



TechMutiny

new thinking new technology for the creative sectors
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N ews Analysis

Drone invasion: flying machines in live entertainment concern regulators

Cirque du Soleil, the captivating iconic Canadian street circus and theatrical production giant, and John Cale, co-founder of influential US rock band Velvet Underground, have been in the media headlines for their experimental use of drones in live entertainment.

Their novel adoption of those unmanned flying machines, normally associated with war and military surveillance, took place indoors.

But had they chosen to take their concept outdoors, there are aviation regulators who might have preferred to clip their wings or shoot them down.

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Filmmaking in studios and on location, indoor and outdoor photography, live entertainment, and sports events are among the applications that could be revolutionized by the creative use of drones.

These sectors have traditionally required expensive, noisy, clunky and weighty helicopters or awkward cable-suspended cranes to take epic aerial shots or film spectacular athletic stunts for movies, TV, commercials, print advertisements, sports events (from skiing to road cycling) or shoot videos of outdoor festivals.

Drones (also known as unmanned aerial vehicle systems, remotely piloted aircrafts, hexacopters or quadcopters) offer a niftier and lighter (between 10kg-20kg) alternative to achieve the same goals for the production of out-of-home and on-stage entertainment.

They are compact flying gadgets with high-definition cameras attached, which can soar far and high thanks to hand-held computers controlled by people on the ground. These people use the computer screens to watch live-streamed videos of what these airborne devices are *seeing*, even when they are hundreds of miles away.

They offer the movie director a more flexible way to oversee action shots at massive locations, or give the concert promoter a potentially all-seeing eye looking out for the safety of hundreds of thousands of fans attending a festival.

But could their progress be stalled by overzealous aviation regulators internationally?

Government authorities fear the growing popularity of drones for non-military use poses new dangers in the increasingly overcrowded skies.

A report by the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International, however, predicts drones will create enough tech jobs, including entertainment and media-related ones, to generate US\$89bn in revenues globally during the decade to 2025.

Advocates say the potential employment that could be created will never materialize if regulators use new legislation to enforce the restrictive use of drones. Until those laws are passed, here are entertaining examples of the way drones are taking to the air and the skies.

The award-winning SARAH, the name for the drones created by US-based Flying-Cam, has been used since 2012 on Hollywood movies such as James Bond's Skyfall and the Tom Cruise starrer Oblivion.

The Walt Disney Company, a pioneer in film animation and the world's biggest theme park operator, has applied for three patents linked to using drones.

Industry experts speculate that Disney's technology, filed with the US Trademark & Patent Office in August, might be used to develop large-scale live puppetry, outdoor animation, sky displays and similar outside entertainment at its theme parks.

Even Spotify, the international streaming-music platform, worked with wireless carrier BASE to launch the BASE Summer Festival Spotify Playlist marketing campaign across various music festivals in Belgium this summer.

Fans could choose to be followed by a drone with flashing lights and playing their favorite tracks as they entered the venue to pick up tickets. Although a one-off stunt, it could inspire more refined future ideas.

UK-based HeliPOV, which carries out work with Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) permits, used drones to shoot aerial scenes of the London 2012 Paralympic Games' closing ceremony. Its other clients include Red Bull, the energy-drink maker famous for organizing extreme sports events.

A new generation of sport promoters is organizing drone races around the world. The biggest to date, by a start-up company called Aerial Grand Prix, took place in Los Angeles in October. According to reports, participants with their headsets and remote control devices were flying their drones around a host of obstacles, including trees and buildings, at speeds of up to 160kph.

Drone entertainment also has potential indoors, if health and safety authorities permit. Cirque du Soleil's short film Sparked features a live performance of a human being dancing with glowing flying lampshades. No special effect or CGI (computer-generated imagery) is involved, only computer-controlled unseen silent drones attached to the lampshades.

For Sparked, Cirque du Soleil worked with Swiss academic institution Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule (ETH) and its subsidiary Verity Studios.

Velvet Underground's John Cale has added drones to his constantly experimental (and experimental) repertoire of live music performances.

At the Barbican's Digital Revolution shows in London this September, Cale hooked up with "technology storyteller" Liam Young for Loop>>60Hz, to perform his music, accompanied by choreographed drones flying just above the heads of the audience.

Pilot licenses are currently not required to fly a drone. And the approval of the US' Federal

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Aviation Administration (FAA), the CAA in the UK and their counterparts in the EU, including the European Aviation Safety Agency, is usually sought on a case-by-case basis.

As drone-flying activities grow, the authorities say they can't have anyone piloting them in the air for fun or commercial use.

The rules for flying remote-controlled model aircrafts are the ones being applied currently. But the safety, security and even privacy issues that drone activities raise are being debated by government officials as creative tech conglomerates, like Google and Amazon, apply for aviation permits to deliver orders to customers by drones.

The FAA is being asked by the US Congress to standardize the rules that will enable all kinds of drone usage in America's airspace by September 2015. The Motion Picture Association of America (the Hollywood studios organization) and tech investors are among those lobbying Congress to ensure the FAA does not include draconian provisions to keep out commercial and leisure users.

A compromise is expected eventually. In September, the FAA gave six filmmaking companies permits to use drones, including Astraeus Aerial, HeliVideo Productions LLC and RC Pro Productions Consulting LLC. But even they and drone aficionados worldwide have to wait to see what rules the FAA will come up with next year.

###

Wearable tech is being sewn into streaming, hearing and playing music

Will.i.am, the US hit-making rapper and technology entrepreneur, and internationally-renowned architect Zaha Hadid recently stood on the stage at a WIRED2014 event to discuss their collaboration on a new smartwatch called PULS (pronounced "pulse").

Shortly after, UK digital music service provider 7digital disclosed that it is providing the streaming music element inside PULS, which was made by will.i.am's creative-tech company i.am+.

This is a stand-alone smartwatch that can make calls, play music, access emails, offer voice navigation, the Internet and wireless technologies (3G, Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, GPS). It features a SIM card, so there is no required link to a smartphone. Hadid gave the device and its OLED screen that organic slick shape associated with her designs.

Wearable technology, where fashion melds with digital software, will be generating US\$11.6bn in revenues globally by 2020, says US research group MarketsandMarkets.

The most famous wearable device must be Google Glass. But, like several current inventions, it still comes across as a gimmick that neither the fashion industry (**TechMutiny Issue No.4**) nor the tech universe knows how to turn into mass-market commerce yet.

But will.i.am's i.am+ company is among a growing number of ventures determined to make a mark in this emerging sector by adding a music element.

In November, Apple will be unveiling the SDK (software development kit) guidelines aimed at developers producing apps for the Apple Watch, its own smart wristband, which is scheduled to launch early next year.

Although the slightest move by Apple (with US\$164.5bn cash in the bank at the last count) makes news, Forbes magazine points out that the announcement of the Apple Watch is mega. It will "mark its first major entry in a new product category since the iPad," which was originally released in 2010.

Details of what the Apple Watch can do remain limited, although financial services group American Express, automaker BMW and American Airlines are among a handful of brand owners to have created some test apps for it so far. And since Apple owns iTunes, the world's biggest download music store and the music streaming service Beats Music, the Apple Watch is expected to feature music.

The digital tick-tock of the smartwatch has also lured Apple's rival Microsoft. The PC software behemoth has reportedly filed an application with the US Federal Communications Commission to make a wireless wearable device.

As the competition to turn smartwatches into mass-market products heats up, other major tech brands are fighting for a piece of the territory. Sony has been doing so for a few years.

Its new minuscule CORE computer chip is being installed in smartwatches that can receive messages, store music, keep track of your physical fitness and alert you to what's happening on your smartphone. Among its latest in the line is the Android-powered SmartWatch 3.

The 3G connectivity on Samsung's Gear S smart wristwatch, which launched in August,

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means it can be used with or without a smartphone. You can make calls and have access to emails, text messages and listen to music, among other applications.

Electronic goods maker LG has launched its smart fitness band called Lifeband Touch. Navigation equipment manufacturer Garmin (Vívofit), printer maker Epson (heart rate monitor Pulsense) and games device manufacturer Razer (Nabu) are seeking attention in the business of fashionable multifunctional digital wrist devices.

These burgeoning consumer products look attractive, but whether they are indispensable is another matter. What they have in common is that they give users easy access to digital music.

