

TECHNOLOGY

BITS

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Yahoo's Chief Opens Up

"Openness is upon us."

That's what Jerry Yang, Yahoo's chief executive, told advertising executives at a company-sponsored conference last week. He was talking about Yahoo's plan to turn itself into a place where other companies can create and deliver content and services.

That he spoke publicly at all was a sign of Mr. Yang's own effort to open up. Since he took the top job at Yahoo in June, Mr. Yang has spent most of his time trying to figure out what was wrong with — and how to fix — the company, which he helped found in 1994. He made few public appearances and gave no interviews during what he called a 100-day strategic review.

Last week, Mr. Yang did not reveal many specifics. But the biggest new thing about Yahoo's strategy is its plan to open up to others; and Mr. Yang spoke about turning Yahoo into a "platform" where developers, content creators and advertisers could offer services to Yahoo's audience.

"The 'platform' word has been the most overplayed and used" in the tech industry recently, Mr. Yang said, no doubt referring to the success of Facebook in opening its social network to third-



COURT MAST/YAHOO, VIA REUTERS

Jerry Yang, left, and David Filo are the founders of Yahoo.

party developers. But clearly, Yahoo would not mind having similar success.

Mr. Yang said creating a successful platform would be worth trying, because empowering other businesses would make Yahoo a more powerful business.

Yahoo, he said, has been a great collection of Web sites. "I think we need to think beyond that," he said.

MIGUEL HELFT