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No amateurish video at Openfilm.com

By BRIDGET CAREY

This isn't a site for your pathetic webcam video diaries.

North Miami-based Openfilm, which launched in late July, showcases quality productions of user-generated short films and animations, all of which are displayed in high resolution on a large video player.

It costs more for the site to host such large video files -- instead of compressing them like YouTube generally does -- but the founders say it's worth the cost if it makes them the go-to site for budding filmmakers and enthusiasts. Right now it's costing more than \$3,000 a month to host the large files, but that could grow to millions of dollars a month as traffic grows. The site has reached one million page views in its first month of launch.

Timothy Pastushkin, chief executive, co-founded the site with marketing director Dmitry Kozko and director of content Alan Melikdjanian.

"We understand what filmmakers are thinking when they're doing videos. We know how to work with them," Pastushkin said. "It's not just an Internet startup. It's not just a Web 2.0 business. It's something more."

Videos are screened by Openfilm staff before being put online. More than 1,100 videos have been uploaded to the site, which promotes itself by partnering with film festivals and film schools, such as Miami International University of Art & Design.

An investment of more than half a million dollars came from friends and family, Kozko said.

"The next milestone is, of course, to attract large advertisers," Kozko said. "They will put you on their radar screen if you can attract 2 million users a month. After that, I'm not going to say the money will start falling from the sky."

Rather than bombard the user with ads, the plan is to work with a company that wants to do a sponsorship, he added.

But the founders don't expect users to stop using YouTube. Rather, they count on users to share video with others using links from Openfilm instead of YouTube.

"People are tired of junk and want to see high-quality content," Kozko said.