

## **SIDEWALK.COM**

I've been looking over the options that Sidewalk.com could offer as a replacement for InfoSpace. Both services offer very similar programming options. InfoSpace appeared to have more partnerships of their own that provided a slightly larger selection of local programming. Sidewalk relies more heavily upon the Microsoft partnerships and their own products such as Expedia, Encarda, MSNBC and the like. However, overall, there's not much that InfoSpace offered that Sidewalk doesn't, or at least will in the future.

Sidewalk.com still tends to be strongest in these cities: Boston, Chicago, Denver, Houston, NYC, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Minneapolis & Washington DC. They have said they are expanding into the other major markets.

*Attached you will find a complete list of services that I've found that Sidewalk offers.*

## **MSNBC**

As we look at talking with MSNBC for a solution to our need for immediate/emergency news and streaming news for the Senate Impeachment Hearings, *as we did for the Iraq bombings and House hearings*, maybe we should explore a larger alignment with the Microsoft folks. If we're going to work with them on the browser buttons, streaming and Sidewalk...then MSNBC may be a natural fit.

With the way MSNBC is set up, I can envision using MSNBC for our main websites that we control. Maybe the best way to make our station's websites a homepage/portal is to align with a strong portal itself. UPI could then be used for sites that are not directly under our control as UPI can be set up to automatically forward certain categories of news to the appropriate stations, through Outlook. UPI could be a good backup and tool for in-house distribution as well.

One of the values I see is that MSNBC utilizes a HOTBOX (*on the right side of most MSNBC news category pages*). It contains four top news headlines with a short story line underneath. It may be possible to take this hotbox code and utilize it on the front pages of our station's websites. MSNBC updates these headlines in their hotboxes several times daily and thus would immediately give our websites FRESH NEWS content throughout the day. No more struggling to get breaking news to our sites. No more cut and pasting news. Instant credibility.

Along with the "generic" news hotbox on the opening page at [www.msnbc.com](http://www.msnbc.com), there are also headline hotboxes for Business, Sports, Technology, Living & Travel, Health, Opinions, Weather and On-Air. Each hotbox giving four headlines from that news category and a few words of the story line underneath.

### **MSNBC Quality Partnerships include:**

News: MSNBC

Business: CNBC & Wall Street Journal

Sports: NBC Sports & Sporting News

Local News: Through NBC affiliates

Living/Travel: Expedia

Opinion: Slate

Microsoft always seems interested in new partnerships and promotional opportunities and I would bet they would bite at this offer. NBC is also likely hungry for such an alignment, especially since they have no radio to promote their products on in the first place. They have the content and we have the vehicle to deliver it.

Rick