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Glam.com is web's latest fashion

Upstart trounces leading style sites with 5.3 million unique visitors worldwide

By **GAVIN O'MALLEY**

AS THE LINT fashion publishing is still squeezing the juice out of every Fashion Week moment. But a newcomer is also making its presence felt. ComScore Media Metrix research reveals year-old upstart Glam Media has arrived.

Glam.com now ranks as the No. 1 fashion-and-beauty web property, according to ComScore, ahead of Style.com, the online arm of Condé Nast Publications' *Vogue and W*; iVillage Beauty & Style; Time Inc.'s InStyle.com; and Hachette Filipacchi's Elle.com. With more than 5.3 million unique visitors worldwide and 2.3 million unique visitors in the U.S., Glam also jumped ahead of the theknot.com as the eighth-most-trafficked women's web property in July.

Glam was started by a group of Silicon Valley A-listers: Former Tickle.com Chairman Samir Arora got Glam off the ground with the help of Susan Kare, who designed the original Apple Macintosh interface graphics. Former Elle Group Publisher Carl Portale was brought on as VP-publishing director to lead Glam's editorial team.

Glam is not an e-commerce site, but a media company that facilitates sales of apparel, cosmetics and the like.

The idea behind Glam was to take the shopping-magazine genre to the web, capture shoppers early in the buying cycle and become a part of their lives, according to Mr. Arora, founder and chairman of Glam Media. "For men, shopping and buying are the same," he said. "But for women, shopping is a lifestyle, and we positioned ourselves—the service we provide—to be a vital part of that lifestyle."

Glam comprises about 20 writers and designers and a host of freelancers who

constantly update the products on the site's thousands of pages. About 150 affiliate "indie publishers," including fashion bloggers and writers, allow Glam to use their content and place ads on their sites in return for potential exposure and a share of ad revenue.

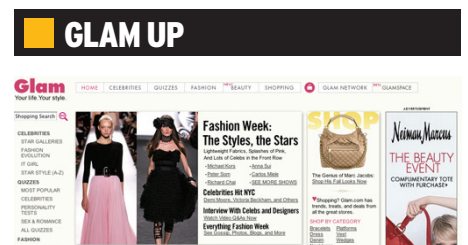
The blogosphere—apparently full of die-hard fashionistas—has been critical to Glam's quick rise. "We couldn't have grown as fast as we have without bloggers who can spread a good idea and good content like nothing I've ever seen," Mr. Arora said.

Another key to Glam's success is its layering of content: Each story or spread is accompanied by links to related material. Readers chart their own courses, submersing themselves deep within the site.

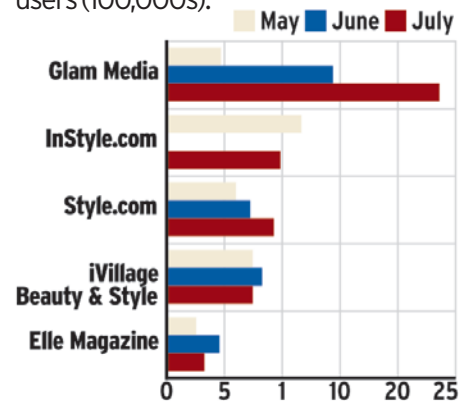
Shoppers can buy any product on the site simply by clicking on links to Glam's partner retailers. Glam gets 12% to 24% of the money merchants make from its referrals. But only about 5% of Glam's revenue is generated this way, Mr. Arora said. The rest comes from advertising.

Glam commands CPM rates of about \$20, Mr. Arora said, and a three-month buy costs \$100,000 to \$250,000. Editors assign keywords to featured products so ads appear adjacent to similar editorial. And for next year, Mr. Arora is receiving \$1 million to \$2 million requests for proposals from brand partners.

In April, Glam scored a major sales relationship with Hearst Magazines' *Cosmopolitan*. Rather than use its own website, *Cosmo* decided to offer its advertisers display banners on Glam to go along with their print campaigns in the magazine.



Glam.com came out of nowhere to overtake top fashion publishers among U.S. home, work and university internet users (100,000s).



Source: ComScore Media Metrix

But Glam isn't stopping to reflect on its early success. The company just launched a fashion-blog network and ranking system dubbed GlamCentral, which offers users a real-time look at what their fellow fashionistas are into. It offers simple tools users can use to create blogs, which then join Glam's network of ad-supported sites. And, of course, Glam has launched a social network called GlamSpace, where, Mr. Arora likes to say, "everyone is a designer."