interested without ever going to the AOL Anywhere product, e.g. the portfolio in the Personal Finance Channel, their news preferences in the News channel, or the list of their favorite sports teams in the Sports channel.

Through the Universal Member Profile, AOL Anywhere captures this information and can then serve it up to a member from the Web or any device. This helps the goal of pushing personalization down deeper into the service where most members are viewing content and services.

The core design principle is that whether a member enters information at the aggregation point or at individual channels, any new settings must be immediately reflected in the member's AOL Anywhere page and AOL Anywhere devices without additional steps.

 Content and services which are core AOL Anywhere services, and hence available across the top tier devices, are visually indicated on the user's AOL Anywhere page.

AOL Anywhere

Personalize My Page | My Profile | My AOL Help

Hello, Foobar!   Monday, September 20th 2000

AOL Anywhere Features
- AOL has new features! Download the latest version!
- Win AOL stock with Sign-On-A-Friend.
- Customized My AOL, the way you like it!

⚫ = Access from the Web, Cell Phone, TV, or Voice Portal

Portfolio — Personalize ▼

DOW STUMBLES MODESTLY.
Why not add a movie to your calendar? Check out Julia Roberts' new hit film Erin Brockovitch! details...

Refresh Portfolio   Create New Portfolio

Choose a portfolio to view: My Portfolio ▼

SYMBOL	CURRENT PRICE	CHANGE
DJIA	10,023.02	-23.02
NASDAQ	4,104.01	-433.97
S&P	1,395.07	0000
AOL	58	+12

QUOTE LOOKUP:
Enter a company symbol or name and click Find.

[ ] Find

Last Updated: Thu, Jun 15 8:54 AM ET
Quotes delayed 20 mins.

Check Out the Latest Market News at CBS.

Weather ⚫ — Personalize ▼

MASSIVE TORNADO LEVELS TULSA SUBURB
A freak tornado struck Somerville, a suburb of Tulsa. Severe damage was reported, although there were no deaths or injuries. details...

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
82°F/ 34°C Cloudy
5-day forecast

NEW YORK, NEW YORK
72°F/ 30°C Rain
5-day forecast

LONDON, ENGLAND
51°F/ 22°C Cloudy
5-day forecast

WEATHER LOOKUP:
Enter a country, city or zip code and click find.

[ ] Find

Calendar — Personalize ▼

APPOINTMENTS FOR TODAY (9/20)
9am   Conference call with Rob-30min
10am   Lunch-errands to bank and cobbler-1hr
11am   Review vendor proposals-1hr 30min

APPOINTMENTS FOR TOMORROW (9/21)
none

UPCOMING APPOINTMENTS (9/19-9/26)
12pm   Lunch-meet Hugh-1hr
1pm   Conference call with Jimmy-30min

ADD AN APPOINTMENT
Enter an appointment description and time then click Add.

Title: [ ]
MM/DD/YY: [ ] [ ] [ ]
Time: [8 ▼] [:30 ▼] [am ▼] Add

My Calendar Now Has New Features!

Lighter Side — Personalize ▼

- CROSSWORDS
- COMICS
- ANN LANDERS
- GAME PARLOR
- GAMES ONLINE
- XTREME GAMES

CNN.com Now has Live TV News. Click Here!

News ⚫ — Personalize ▼

ANOTHER TWIST IN THE MYSTERIOUS CRASH
A secret Black Box has surface in what could prove to be a remarkable twist in investigators speculation as the cause of the doomed airline. details...

THE NATION
Greenspan to address Congress Thursday
Bush, Gore face off on economy developments
Surprise retirement of Vogle from Fidelity Post

TOP ENTERTAINMENT (REUTERS)
Surge in Gas Prices Certain to Dampen Economy
What Will Greenspan Say Next?
And End to the Era of the Blue Chip Stocks?