Another wearable device category being talked about is the smart headphone. Muzik (www.muzikofficial.com), the socially connected wireless headphones launched in the US last year, enables users to share listening to music with their friends on social media by tapping a side of the over-the-ear headphone.

Also on the market is The Dash, a pair of waterproof wireless smart in-ear headphones that track body movements, monitor heartbeats and track fitness and is aimed at sports enthusiasts who like listening to music while pounding the sidewalk.

Bragi (www.bragi.com), The Dash's Munich-based maker, raised US\$3.4 million from crowd-funding website Kickstarter in March this year; the original goal was to raise US\$260,000. The first shipment is scheduled for December 2014.

After music-friendly smart wristwatches and headphones comes smart-clothing- as-a-musical-instrument.

The most high profile of these tech-controlled apparels are the gloves won by Imogen Heap, the English singer-songwriter and composer. Heap plays virtual and actual musical instruments with her high-tech musical gloved hands at shows.

They create and play music by combining a variety of gizmos, including sensors, microphones, Xbox Kinect (the motion sensing video games console controller) and gesture gloves inspired by Elly Jessop, a student at the US MIT Media Lab (part of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology).

On a similar note is a start-up called Machina, which has embedded sensors inside the MIDI Controller jacket to allow the wearer to play the apparel like a music instrument.

The combination of body movements plus pressure on high-tech buttons, wireless chips and an accelerometer sewn into the jacket permits the wearer to reproduce the sounds of different instruments, from keyboard to percussion, by pressing buttons and waving their arms.

Machina's founders, based in Mexico, Japan, Pakistan and Spain, are actually supplying the jackets plus hoodies with speakers to a concept retailer in Mexico and are seeking outlets in Japan.

###

Banned in Beijing: Facebook and other tech giants in a face-off to go Chinese

Mark Zuckerberg speaks "near-fluent" Mandarin. The founder/CEO of social media goliath Facebook has just been appointed to the board of the Tsinghua University School of Economics and Management in Beijing.

Facebook has started advertising for Mandarin-speaking Chinese staff based in the US and is poaching IT engineers from Beijing. And there are reportedly plans to open its first office in Beijing.

What would a global tech conglomerate not do to enter the Chinese market?

But Communist China has been a tough nut to crack, not only for Facebook, but also for Google, Twitter, Microsoft, Apple, and many more digital tech companies in the West.

Facebook has been blocked from China since 2009. And several other tech-media platforms are also prohibited, censored or given restricted access to Chinese consumers. Most social media postings coming from China usually use private networks, not the open Internet.

With a population of 1.3 billion people, the status as the world's second biggest economy, and 600 million-plus Internet users, China could not be ignored. But the country also poses myriad challenges.

Despite ending the centrally controlled economy in the late 1970s, China's Communist

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government retains a tight hold over most businesses. It also remains wary of highly influential global media conglomerates, especially after the international coverage of the 1989 military crackdown on student protesters at Tiananmen Square.

And when whistleblower Edward Snowden disclosed the extent to which the US National Security Agency worked with tech companies to spy on individuals and politicians worldwide, China's distrust of digital tech media services deepened.

The country's Ministry of Public Security's Golden Shield Project (also known as the Great Firewall of China) is the initiative used by China to check on and control content distributed via the Internet.

The government of China is sensitive to the powerful influence garnered by international social media networks: Facebook has more than 1 billion monthly active users and Twitter has more than 270 million active users, while Google+ boasts more than 340 million. China would prefer to control the impression it makes on their subscribers.

These social media networks, however, want to sign up only a fraction of China's estimated 618 million Internet subscribers legitimately, but without giving in to China's censorship conditions.

One analyst guessed that if Facebook were allowed to reach one third of China's online users, its capitalization value could jump 5% to US\$216bn from US\$209bn in October 2014.

That sounds like a good reason for Sheryl Sandberg, Facebook's COO, to be seen with Cai Mingzhao, director of the State Council Information Office, in September 2013. Dick Costolo, Twitter's CEO, made his first official visit to China earlier this year.

Yet the restrictions seem entrenched.

During the 25th anniversary of the suppression of the Tiananmen Square protests in June,

Google services in China were shut down. Coverage of the current student protests in Hong Kong, now under mainland China's rule, led to the website of UK public broadcaster BBC being blocked in the middle of this month (October).

In August, US-based Symantec Corp and Kaspersky Lab of Russia, both online security firms, had products struck off a list of China's approved foreign technology.

Around the same time, Apple, one of the few foreign tech giants to have been embraced in China, learned that government officials were forbidden to use many of its products, including iPad tablets and MacBook computers.

And several Microsoft offices in the country as well as technology-consultancy group Accenture were raided in the same month.

Then, in October, Internet censorship research organization Great Fire (via TechCrunch) claimed that the government is spying on users of Apple's iCloud Internet storage service and Facebook's photo-sharing platform Instagram.

At a time when the world's major tech and media companies are arguing for net neutrality, equal open Internet usage for all, China is gaining a reputation for media censorship.

Still, as the economic influence of the wealthy and growing middle class grows, industry observers argue that the government will have to take their needs into account.

Zuckerberg's new friends at the Tsinghua University School of Economics and Management might be able to push Facebook's entry into China. (It is already doing business from Hong Kong.) Meanwhile, Google has retained offices on the mainland.

And the benefits of the specific areas where free commercial trading is practiced, the Shanghai Free Trade Zone and the Special Economic Zones in Shenzhen, could have a positive impact.

If rumors that state-controlled media and government officials have secret Twitter and Facebook accounts are true, maybe someone in China gets what the Internet stands for after all.

###

D

isruption Directory

Thumbnail outline of the latest in ground-breaking technologies

ADVERTISING/MARKETING

Product: **Adbrain**, multiscreen ad-serving specialist

Need to know because the start-up has just come out of its Beta phase and gone commercial with offerings such as Synapse, a package of self-service tools that enable multi-platform advertisers to buy, place, manage and analyze their own campaigns in real time on desktop computers and on mobile from a single platform

Creative function: online advertising creation and management

Creative target: advertisers and brand owners

Company: Adbrain, based in London, UK

Key executive/s: CEO Gareth Davies; CTO Rashid Mansoor

Investors/Owners: Octopus Ventures; Notion Capital; angels

Distribution platform: Internet; mobile apps

Launched: 2012

URL: www.adbrain.com

###

Product: **ChoiceStream**, a digital media buying company

Need to know because the pioneer in automated online ad-buying recently raised US\$7.5m in a Series B round of funding. Via a complicated history, ChoiceStream has raised US\$85.8m to date, including US\$16.2m since a restructuring in 2011. The recent funding round was led by New York's Fred Alger Management with existing investor Steve Johnson Family Trust

Creative function: online ad serving, targeting; programmatic ad buying

Creative target: online publishers, advertisers, brand owners, ad agencies

Company: ChoiceStream, based in Boston, Massachusetts, US

Key executive/s: CEO Eric Bosco; chairman/founder Steve Johnson; vice president Pete Bishop

Investors/Owners: Fred Alger Management; Steve Johnson Family Trust

Distribution platform: Internet

Launched: 2001

URL: www.choicestream.com

###

Product: **Feed.fm**, music-as-a-service marketing tool

Need to know because the start-up venture secured US\$1.2m in a new round of funding in September to hire engineering and sales staff for the business of supplying copyrighted streaming music (in the form of curated or in-house produced online radio stations) to brand owners, retailers, games publishers, app developers and other website publishers; Feed.fm argues that it is the music that will lure visitors to the websites to fully discover the content on offer, plus the brand messages and ads on display

Creative function: online marketing

Creative target: online publishers; ad agencies; games developers/publishers

Company: Feed Media Inc, based in San Francisco, US

Key executive/s: CEO/co-founder Jeff Yasuda; CTO/co-founder Eric Lambrecht; executive chairman Mika Salmi

Investors/Owners: Allegro Venture Partners; Streamlined Ventures; Core Ventures Group; KEC Ventures; CrunchFund

Distribution platform: Internet; mobile app

Launched: 2013

URL: <http://feed.fm>

###

Product: **Mirriad**, native product-placement advertising service provider

Need to know because the company reached an agreement in September that enables it to place brands' ads inside videos produced by giant record company Universal Music Group (UMG); the brands' message or product is inserted after production of the selected music videos is completed, with the record label and artist having editorial control.

