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AOL Announces Open AIM 2.0 Developer Program

Dulles, VA – March 5, 2008 – AOL today announced the launch of Open AIM 2.0 (<http://dev.aol.com/openaim> [1]), affording the developer community the freedom to access the AIM instant messaging network with unprecedented ease and to integrate AIM into their web sites and applications in their own ways. Open AIM 2.0 now offers free SDKs and APIs that support third-party chat services, as well as instant messaging applications designed for mobile, enterprise and international use. Web-based messaging providers meebo and eBuddy were the first to sign on to the new program.

Additionally, Open AIM will give participants an easy way to generate income through AIM Money, a new advertising revenue sharing platform expected to debut in April.

"Today, we're putting a stake in the ground, opening our network up wider than anyone else and empowering the web community to leverage the AIM messaging network in bold new ways," said Kevin Conroy, Executive Vice President, AOL.

When the Open AIM program launched in 2006 the goal was to help developers create innovative applications integrating the AIM service. Since that time more than 235,000 third-party developers have signed on to this mission to create everything from plugins that allow users to send money to their buddies to bots that send users notifications when their friends post new pictures and videos.

"Our mission for AIM is to facilitate the world's online, real-time conversations," said David Liu, Senior Vice President, Social Media, Messaging and Homepages, AOL. "To that end, we've come together with third-party chat services such as meebo and eBuddy to enhance the experiences of our users who access the AIM platform from these web-based services. We're also giving developers the tools and flexibility they desire to build innovative and meaningful applications around instant messaging for web users around the globe."

Key components of the new Open AIM 2.0 include:

* **Public Access to the OSCAR Protocol:** As part of the new openness, AOL is publishing at <http://dev.aol.com/openaim> [2] the OSCAR protocol, the proprietary instant messaging and presence information protocol used by AIM. This will enable developers to build fully-compatible, full-featured and secure AIM services for use on platforms that also host other chat services, both on the desktop and on mobile devices. Developers have freedom of choice to connect to the AIM network using APIs in either AOL-provided libraries or open-source libraries.

* **Relaxed Usage Limits:** Per-day and per-month usage limits have been removed to offer developers more flexibility. Users can now also use the new Open AIM SDKs and APIs to build AIM chat services designed for international use.

* **Revenue Share:** Developers will have an opportunity to earn advertising revenue through a new revenue share platform called AIM Money that is expected to launch next month. More details on this exciting new program are available at <http://dev.aol.com/openaim> [3].

* **Support for Third-Party Chat Services:** Developers can use Open AIM SDKs and APIs to create one unified instant messaging application that supports multiple chat services so that users can organize all their buddies in one place. Popular chat services meebo and eBuddy have

signed on to build the AIM APIs into their web-based applications.

"Open communications platforms are great for users and great for innovation," said Seth Sternberg, CEO and Co-founder, meebo. "The launch of Open AIM 2.0 marks a significant step forward for AOL and communications at large. The 25 million people that meebo reaches monthly will benefit immediately from increased openness and innovation."

"eBuddy has over 12 million monthly web site users and more than 1.5 million unique mobile users who love having the ability to access their friends via various chat services, like AIM, all in one aggregated interface. We jumped at the opportunity to sign on to Open AIM because it will allow us to greatly enhance the AIM experience on the eBuddy platform," said Jan-Joost Rueb, CEO and Co-founder of eBuddy. "Our participation in Open AIM will enable us to better the experiences of our AIM users chatting with friends using eBuddy and the AIM service directly."

*** Enterprise & Mobile Applications:** Third-party developers can use the existing SDKs and APIs to build custom software designed for enterprise use as well as for users who access the AIM messaging network from their cell phones. Protections in the license agreements ensure that mobile applications built on the AIM platform remain free and open in line with the Open AIM program goals.