TOP BUSINESS (REUTERS)
Growth figures send Nasdaq, Dow upward
Madonna blasts Napster, MP3 sites
HP offers Jornada buyers refund on screen glitch

TOP SPORTS (AP)
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Madonna blasts Napster, MP3 sites
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CNN.com Now has Live TV News. Click Here!

Horoscope — Personalize ▼

VIRGO *August 23 - September 22*
Acquaintances my irritate you somewhat. Your health could suffer if you allow these irritaions to most perfect creative opportunity when you try to collect funds which are owed to you . People tend to promise more than they deliver.

View all Horoscopes...

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CHECK MORE SIGNS:
-Select A Sign- ▼   Go

CNN.com Now has Live TV News. Click Here!

Sports ⚫ — Personalize ▼

VINTAGE VINCE: CARTER'S 3 AT BUZZER LIFTS
In a stunning victory, Vince Carter pulled off a 38-foot jumper at the buzzer to end. details...

MLB | NBA | NHL | NFL | Tennis | Golf | Auto Racing | Soccer

SCOREBOARD

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

Los Angeles @	6	Final SUMMARY
Arizona	12	BOXSCORE
San Francisco @	3	Top 9th SUMMARY
Cincinnati	2	BOXSCORE

NATIONAL BASKETBALL LEAGUE

Portland @	Wed 6/19 7:00pm EST	SUMMARY
Miami		PREVIEW

MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER

DC United @	Wed 6/19 7:00 EST	SUMMARY
Miami		PREVIEW
San Jose @	Wed 6/19 7:00 EST	SUMMARY
Chicago		PREVIEW

ESPN.com Now Has Live TV Sports. Click Here!

add content to left side
select content ▼   Add

add content to right side
select content ▼   Add

Transferring document (100%)...

Summary

Optimize Overall Member Experience

One final, but extremely important point is that AOL could essentially take two different approaches to an AOL Anywhere strategy. Each device could try to optimize for that device – for example, a stand-alone AOL-TV product, or a self-contained WAP Wireless or Voice Portal. The problem with that strategy is that it puts us on the same playing field as much smaller companies with far less resources, in each of those spaces, and it fails to deliver the true potential to AOL members. This approach also limits our ability to leverage our technology, content and business deals across the brands and across the devices.

The alternative strategy is to optimize the experience for the AOL member across the range of the devices while still delivering device-specific services where necessary. The issue is one of emphasis, either on the experience on each individual device or on the overall experience across the range of devices. AOL's real advantage is that we can deliver *convenience*, i.e. the content and services our members' need and want, whenever they wish, wherever they are.

As devices change and new services continue to come on-line, we will be able to rapidly respond to the market, and ever more closely bond our members to AOL.

Appendix: Product Principles

The following summarizes the core product principles of the AOL Anywhere product strategy:

1) Cross-Device Core Services – A core set of content and services will be consistently available across all top tier devices.

2) Flexible Content Delivery – Content and services will be delivered to the member both on-demand, as well as schedule and event-based.

3) Global Services – AOL Anywhere will be a worldwide service, utilizing local devices and services where appropriate, but always providing a consistent set of world-class services across all major devices.

4) Device-Specific Services – Each device will typically be supplemented with a set of services that are specific to the capabilities of that device.

5) Screen Name Access – All devices will support Screen Name-based access so that members do not need to maintain different id's and passwords for each device.

6) Universal Member Profile – A single master data store for common user preference data.

7) Cross-Brand Infrastructure Strategy – The AOL Anywhere infrastructure is designed for both AOL members and non-members.

8) Personalization Hub – The member will be able to go to a single site to specify preferences and configure their AOL Anywhere devices, content and services.

9) Automatic and Progressive Personalization – Whenever possible, the system will automatically personalize based on information it already contains about the member, and the member should be able to easily provide additional information over time.

10) Reflection – Setting made via one device will be immediately reflected in all other devices, and also in related areas within the same device.

11) Optimize Overall Member Experience – Rather than focus on any one device, AOL Anywhere will focus on making the whole greater than the sum of the parts.