Viewers will see the brand's marketing message in the form of a billboard inside the music videos when they appear online, on TV and on mobile.

The first ad agency taking advantage of the new setup is France-based international media buying specialist Havas Media, whose clients include brands like Coca-Cola, LG and LVMH. Havas will also use the Mirriad technology at its own research center SiliWood to explore the future of video advertising

Creative function: digital product placement; digital advertising

Creative target: record labels; artists; advertisers; ad agencies; online publishers

Company: Mirriad, based in London, UK

Key executive/s: Mirriad CEO Mark Popkiewicz; UMG CEO Lucian Grainge; Havas Media CEO Yannick Bolloré

Investors/Owners: include India-based Zee Entertainment Enterprises;

Amati Global Investors; Edge Investment Management; Edge Group;

Oxford Technology Management; Oxford Capital Partners; STV Group PLC

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Seraphim Capital and South East Growth
Fund and angel investors

Distribution platform: Internet; mobile; digital TV

Launched: 2008

URL: www.mirriad.com

###

Product: **Ooyala**, international online video management service provider
Need to know because shortly after it was acquired in August for US\$270m by Telstra, the Australian telecoms group, Ooyala has gone and bought UK/Sweden-based start-up video-ad server Videoplaza. The move will give Ooyala its first presence in the increasingly competitive online ad-serving space, especially for TV broadcasters and media owners moving into the online video business. Ooyala's previous investors include CID Group, Rembrandt Venture Partners, Sierra Ventures and Google Ventures
Creative function: real-time online ad distribution; analytics; monetization
Creative target: digital-TV operators; online publishers; advertisers; ad agencies
Company: Ooyala, headquartered in Santa Clara, California, US
Key executive/s: President/CEO Jay Fulcher; chief product officer Sean Knapp; Videoplaza founder/CEO Sorosh Tavakoli

Investors/Owners: Telstra

Distribution platform: Internet

Launched: 2007

URL: www.ooyala.com

###

BOOKS/PRINT MEDIA

Product: **BookLamp**, book reading recommendation and analytics software
Need to know because it has been acquired by Apple for reportedly between US\$10m-US\$15m; the company's website was immediately shut down as Apple is thought to have bought the company for only its Book Genome technology and staff, not the operation. Experts predict the technology will be merged with Apple's iBooks store for buying and reading digital books; iBooks currently holds more than 2 million titles.

Creative function: book reading

Creative target: book publishers; authors

Company: BookLamp, based in Idaho, US

Key executive/s: CEO Aaron Stanton

Investors/Owners: Apple Inc

Distribution platform: Internet

Launched: 2001

URL: www.apple.com

###

FILM/VIDEO

Product: **Barco Escape**, ultra-wide panoramic cinema theater format

Need to know because Escape hopes to change the experience of movie fans at the pictures. It is arguably the newest cinema screen format aimed at the digital generation and it was used to screen The Maze Runner - the first movie produced with the format in mind - in September. Escape comprises three screens: one in front of the spectator and one angled on each side of the middle screen. They are stitched together so that the viewer sees the moving pictures stretched across all three screens to create a more immersive experience. The Maze Runner, which was screened at traditional multiplexes, generated US\$260m at the box office worldwide. Footage from the 21st Century movie, based on the young-adult novel by James Dashner, was also tested at five designated Escape theaters with the Cinemark chain in the US and Kinopolis cinemas in Belgium in October. It was the first Hollywood movie made to be compatible with an Escape theater. Barco, the digital cinema projector maker that manufactured Escape, hopes the end result will inspire more movie makers to produce film with the new panoramic platform in mind to attract millennials who are happy to see long form videos on their mobile devices

Creative function: cinema screening

Creative target: movie producers; distributors; exhibitors

Company: Barco (Belgian American Radio Corporation), headquartered in Kortrijk, Belgium

Key executive/s: president/CEO Eric Van Zele; COO Filip Pintelon; general manager entertainment & corporate Wim Buyens

Investors/Owners: publicly quoted on Euronext Brussels

Distribution platform: Cinema screens

Launched: 2014

URL: www.ready2escape.com

###

Product: **Hungama Digital Media Entertainment**, Bollywood and south-Asian entertainment content aggregator, developer and distributor

Need to know because Bessemer Venture Partners led a US\$40m round of investment with contribution from existing investor Intel Capital. The funds will be used to enhance the service by developing

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more content - especially games -, improving the mobile apps, the cloud service and adding a banking payment system for customer retention

Creative function: multi-platform content distribution

Creative target: Bollywood and Asian entertainment producers; rights owners

Company: Hungama Digital Media Entertainment, based in Mumbai, India

Key executive/s: Chairman Rakesh Jhunjhunwala; CEO Neeraj Roy

Investors/Owners: Bessemer Venture Partners; Intel Capital; Rakesh Jhunjhunwala

Distribution platform: Internet; mobile app

Launched: 1999

URL: www.hungama.com

###

Product: THX, movies sound system for certified cinemas

Need to know because the technology originally created to ensure the best cinema acoustics for Return of the Jedi, the third of George Lucas' epic Star Wars movies, is now available in China. THX has opened offices in Beijing and formed a partnership with the sound division of the state-owned China Film Group. Giant screens, in particular, are very popular with movie fans in China, now the world's second biggest movie market in terms of attendance. THX will ensure movie auditoriums meet the required certification standard approved by THX and China Film Group's joint venture

Creative function: cinema acoustics standards verification

Creative target: cinema distributors and exhibitors; screening rooms; home theaters

Company: THX Sound System, based in San Rafael, California, US

Key executive/s: executive vice president of international business development and brand strategy Louis Cacciuttolo

Investors/Owners: Lucasfilm; Creative Technology

Distribution platform: cinema screens

Launched: 1983

URL: www.THX.com

###

GAMES

Product: Jaunt Cinematic VR, virtual reality experience and content creator

Need to know because it has picked up US\$27.8m in new funding; the round was led by Highland Capital Partners with contributions from Google Ventures. Aimed at getting Hollywood and other filmmakers to create virtual reality

movies, Jaunt is developing the software and hardware required to create the content and enjoy the experience.

The cash will be used to develop the technology, including a globe-shaped camera for shooting scenes in 360-degree angles. This movie industry element explains why movie actor/rock singer Jared Leto, who is also an investor in other tech start-ups, is on the board of advisers.

Creative function: virtual reality content production

Creative target: video and film content producers

Company: Jaunt, based in Palo Alto, California, US

Key executive/s: CEO/co-founder Jens Christensen; CTO/co-founder Arthur van Hoff; vice president of content Scott Broock

Investors/Owners: Highland Capital Partners; Google Ventures; Redpoint Ventures; British Sky Broadcasting; Dolby chairman Peter Gotcher; Sling Media co-founder Blake Krikorian

Distribution platform: motion-sensing platform; Internet

Launched: 2013

URL: www.jauntvr.com

###

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Product: Eventjoy, DIY concert ticketing platform

Need to know because Ticketmaster, the Live Nation subsidiary and world's largest online ticket seller, has bought Eventjoy for an undisclosed sum. But the deal brings Eventjoy, a start-up, into Live Nation's gigantic fold, while Live Nation sees the move as an opportunity to enter a space where concert organizers are able to sell their own tickets online, as opposed to using a third party like Ticketmaster; the brand name might change in the future

Creative function: online ticket sales; concert promotion

Creative target: concert and other events organizers

Company: Eventjoy, based in San Francisco, California, US

Key executive/s: Co-founders Todd Goldber and Karl White; Live Nation CEO Michael Rapino

Investors/Owners: Live Nation/Ticketmaster

Distribution platform: Internet; mobile apps; social media

Launched: 2013

URL: www.eventjoy.com

###

Product: Festicket, travel-booking service for music festival goers

Need to know because the company has snapped up US\$2.7m in a Series A funding round led by pan-European investment companies Wellington Partners Venture Capital and PROfounders Capital. Existing investors, including Windcrest Partners, also contributed. The money will be used

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to grow internationally and develop the content and e-commerce elements of the website. Thanks to partnership with 200-plus music festival worldwide, the firm is able to offer subscribers end-to-end travel packages, from discovery to hotel accommodation.

