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NEWS



MoviebankUSA plans to open fully automated "stores" in the future.

MoviebankUSA Offers Online Reservations

By Angeliqne Flores

MoviebankUSA members can now go online and reserve a movie or video game through the new MoviebankUSA FilmONLine service.

From the Web site www.moviebankusa.com, users can select a MoviebankUSA vending machine location and browse the whole inventory or search by title, genre, director, actor or by new releases. Users can then select a title and reserve it. Once the reservation is made, the title is blocked for up to three hours. If the customer doesn't pick up the title within that time, there will be \$1 fee.

"We want to be more convenient for our customers," said Stephane De Laforcade, one of the co-founders of MoviebankUSA. "It's the missing link between the [ma-

chine] and the Internet."

Using FilmONLine doesn't cost anything, but it requires a MoviebankUSA membership card, which can be obtained at no cost.

So far, the service is available for all 25 Manhattan locations of Videobank. The company expects to roll out the program in Los Angeles, Chicago and parts of Florida and Texas during the summer, starting with Los Angeles, De Laforcade said. MoviebankUSA expects to have FilmONLine available for up to 125 machines nationwide by the end of the year.

"You can browse in an even more comfortable environment — on your own PC. You don't have to wait in line. You can just go through, put in your card, get the movie and go home," De Laforcade said. "It's a 20-second trip."