

Ford And Trilogy Launch Web Company - InformationWeek

Ford Motor Co. today took the wraps off a partnership with E-business software maker Trilogy Software Inc. to launch a company that will develop and operate Ford.com and its dealer Web sites.

The new company, which hasn't been named yet, will focus on strengthening Ford's customer relationships through its brand sites, such as Jaguar, Lincoln, Mercury, and Volvo. Chris Porch, founder of Trilogy and CEO of the joint venture, says the new company will let Ford.com and all its dealer sites provide consumers with personalized information about their vehicles for as long they own their cars.

Ford currently uses Trilogy configuration and pricing software on its online buying site. The new company will incorporate Trilogy's existing software with its E-commerce platform to provide content management, needs analysis, and customer-relationship management.

Because of their existing relationship, the partnership makes sense for both companies, one analyst says. "Trilogy is a good company to go with because they have experience with quickly building products on demand for Fortune 500 companies," says Robert DeSisto, research director of CRM for Gartner Group.

DeSisto adds, however, that Trilogy's shortcomings in E-mail response and campaign-management technology will force the new company to partner with other vendors to get these products and services. "Either Trilogy will have to start building these applications themselves, which is not likely, or the new company will have to buy third-party applications from other suppliers, possibly even Trilogy's competitors," he says.

The company will open its doors by late March. It will be based in Austin, Texas, and will have offices in Dearborn, Mich.; Irvine, Calif.; and Europe.