Creative function: e-commerce; content distribution; events booking; travel booking

Creative target: music-festival promoters; artist management; travel agencies

Company: Yeslab Ltd, based in London, UK

Key executive/s: CEO/co-founder Zacharie Sabban and co-founder/CTO Jonathan Younes

Investors/Owners: Wellington Partners; PROfounders Capital; Windcrest Partners; KIMA Ventures; Playfair Capital; angels

Distribution platform: Internet

Launched: 2012

URL: www.festicket.com

###

Product: SeatGeek, live events ticket search engine

Need to know because the company, which helps music and sports fans discover the best live events tickets, has boosted its coffers with US\$35m in a new round of funding, led by venture-capital firm Accel Capital. It is also co-financed by several US celebrity athletes. The money raised will be used to develop and improve the Android and iOS apps and market the brand. It has links (or worked) with nearly 60,000 venues and about 236,500 sports teams and artists

Creative function: ticket sales; e-commerce

Creative target: concert and sports event organizers; sports and concert sponsors

Company: SeatGeek, based in New York, US

Key executive/s: co-founder Jack Groetzinger; co-founder Russell D'Souza; CTO Eric Waller

Investors/Owners: Accel Capital; Causeway Media; Melo7 Tech Partners; Stanford University Athletics; Mousse Partners; US football players Peyton Manning, Eli Manning, Shane Battier and US basketball star Mike Dunleavy Jr; US rapper Nas

Distribution platform: Internet; mobile apps

Launched: 2009

URL: <http://SeatGeek.com>

###

Product: Sherpa.be, online ticket seller

Need to know because the Belgian company was taken over by Ticketmaster, the ticket-selling giant owned by concert promoter Live Nation, for an undisclosed sum. The acquisition will boost Ticketmaster's services in Belgium, which lacked the strong roster of events and concert promoters that Sherpa's founder Hubert Laterre had accumulated over the years, including Live Nation itself. Whether it changes its name in the future is unknown, but it is currently called Sherpa.be, "a Ticketmaster company."

Creative function: ticket sales; e-commerce

Creative target: concert promoters; concert-goers

Company: Sherpa.be, based in Brussels, Belgium

Key executive/s: Ticketmaster Belgium chairman Hubert Laterre; managing director Didier Decaestecker

Investors/Owners: Live Nation/Ticketmaster

Distribution platform: Internet

Launched: 2000

URL: www.sherpa.be

###

Product: Sidestage, discovery platform for booking artists for private events

Need to know because after a successful start in its native Berlin, the still very young Sidestage is expanding into London and has started business in New York. Artists, DJs and bands on its roster are charging between £96 (US\$155) and £10,000 (US\$16,000) to perform

Creative function: artist bookings; event organization; artist discovery

Creative target: artists; artist management; talent agencies

Company: Sidestage, based in Berlin, Germany

Key executive/s: CEO/co-founder Schuyler Deerman; CTO/co-founder Daniel Karl Roberts

Investors/Owners: angel investors

Distribution platform: Internet

Launched: 2014

URL: www.sidestage.com

###

Product: WillCall, live-music discovery and ticket buying app

Need to know because it has been bought by Ticketfly, one of the US' biggest online ticket retailers for an undisclosed sum; experts speculate that WillCall will benefit from Ticketfly's partnership with a vast number of venue operators. Combined, they hope WillCall's resources will enable them to serve fans looking for last-minute ticket sales; WillCall is also known for its BarTab, a kind of mobile wallet app that helps WillCall ticket buyers purchase drinks at bars without credit cards or cash

DISRUPTION DIRECTORY

Creative function: ticket sales; e-commerce

Creative target: Venue operators; concert promoters

Company: WillCall, based in San Francisco, California, US

Key executive/s: CEO/co-founder Donnie Dinch; co-founder Julian Tescher; co-founder Patrick Tescher

Investors/Owners: Ticketfly

Distribution platform: Internet; iOS and Android apps

Launched: 2011

URL: www.getwillcall.com

###

MUSIC

Product: All Def Digital, multi-channel entertainment and culture video network

Need to know because it raised US\$5m in a Series A round of funding led by Greycroft Partners. By backing ADD, they are supporting the latest venture from US entertainment entrepreneur Russell Simmons. Simmons, who founded the pioneering hip-hop record label Def Jam Recordings, sees ADD as the latest in the growing number of multi-channel video entertainment channels on YouTube

Creative function: video entertainment; music videos; original video content; branded entertainment

Creative target: filmmakers; video producers; next-generation content creators

Company: All Def Digital, based in New York, US

Key executive/s: co-founders Russell Simmons; Brian Robbins; Steven Rifkind

Investors/Owners: Greycroft Partners; Advancit Capital; Nu Horizons Investments; e.ventures

Distribution platform: Internet; mobile

Launched: 2013

URL: www.alldefdigital.com

###

Product: Beatport, leading international electronic music portal

Need to know because it has acquired social music start-up Listn to enhance its users' ability to interact with the platform and each other via social media. Listn brings to Beatport (which critics insist is nothing more than a sophisticated e-commerce platform) the means to link and share favorite tracks via streaming platforms like YouTube, Spotify, Rdio and SoundCloud. As Beatport plans to shut down Listn's website and app,

the acquisition is focusing on the skills and talent of Listn's tech staff

Creative function: sharing music; playlists compilation

Creative target: music rights owners; music fans

Company: Beatport, based in Denver, Colorado, US

Key executive/s: Beatport president Lloyd Starr; Listn co-founder Mike Schmidt

Investors/Owners: SFX Entertainment

Distribution platform: Internet; mobile apps

Launched: 2004

URL: www.beatport.com

###

Product: GhostTunes, music streaming and download service

Need to know because US country singer Garth Brooks, arguably the US' biggest selling artist of all time, has launched GhostTunes as a more artist-friendly rival to Apple's iTunes and Amazon's online music store. It is currently in Beta. The launch is newsworthy because Brooks had refused to make his recordings available to the major online stores, which he felt did not appreciate how music acts create their work. GhostTunes gives artists the flexible option to offer their recordings as single tracks, albums, streamed music, digital downloads and variety of combinations. Fans can download and stream tracks once paid for. In addition to Brooks' catalog of music, GhostTunes also carries the recordings of other artists, who so far include Coldplay, Iggy Azalea and Ariana Grande

Creative function: e-commerce; streaming music; digital downloads

Creative target: artists; record labels; music publishers

Company: GhostTunes; headquarters unknown

Key executive/s: CEO Randy Bernard

Investors/Owners: Garth Brooks

Distribution platform: Internet

Launched: 2014

URL: www.ghosttunes.com

###

Product: KKBox, streaming music platform

Need to know because the Taiwan-based streaming music technology provider has added another US\$104m to its financing to expand internationally. The cash comes from Singapore GIC, which used to be the Government of Singapore Investment Corporation. Currently, KKBox provides streaming music services to clients in Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand plus the domestic market. Despite having the streaming rights to 10 million songs and launching in 2004, it is a pioneer that finds itself with a tough younger competitor, Spotify, which was founded in 2006

DISRUPTION DIRECTORY

Creative function: streaming music
Creative target: artists; record labels; music publishers
Company: KKBox, headquartered in Taipei, Taiwan
Key executive/s: CEO/co-founder Chris Lin
Investors/Owners: KDDI; GIC; HTC
Distribution platform: Internet
Launched: 2004
URL: www.kkbox.com
 ###

Product: On SoundCloud, a music monetization scheme
Need to know because SoundCloud, the largest free streaming music platform after YouTube, hopes On SoundCloud will be the first of many strategies to boost the company's revenues and, hence royalties for rights owners that uses the platform. SoundCloud recently disclosed that it has garnered about US\$100m from investors. The major challenge for SoundCloud, with 175 million active monthly users, has been to get investors' their money back and win over the trust of the major record labels still skeptical about licensing their repertoire. But On SoundCloud will offer formats that will allow artists and labels to accept advertising around their SoundCloud pages and offer subscription-funded music
Creative function: content monetization; copyright remuneration
Creative target: rights owners; musicians; composers; record labels; music publishers
Company: SoundCloud, headquartered in Berlin, Germany
Key executive/s: CEO/co-founder Alex Ljung; CTO/co-founder Eric Wahlforss
Investors/Owners: IVP; The Chernin Group; Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers; GGV Capital; Union Square Ventures; Index Ventures; Doughty Hanson Technology Ventures
Distribution platform: Internet; Android and iOS mobile apps
Launched: 2007
URL: <http://on.soundcloud.com>
 ###