*** Open-Source Opportunities:** The Open AIM APIs are now accessible for open-source software use.

In addition to the new program components, developers will find an enhanced Open AIM 2.0 web site at <http://dev.aol.com/openaim> [4] with improved navigation, as well as more documentation and sample code, including Open AIM tutorials, blogs, tech notes and articles. A new AIM Gallery at <http://gallery.aim.com> [5] gives developers an easy way to put their applications within easy reach of millions of AIM users.

Program Requirements:

It's easier than ever for third-party developers to take advantage of the new opportunities in Open AIM 2.0. In order to extend the AIM network to a new generation of applications, the Open AIM program asks developers to incorporate at least two of the five most popular and valuable AIM features below into their web-based or downloadable AIM software and mashups. Developers have the flexibility to choose and match the value-added features that best fit with their applications and desired user experiences.

- * Display ad to appear alongside AIM, with a revenue share to be provided using AIM Money
- * Bundle the AIM Toolbar
- * Provide access to AIM Expressions, including wallpapers and buddy icons
- * Display Buddy Info
- * Display the AIM Dashboard (<http://dashboard.aim.com> [6]) as start page at launch

Partners wishing to pursue additional opportunities beyond those offered in the Open AIM program can contact AOL for custom solutions. For more details on the Open AIM program, or for information about other available open APIs, tools, and documentation for services such as AOL

Video Uploads, Open Xdrive, Truveo, Userplane, MapQuest, Winamp, OpenAuth, and others, please visit <http://dev.aol.com/> [7].

Open AIM Developer Challenge

To mark the launch of Open AIM 2.0, AOL has teamed up with TopCoder, Inc., a leader in online programming competition, skills assessment and competitive software development, to kick off the Open AIM Developer Challenge that will run from March 5 through May 6, 2008 to find the most innovative creation built using the Open AIM APIs. There will be \$100,000 in prizes and the winners will be announced at the TopCoder Open in Las Vegas on May 15. More details can be found at <http://www.topcoder.com/openaim> [8].

About the AIM Service

The AIM service (<http://www.aim.com> [9]) is at the center of one of the largest and most dynamic online and mobile communities. It provides developers with an open and modular platform for development and access to millions of Americans at <http://dev.aol.com/openaim> [10]. The AIM service is where users go to find their friends and manage their social lives through instant messaging, email and mobile texting as well as robust voice and video services.

About meebo

meebo is the Web's live interaction platform. Founded in September 2005, 25 million people use meebo monthly, either at meebo.com, or through meebo rooms on partner sites. meebo's investors include Sequoia Capital and Draper Fisher Jurvetson. Visit meebo.com to connect with friends on any IM network, including AIM and ICQ.

About eBuddy

eBuddy (www.ebuddy.com [11]) created the world's first, independent web browser-based IM service as e-Messenger in 2003. eBuddy's patent-pending technology enables more than 12 million monthly global visitors with AIM, Google Talk, MSN, MySpace and Yahoo Messenger accounts to chat free of charge in one aggregated interface without having to download or install any application on their computer. Currently, an additional 1.5 million unique monthly mobile users access and utilize eBuddy to chat on their mobile phone, independent of carrier or device via WAP or mobile internet browser. (m.ebuddy.com)

About AOL

AOL is a global Web services company that operates some of the most popular Web destinations, offers a comprehensive suite of free software and services, runs one of the largest Internet access businesses in the U.S., and provides a full set of advertising solutions. A majority-owned subsidiary of Time Warner Inc., AOL LLC and its subsidiaries have operations in the U.S., Europe, Canada and Asia. Learn more at AOL.com.

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Links:

- [1] <http://dev.aol.com/openaim>
- [2] <http://dev.aol.com/openaim>
- [3] <http://dev.aol.com/openaim>
- [4] <http://dev.aol.com/openaim>
- [5] <http://gallery.aim.com>

- [6] <http://dashboard.aim.com>
- [7] <http://dev.aol.com/>
- [8] <http://www.topcoder.com/openaim>
- [9] <http://www.aim.com>
- [10] <http://dev.aol.com/openaim>
- [11] <http://www.ebuddy.com>