



Geni.com Launches to Create the World's Family Tree

New Website founded by former PayPal COO / Golden Globe-Nominated producer.

Los Angeles, CA ([PRWEB](#)) January 16, 2007 -- Internet and entertainment entrepreneur David O. Sacks today announced the launch of a new website, Geni.com, whose mission is to create a family tree of the entire world. The site applies "Web 2.0" principles of social media to genealogy and family networking.

Sacks, who is CEO of Geni, Inc., founded the company six months ago and has been quietly developing the software with a team of engineers. The company's CTO and co-founder is Alan Braverman, who previously founded Xoom, an international money transfer site.

Sacks has a track record in both new and old media: he was Chief Operating Officer (COO) of PayPal, Inc. where he was instrumental in creating the PayPal product. After the company's \$1.5 billion sale to eBay, Sacks founded Room 9 Entertainment, a Los Angeles-based production/finance company, for which he continues to serve as CEO. He produced the feature film THANK YOU FOR SMOKING, which was nominated at yesterday's Golden Globes for Best Picture in the Comedy or Musical category. Sacks is also developing a TV spin-off to that film with NBC, and other movies are in the works.

The idea for Geni pulled Sacks back into the internet world. "This is an exciting time," he said. "The rise of social media makes it possible for humans to collaborate and solve problems in new ways. One such area is genealogy. Mass collaboration via the internet finally puts us in a position to understand how every human being on earth is related. Not only can we learn who our ancestors are, we can create a living family network of all our relatives. That is our goal."

Geni works like this: the website allows users to create a family tree through a fun simple interface. When the user adds a relative's email address, that relative is invited to join the tree. That relative can then add other relatives, and so on. Each tree continues to grow as relatives invite other relatives.

Whereas conventional family trees show only direct ancestors, the Geni tree includes siblings, cousins, and their families. The result is a living family network. Each family member has an individual profile which allows other relatives to learn more about them and stay in touch. Geni plans to layer on additional family networking features like photo sharing.

When separate trees start to overlap, Geni will provide the option of merging them. Eventually, the goal is to get to one family tree of the whole world. "There are a lot of data islands out there," Sacks said. "We want to bring them together."

Geni is free to use. The company will generate revenue through advertising and eventually layer on premium services for power users.

Sacks added, "The cool thing about Geni is that everyone can use it. Everyone is related. Like PayPal, it's a simple solution that addresses a fundamental human need."

Geni, Inc.'s financial backer is venture capital firm Founders Fund in San Francisco, which was started by the founding business team of PayPal. The Founders Fund is also an investor in companies such as Facebook,



Slide, Powerset, and Ironport.

Founders Fund Managing Partner Peter Thiel, formerly CEO/co-founder of PayPal, said, "It's great to work with David again. There is no one better at designing consumer internet products. Not many people are equally adept at coming up with a big-picture idea and implementing it with total attention to detail. This is also what has made him one of the very few people - out of many who have tried - to cross over successfully between the internet and movie industries."

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Online Web 2.0 Version

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