Product: Rockbot, virtual jukebox service provider
Need to know because the business-to-business company that serves pubs, restaurants, bars, gyms and other physical leisure establishments has clinched investment from Universal Music Group (UMG), the world's biggest record company, to expand. Rockbot's unique selling point is the downloadable mobile app that enables customers pay for the music they want played on the jukebox. They can also interact with

the jukebox and vote for the music played. The company predicts it will have 1 million US establishment clients by the end of 2014

Creative function: music as a service
Creative target: music rights owners; artists; record labels; music publishers
Company: Rockbot, based in Oakland, California, US
Key executive/s: CEO/co-founder Garrett Dodge; CTO/co-founder Ketu Patel; marketing director Masen Ewald
Investors/Owners: UMG; Susa Ventures; Detroit Venture Partners; XG Ventures; business angels
Distribution platform: Internet; Android and iOS apps
Launched: 2010
URL: <http://rockbot.com>
 ###

Product: Stitcher, podcast app
Need to know because it has evolved into the key prop that could help Deezer, Spotify's biggest rival in the subscription streaming music market, crack the US market. France-originated Deezer, which is in 180 countries with 16 million active users and 5 million paying customers, has waited until this year to enter the world's biggest music market. It recently opened an office in San Francisco and, in September, it officially launched in the US with a high-definition version called Deezer Elite. Deezer Elite came pre-installed in Sonos audio products. The addition of Stitcher gives Deezer access to a burgeoning online radio network with more than 35,000 talk shows and podcasts, an in-car entertainment app, and 1.5 million-plus subscribers able to create personalized radio channels
Creative function: online radio; podcasts; streaming music
Creative target: audio content creators; music creators; rights owners
Company: Stitcher, based in San Francisco, California, US
Key executive/s: Deezer North America CEO Tyler Goldman
Investors/Owners: Deezer
Distribution platform: Internet; Android and iOS apps; Kindle Fire
Launched: 2007
URL: www.stitcher.com
 ###

Product: TIDAL, high-definition music and video streaming platform
Need to know because it is the brand name being used by WiMP, currently in Germany, Poland, Sweden, Denmark and Norway, to expand into the UK and US. The venture has agreements with the major music labels (Universal Music Group/EMI Music; Warner Music Group; Sony Music Group)
Creative function: digital distribution; streaming; music discovery
Creative target: artists; record labels; music publishers; rights owners

DISRUPTION DIRECTORY

Company: TIDAL, based in Malmo, Sweden

Key executive/s: CEO Andy Chen

Investors/Owners: Aspiro AB

Distribution platform: Internet; iOS and Android mobile apps

Launched: 2014

URL: www.tidalhifi.com

###

Product: Zvooq, online streaming music platform

Need to know because the company has attracted significant new funding of US\$20m in Russia, a country notorious for the damage caused by digital piracy to music sales. The funds will be used for an international rollout. Zvooq's tiered and flexible pricing has convinced the investors, led by Russian online retail group Ulmart and Finnish investment firm Essedel Oy, that consumers will be encouraged to choose to pay for music. There is a free ad-funded and digital download service for fans who prefer a format that will generate royalties for rights owners. It operates a catalog of more than 15 million songs, 500,000 artists and 25,000 labels

Creative function: digital distribution

Creative target: artist, rights owners; record labels; music publishers

Company: Zvooq, based in Moscow, Russia

Key executive/s: co-founders Victor Frumkin and Simon Dunlop; CEO Michael Ilyichev

Investors/Owners: Ulmart; Essedel

Distribution platform: Internet; mobile apps

Launched: 2010

URL: www.zvooq.ru

###

SOCIAL MEDIA

Product: Emu Messenger, instant-messaging personal assistant

Need to know because it was the subject of a takeover move by Google, which is only after the talent and technology, so the Emu service has been shut down. But its ability to learn what a user wants to do in terms of booking appointments, reminders, and making recommendations based on conversations must appeal to Google, which continues to enhance what the Android operating system can do on mobile devices. And competitive technology conglomerates like Facebook are including messaging software in their repertoire

Creative function: messaging

Creative target: content producers; content marketers

Company: Google, based in Mountain View, California, US

Key executive/s: Google co-founder/head of Google X Sergey Brin

Investors/Owners: Google

Distribution platform: mobile app

Launched: 2012

URL: www.google.com

###

Product: Flipkart, e-commerce platform

Need to know because India's answer to Amazon.com has raised US\$1bn in its latest financing round. The round was led by Tiger Global and Naspers, the publicly quoted South African e-commerce operator. An indication of Flipkart's popularity is the US\$770m the company has picked up from various investors in the past. Flipkart will use the US\$1bn to expand the brand internationally, develop its mobile applications and increase the number of product categories sold on its platform

Creative function: e-commerce

Creative target: creators of content (music, movies, games) and digital electronic goods (computers, cameras, mobile devices)

Company: Flipkart, based in Bangalore, India

Key executive/s: co-founders Binny Bansal and Sachin Bansal

Investors/Owners: Naspers; Tiger Global; Accel Partners; Morgan Stanley Investment Management; Belgium's Sofina; Singapore's GIC; DST Global

Distribution platform: Internet; mobile apps

Launched: 2007

URL: www.flipkart.com

###

Product: SnapChat, photo-messaging mobile app

Need to know because the start-up that once rejected a US\$3bn offer from Facebook has been given a valuation of US\$10bn following an investment of up to US\$20m pledged by venture-capital group Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers. The new fund brings total financing to more than US\$160m

Creative function: multimedia messaging; photography

Creative target: social marketing

Company: Snapchat, based in Venice Beach, California, US

Key executive/s: CEO/co-founder Evan Spiegel; co-founder Bobby Murphy

Investors/Owners: Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers; DST Global; Tencent Holdings; Benchmark; Lightspeed Venture Partners; Institutional Venture Partners; Coatue Management

Distribution platform: Android and iOS mobile app; Internet

Launched: 2011

URL: www.snapchat.com

DISRUPTION DIRECTORY

Product: **Twitter**, pioneering microblogging platform

Need to know because the company, which floated on the New York Stock Exchange in November 2013, is now turning to the debt market to raise the US\$1.5bn needed for future expansion. It is issuing convertible bonds in two parts. The first is scheduled to mature in five year followed by the second in seven years

Creative function: fund raising

Creative target: lenders

Company: Twitter, headquartered in San Francisco, California, US

Key executive/s: CEO Dick Costolo; chairman Jack Dorsey; CFO Anthony Noto

Investors/Owners: New York Stock Exchange

Distribution platform: Internet; mobile networks

Launched: 2006

URL: www.twitter.com

###

Product: **VKontakte**, Russia's leading social-media network

Need to know because, in addition to its notoriety for harboring and promoting online piracy of copyrighted music, films and TV shows, it is now the fully owned subsidiary of Mail.Ru, the Russian Internet conglomerate. Mail.Ru has acquired the 48 % of VKontakte that it did not own from United Capital Partners (which owns Blesmir Development Ltd and Palagon Ltd). It paid US\$1.47bn, which includes a loan from Gazprombank. The acquisition brings to an end a bitter legal dispute between VKontakte's former CEO Pavel Durov and its former shareholder United Capital Partners. Now VKontakte will be part of Mail.Ru's empire, which includes rival social networks, instant messaging, e-commerce, web portals, and online games

Creative function: social media

Creative target: content owners

Company: VKontakte, based in St Petersburg, Russia

Key executive/s: Mail.ru CEO/co-founder Dmitry Grishin

Investors/Owners: Mail.Ru Group

Distribution platform: mobile apps; Internet

Launched: 2006

URL: www.vk.com

###

TELEVISION

Product: **Shomi**, subscription-funded on-demand streaming video service

Need to know because it has been described as Canada's answer to Netflix, the US TV/film streaming platform that is also investing heavily in original content. Shomi is to be launched by Canadian TV giants Shaw Media and Rogers Media in response to Netflix, which came to Canada in 2010 and has grown rapidly. Shomi says it has a US\$100m budget to ensure it competes effectively against Netflix Canada for the over-the-top (OTT) TV rights to hit Hollywood and international TV shows. To avoid cannibalizing audiences for Rogers and Shaw's cable TV services, Shomi will focus on airing past seasons of popular TV series

Creative function: OTT distribution; digital distribution

Creative target: video-content producers; film and TV rights owners

Company: Shomi Entertainment, based in Toronto, Canada

Key executive/s: Rogers Media president Keith Pelley; Shaw Media president Barb Williams

Investors/Owners: Shaw Media; Rogers Media

Distribution platform: Internet

Launched: 2014

URL: www.shomi.com

###

Product: **Sony**, cloud-based pay-TV service

Need to know because the planned Web-TV service, which does not appear to have a brand name yet, has clinched its first major content deal with Viacom, owner of the MTV, Nickelodeon and BET international TV networks. Part of the fuss the industry is making about the Viacom content deal is the potential disruption Web-based distribution could cause the traditional cable-and-satellite pay-TV content licensing models. Currently, only subscription-funded on-demand licensing of TV shows is being made available to Internet-delivered platforms. Viacom has agreed to supply its TV series and movies to the new service, if Sony can entice other TV networks to do the same. Should it be successful in its quest for the best TV shows, Sony's venture is scheduled to start trials end of this year

Creative function: Internet distribution

Creative target: TV and film production companies; rights owners

Company: Sony Corporation, based in Tokyo, Japan

Key executive/s: Sony Corporation CEO Kazuo Hirai

Investors/Owners: Sony Corporation

Distribution platform: Internet; cloud technology

Launched: 2014 (for pilot version)

URL: www.sony.net

###

DISRUPTION DIRECTORY

EXTRA

Product: **Alibaba Group**, China's biggest e-commerce corporation
Need to know because it became the world's 18th biggest company by valuation when it floated on the New York Stock Exchange on 19 September. Its valuation of US\$230bn made the group more valuable than Facebook, eBay and Amazon.com. Other experts noted that it had also become more valuable than the US' biggest bank JP Morgan Chase. With a personal fortune of US\$19.5bn, founder/CEO Jack Ma is officially China's richest person, according to Forbes magazine
Creative function: e-commerce
Creative target: small to medium-sized businesses
Company: Alibaba Group, based in Hangzhou, China
Key executive/s: CEO/founder Jack Ma
Investors/Owners: listed on the New York Stock Exchange; Jack Ma
Distribution platform: Internet; mobile apps
Launched: 1999
URL: www.alibaba.com
 ###

Product: **Apple Pay**, mobile wallet
Need to know because it is Apple's long awaited move into a sector that promises to offer a more reliable consumer payment system compared to cash, checks, credit cards and debit cards. The contactless payment service using near-field communication technology is still nascent. It is currently available only in the US, but it already works in more than 220,000 stores and in Apple's App Store, and more than 1 million credit card users have signed up. The user requires an iPhone 6 or iPhone 6 Plus and a thumb print for identification. Several financial institutions, including credit card issuers Visa, MasterCard and American Express, have partnered with Apple Pay to clear transactions
Creative function: mobile payment
Creative target: retailers; credit card holders
Company: Apple Inc, headquartered in Cupertino, California, US
Key executive/s: CEO Tim Cook; senior vice president, Internet software and services Eddy Cue
Investors/Owners: Apple Inc
Distribution platform: iOS mobile app; near field communication
Launched: 2014
URL: www.apple.com
 ###

Product: **Ford's** anti-heart attack smart car
Need to know because the automotive giant has disclosed plans to make cars that can detect when the driver is having a heart attack, high blood pressure or other chronic medical conditions. The driver's seat is installed with electrocardiograph technology plus sensors linked to an in-car camera. Should the driver suffer from a heart attack, the technology inside the seat takes over the driving to come to a safe stop. Only a prototype is currently available
Creative function: safe driving
Creative target: wealthy over 65-year-olds
Company: Ford Motor Company, headquartered in Dearborn, Michigan, US
Key executive/s: Ford Research Center director Pim van der Jagt
Investors/Owners: listed on the New York Stock Exchange
Distribution platform: motor vehicles; wi-fi
Launched: 1903
URL: <http://corporate.ford.com/innovation>
 ###

Product: **Magic Leap**, unknown tech venture, possibly wearable device
Need to know because, for a company that no one allegedly knows anything about, Magic Leap has been able to attract US\$542m in new funding led by Google Ventures. All that is certain is that the device will feel as natural as part of the body when worn, and it transcends "the current perception of mobile computing, augmented reality and virtual reality." It aims to meld the physical and virtual by bringing together magic and technology
Creative function: unknown
Creative target: unknown
Company: Magic Leap Inc, based in Dania Beach, Florida, US
Key executive/s: CEO/president/founder Rony Abovitz
Investors/Owners: Google Ventures.
 Other participating investors include KKR; movie producer Legendary Entertainment; Qualcomm Ventures; Vulcan Capital; Obvious Ventures; Andreessen Horowitz; Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers
Distribution platform: Internet; mobile computing
Launched: unknown
URL: www.magicleap.com
 ###

N

umbers that count

The statistics illustrating technology's influence on media and entertainment's evolution

The US' Top Ten Tech Titans hoose \$330bn in personal wealth

Microsoft accounts for the biggest share of the US' richest individuals in the technology sector this year. As Facebook, Google and Apple dominate the tech-media headlines, Microsoft is quietly but feverishly making money for its owners.

Bill Gates, Microsoft's co-founder, former CEO and now new product and technology adviser, is not only the richest on Forbes tech list, but also the richest individual in the whole of the Americas this year.

In a list compiled in October 2014, Forbes calculated that Gates is worth US\$81bn., putting him at the top of TechMutiny's Top 10 Tech Titans ranking (see page 16).

These are the individuals who made their vast fortunes from inventing and/or investing in innovative digital technology. In seventh place on the tech list (but at No.21 for the whole of the US) is Steve Ballmer, who was Microsoft CEO from 2000 until February of this year, when he retired.

His personal worth is reported to be US\$22.2bn, US\$2bn of which he recently used to buy the Los Angeles Clippers NBA basketball team. And in ninth place is Paul Allen, Microsoft's co-founder, who has a personal fortune valued at US\$17bn.

This means Microsoft alone accounts for US\$120bn, more than one-third (36%) of the US\$329.7bn fortune belonging to the US' Top 10 technology innovators.

In second place of the Top 10, with wealth worth US\$48.7bn, is Larry Ellison. Compared to the Apples, the Facebooks and Googles, Ellison is making his money from old but constantly updated computing.

He is the CEO/co-founder of Oracle, a traditional computing company that happens to serve some of the world's biggest databases, including those belonging to the CIA.

He is followed by next-generation computing whiz-kid Mark Zuckerberg, co-founder/CEO and chairman of Facebook, the world's biggest social media network, which has more than 1 billion monthly active users. At 30 years of age, he is the youngest in the Top 10 with a colossal fortune of US\$35.3bn.

Facebook's revenue jumped 59% to US\$3.2bn in the third quarter ending 30 September 2014 - compared to the same period in 2013 - and net income soared 90% during those three months, so Zuckerberg's personal prosperity won't be ending any time soon.

The company, however, has warned investors to expect a significant hike in spending and acquisitions in 2015, which might affect the profit margins that year. In 2014 alone, Facebook spent US\$19bn buying messaging platform WhatsApp, plus another US\$2bn on Oculus VR, a virtual-reality gaming headset.

Google, once the technology titan feared by both predecessors and successors in the innovation space, continues to perform positively. CEO Larry Page and special projects boss Sergey Brin, the search engine giant's co-founders, are worth US\$59.8bn combined. They are ranked fourth and fifth respectively in the Top 10 list.

They are followed by Jeff Bezos, founder/CEO of Amazon.com, a behemoth that began as an upstart start-up online bookseller. Bezos has used the same Internet technology to invest in book publishing, digital music, online TV, and arguably the world's biggest online marketplace.

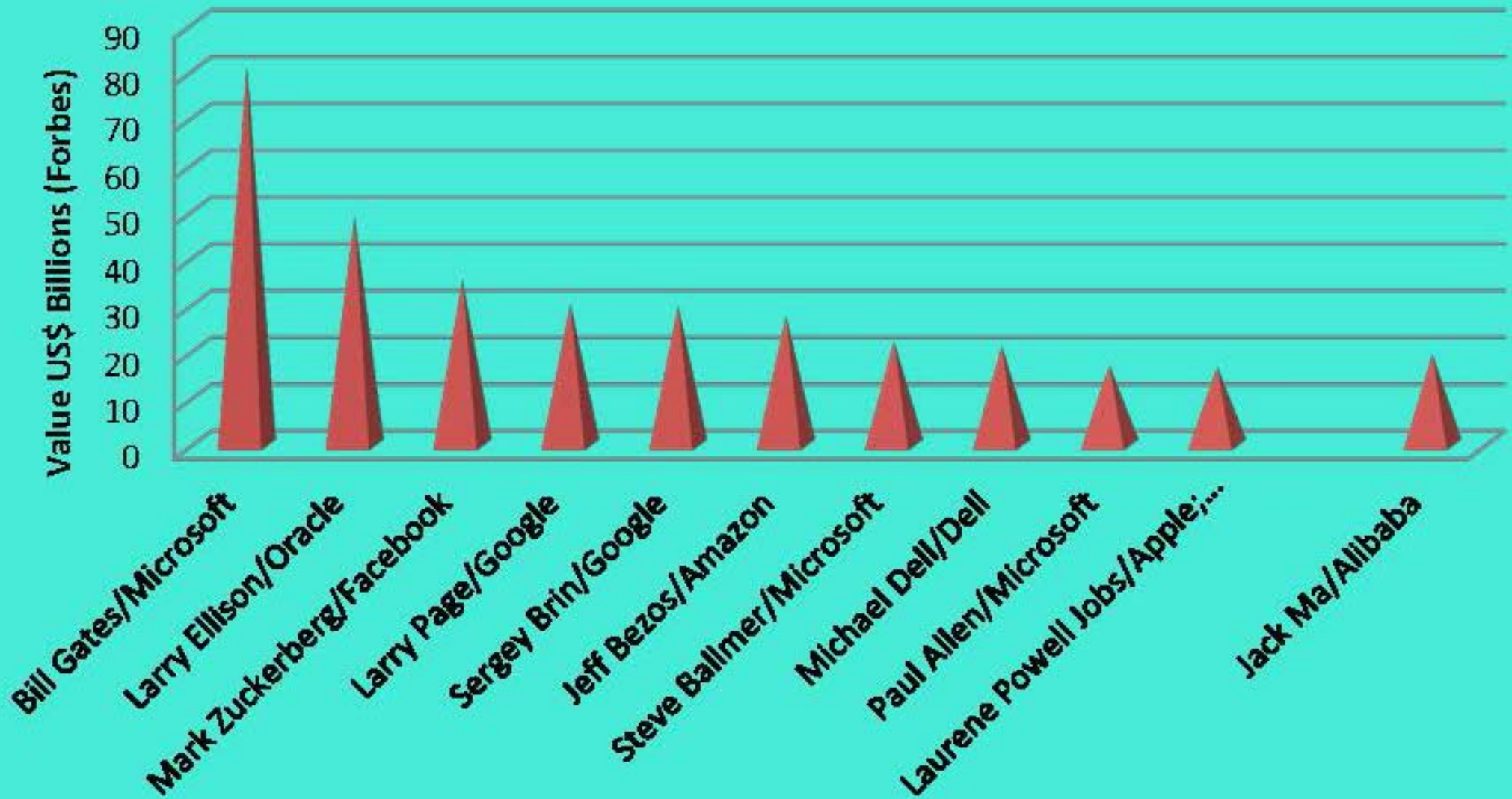
That status might be in jeopardy as Chinese entrepreneur Jack Ma floated his company Alibaba Group (described as China's answer to Amazon, eBay and Google combined) on the New York Stock Exchange in September. The IPO was hailed as the world's biggest, raising US\$25bn from investors. Had Ma been American, he would have nipped into the Top 10 now that is he said to be worth US\$19.5bn.

Among the US hot hitters in the Top 10 technology chart, based on their tech-sourced income, is Michael Dell, CEO of computer group Dell (US\$21.2bn), at No.8.

At No. 10 is Laurene Powell Jobs, widow of Apple founder Steve Jobs. Her fortune stems from hers and her late husband's interests in Apple, considered the world's most valuable brand, and in the Walt Disney Company.

Disney acquired Pixar, an Apple subsidiary that Jobs majority-owned, for US\$7.4bn in 2006. That stake led to Jobs becoming the biggest individual shareholder at Disney. ###

Top 10 Tech Titans - October 2014



S

tart-ups' Standpoint

The challenges start-ups face the moment they go public with their visions

Product/Service: Bambuser

Developer: Bambuser (Stockholm, Sweden)

When launched: 2008

Targeted users/sector: news and media sector; service sector; early adopters

How will your technology change the industry you are in; what gap is it filling; what is its unique selling point? With a mission to democratize video broadcasting, Bambuser is a simple-to-use multimedia platform that allows consumers, as well as professionals, to easily capture, share and publish live and on-demand video broadcasts and photos from mobile phones or computers. Bambuser offers a free consumer service as well as professional end-to-end solutions for enterprises and media companies. Bambuser's lightweight, yet highly advanced, real-time multimedia technology and scalable and robust platform offers news and media companies and other enterprises an innovative way of harnessing disruptive consumer technologies to gather, vet and publish smartphone video and photo content in real time from their own staff as well as members of the general public (user-generated content). With Bambuser's solutions, customers will be able to increase their revenues by speeding up and increasing content creation, as well as by increasing traffic due to higher relevance with more frequently updated content. Customers will also be able to lower their costs by offloading complex technology R&D, hosting, transcoding maintenance and scaling to Bambuser, and by lowering costs for content acquisition, vetting and publishing.

How did you, or the founders, overcome your biggest fear when you realized the concept was becoming a business reality? Our biggest fear was that there were not enough hours in the day for us to move forward at the speed we wanted, building the product that we were really passionate about. One of the benefits of starting as a consumer tech company is that we were initially quite fearless in terms of sales cycles and could focus 100% on the product and technology development.

Any recent developments to announce? Today, Bambuser offers a free consumer service with apps available for iOS and Android as well as a browser-based solution. The company also offers a professional end-to-end solution for user-generated content (UGC) video called "Iris SDK", which integrates with a media brand's mobile news app to allow newsroom editors to discover, preview and then exclusively publish or broadcast live streaming or on-demand video content shot on smartphones by app users. Most recently, Bambuser has developed the "Iris Mobile Reporter" app, a standalone app for iOS, Android and Windows smartphones built entirely on the Iris SDK that includes all the features of the Iris SDK. The mobile reporter app completes the Bambuser Iris suite of products dedicated to the professional use of mobile video. In the fall we will launch a new suite of products across all mobile platforms that will make it easier for our customers and partners to seamlessly integrate and utilize the full range of Bambuser's solutions and technology within their existing workflows and products. We're upgrading our technology and feature set across all products, from mobile clients and server-side tech to our web-based content management interface.

Current Investors:

Associated Press
Kistefos AS
Almi Invest
Business angels
Bambuser staff

URL: www.bambuser.com/libbambuser

Twitter: @Bambuser

Sales inquiries: sales@bambuser.com

###

Product/service: DipIn (the story comparison app)

Developer: Storyjacker (Manchester, UK)

When launched: the company, in October 2014; the app is scheduled for a June 2015 launch

Targeted users/sector: casual and regular book readers with smartphones

START-UPS' STANDPOINT

How will your technology change the industry you are in; what gap is it filling; what is its unique selling point? Dipln will make the process of finding a new book easier. Its main interface will offer users different novels for comparison. They can keep reading the stories they like; the ones they do not like can quickly be rejected for something else. When they find a book they want to read more of, they can download a longer sample or buy the whole book to read. What's unique about it is the way it gives readers the ability to make quick and intuitive decisions about the book they want to read next. As they make these decisions, the app draws conclusions about their tastes and next time will offer up more appropriate comparisons. It helps readers discover new books and work out their preferred genres in the process. Other entertainment industries, such as music, sell products which have been easy to translate into quick-to-try samples online. This has helped those industries maintain and grow audiences. Book publishers can use Dipln in a similar way, to easily market sample selections from their entire catalog.

How did you, or the founders, overcome your biggest fear when you realized the concept was becoming a business reality? The biggest potential hurdle to the project was that, without any commitment from owners of digital-book content, i.e. book publishers, the proposition could not move towards becoming a viable product for consumers, because the app would have no content. By entering and winning the Innovate UK/IC tomorrow competition, we have found a way to overcome that, as we will be working with a publisher organized by the UK's Publishers Association, which is the industry's trade body and one of the IC tomorrow competition partners.

Any recent developments to announce? Dipln is currently at design stage, but will soon be a reality thanks to funding from the IC tomorrow's 'Books on the move' challenge, which Storyjacker recently won. The innovation prize gives us the right partners and funding we need to turn a good idea into a commercial success.

Current Investors:

Bootstrapped by managing director David Jackson
Innovate UK's IC tomorrow competition prize of up to £25,000

URL: www.storyjacker.net

Twitter: @storyjacker

Email: david@storyjacker.net

###

Product/service: Get On Up

Developer: BioBeats (London headquarters, offices in Pisa and Los Angeles)

When launched: scheduled for January 2015

Targeted users/sector: people interested in being healthy and getting fit without necessarily running a marathon or doing the Nike+ 'Faster! Harder!' treadmill.

How will your technology change the industry you are in; what gap is it filling; what is its unique selling point? Get On Up (a mobile health SDK) generates, discovers and streams music that adapts to your body (during fitness exercises). That means it'll understand your pace, gait and music preferences, generate music that reacts with your body to get you started. Then, when you hit your stride, it will find streaming music to fit your pace and style. Eventually, Get On Up will react to data it knows about you (eg, from wrist-worn heart sensors) and adapt the music to optimize your training.

How did you, or the founders, overcome your biggest fear when you realized the concept was becoming a business reality? Our biggest fear was that music labels, health insurers and smartphone manufacturers wouldn't be able to have a coherent conversation about how to help each other to help consumers. We didn't think they would understand that the music you listen to could help you become fitter, and that there could be an opportunity for healthcare providers/insurers to subsidize that music in the first place. It turns out we were wrong, and every single sector is interested and excited about the cross-subsidization of music/healthcare/hardware. It could eventually help us save lives, and trim budgets in healthy systems like the NHS (the UK's publicly funded national health service).

Any recent developments to announce? We recently secured investment from Italian Angels for Growth (IAG), largest Angel group in the country, and started working with Samsung Open Innovation. We will also receive up to £25,000 from winning the IC tomorrow Entertainment on the Move contest, together with a partnership with the BPI (the trade body for the British recorded-music industry) to help us find a music label to trial the product.

Current Investors:

Founders Nadeem Kassam, Davide Morelli, David Plans
Hollywood actor Will Smith
Justin Bieber's manager Scooter Braun

START-UPS' STANDPOINT

Author/medicine guru Deepak Chopra
ENIAC Ventures
Raptor Ventures, among others

Twitter: @biobeatslive

Email: david@biobeats.com

URL: <http://www.biobeats.com>

###

Product/service: My Make and Play

Developer: My Make and Play Ltd (London, UK)

When launched: company registered in April 2013; the technology still in development

Targeted users/sector: the design and technology education sector; children ages 8 to 14; families (especially mothers and grandparents)

How will your technology change the industry you are in; what gap is it filling; what is the unique selling point? My Make and Play is an online educational platform that uses design to bridge the real and virtual worlds. The architecture specification of this product falls under the EU's FI-ADOPT (Future Internet Core Platform Adoption and Sustainability Enabler) Pervasive Games Platform, which supports new forms of entertainment through blending the real and virtual worlds. This platform takes advantage of the Unity native engine plugin that supports professional (digital/video) game developers by allowing them to work with their customary tools. I was always bothered about the dumbed-down ways children learn about design and technology and decided to do something about it. I'm in the early stages of starting up a business called My Make and Play to get children as excited about designing and making awesome things as I am. My vision is finding powerful new ways for children to engage with design and technology as a shared experience that bridges digital and tactile play. The proposed solution is to develop and beta test an online educational platform that bridges real and virtual worlds with social networking and uses creativity, storytelling and gameplay to help children design and make products that solve real problems. A Gallup Poll (USA) 2014 survey concluded that blended learning in

virtual environments is a growing hot spot. While blended-learning solutions are new, the proposed solution's innovative functionality provides an integrated environment of collaborative tools and gamification; it bridges tactile play with digital space to create an immersive environment.

How did you or the founders overcome your biggest fear when you realized the concept was becoming a business reality? Our biggest fear is not engaging our users! The fear of failure! There is a lot of 'noise' on the Internet and we will struggle to be heard. We fear that what we will spend hours and hours building is going to look lame to others. With so many people trying to 'disrupt' industry, a new kid on the block can suddenly wipe out our entire business model. However, a fear conquered is a fear harnessed. We learned that believing in oneself is the first step towards overcoming fear. If the fear lingers, then, as Bill Gates once said: "If I was down to my last dollar I would spend it on PR."

Any recent developments to announce? The company recently pitched at TechPitch 4.5, the pan-European investment pitching contest in London, and received favorable comments. Most significant is that the judges believed the product is timely and suggested the target market be moved from schools to individual users (families/kids). Schools are constrained by diminishing budgets.

Current Investors:

Founder Francis Maietta

Seeking funds from EU's FI-ADOPT project accelerator

URL: www.mymakeandplay.com

Email: info@mymakeandplay.com; francis@mymakeandplay.com

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Product/service: Newstag

Developer: Newstag (Stockholm, Sweden)

When launched: November 2014 (initially by invitation only)

Targeted users/sector: People who are interested in the world they live in and want to make a difference by engaging with news and current affairs. Newstag provides users with quality video news stories that they can trust, enabling individuals to create customized newsfeeds by tagging and sharing with their network of other users. The current content partners include global news agencies Reuters, Associated Press and Agence France Presse. Newstag will provide a single destination for professionally-produced video news content from a wide

START-UPS' STANDPOINT

range of sources at global, regional and local levels. These stories will be available 24/7 from multiple perspectives and in many languages.

How will your technology change the industry you are in; what gap is it filling; what is the unique selling point? Newstag is a crowd-curated video news and current affairs service pioneering an innovative approach to news sharing through social media. We have developed our technology and business model in a serious attempt to find a solution for the troubled media industry, rebalancing relationships between traditional stakeholders. For news to be sustainable, there has to be funding for content. This has traditionally come from brand placement so we've tried to resolve some of the issues faced by advertisers in order to create a platform that benefits everyone. Just as content providers are struggling to reach their target audience, so are brands. Newstag empowers the user to select the brands or campaigns that interest them as individuals, reversing the traditional advertising model. When users share content (the news and ads), they're distributing to their own social network whose interests closely match their own, creating a kind of advertising that's relevant and intimate. The same applies to good causes – NGOs (non-governmental organizations) and research projects – as users will be able to redistribute the value (and revenue) they create to projects relevant to them. This allows the NGOs and research projects to create awareness more effectively. And as a result, we are able to offer our users the world's largest professionally-produced video news network for free, and payment is generated within the Newstag ecosystem.

How did you or the founders overcome your biggest fear when you realized the concept was becoming a business reality? This is not the first company we have created and being an entrepreneur is always somewhat terrifying. There are so many fears – the risks are financial, technical and personal - but the worst is probably the fear of not making ourselves understood. I believe we have developed a fantastic new technology that allows for a brilliant news service; but without users that engage with this new approach, there is no potential for innovation and that is the greatest fear!

Any recent developments to announce? Agence France Presse joined our growing network of global content partners. We've revamped the technology by adding facilities to 'tag' compared to only 'search', gained new investors and secured US\$1.3m in seed funding; and announced several new appointments. And Kaizen! (Japanese for continuous improvements in any enterprise).

Current investors:

Founders Henrik Eklund and Camilla Dahlin-Andersson
Private and institutional investors
Swedish Innovation Grant

URL: www.newstag.com

Email: henrik@newstag.com

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The quality quarterly newsletter that keeps track of technology breaking the boundaries surrounding traditional media and content platforms, and the technologists making a difference. Our **News Analysis** covers tech activities in the international media, entertainment and creative businesses. Our **Disruption Directory** lists technology products that have been announced or developed for specific creative sectors. Our **Numbers That Count** page features statistics illustrating technology's influence on media and entertainment's evolution. Our **Start-ups' Standpoint** section gives emerging technology-service providers a platform to state the differences they hope to make and the challenge of fulfilling those ambitions.

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Media, entertainment and tech decision makers seeking a snapshot of the new developments catapulting the creative businesses further into the 21st century.

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