



THE MANDARIN

MONTHLY

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(Photo Credit: Anthony Quintano)

Trending Topic

SOCIAL MEDIA'S NEW KING

For decades, social media has been deemed "The Next Big Thing". Suddenly, we're ushered into the Golden Age of Social Media outrage where everyone is rushing to build THE platform. Facebook came into the picture in 2004 and no matter how you slice it... Facebook is King.

Fast forward 10 years and we now see Snapchat, the social messaging app as the new challenger. With its recent initial public offering, Snap Inc., parent company of Snapchat is becoming the biggest US-technology based IPO since, you guessed it, Facebook Inc.

So, is Snap Inc. the new King? How did this school project develop into one of the biggest tech names in history?

Legend has it, that Snapchat originated from a simple idea by 3 former students in Stanford University. Simply put, Reggie Brown wanted to develop an app that can allow users to send pictures to each other. The trick is, the pictures will disappear, with no strings attached. Evan Spiegel was invited as co-founder due to his prior business experience. A quick gathering resulted in them pulling in the tech guy due to his rich experience in coding. In mere months, Snapchat was born, and the rest as they say, is history.

I will argue that it's not that simple. Data shows that Snapchat's largest age demographic by far is 18 to 24 year old. Moreover, 60% of its users are 25 or

younger, with most of its users as Millennials. Snapchat is popular because it gives Millennials what they want.

Firstly, Snapchat is instant. Any photos or videos sent to a recipient will self-destruct in several seconds. Content sent to followers can be viewed multiple times, but it will disappear in 24 hours. This generates a primal urge for users in scrambling to send and receive content in order to not "miss out".

Secondly, Snapchat is authentic. Most social media platforms such as Instagram provide many tools for its users to make beautiful photos. In many circumstances, it felt like a race to see who can best each other in a photo contest. In addition, popularity is irrelevant. There are no content to "Like". If content isn't that great, there's no shame. It's going to self-destruct anyway.

Lastly, Snapchat is fun. It's messy and chaotic where you can customize your video in different lens or filters. All users can revert back to their roots of using Snapchat, where we can social freely with our friends without being judged.

The question now is how can Snapchat remain relevant? Although it's a social phenomenon in its own right, it's still in its infancy stage. In the cutthroat technology industry, we are already seeing other companies rushing to ape Snapchat's features and functions. How long, will Snapchat be King?

UC910 | Black Beauty

It's been a long day. The week has been rough, where everything seems to be going wrong. Life is here again, giving me the beating of a lifetime. My problems are piling up, judgmental parents, unforgiving friends, screw-up at work, taxes are unpaid...heck, even my cat is giving me a hard time.

I swear its Armageddon. My head is already filling up with Steven Tyler's voice screaming the lyrics of Aerosmith's - I Don't Want to Miss a Thing. The world as I know it, is coming to an end.

Hungry, exhausted and worn-out, I dragged my seemingly lifeless body and closed my eyes. It's pitch black in my room. Darkness everywhere.

A streak of light passed through my mind, and then I saw her. Yes...she's here again, always forgiving and unconditionally welcoming.

All of a sudden, all outside noise are blocked. Absolute silence.

A smile crossed my face as I plugged the keys into the machine. Her voice is soft spoken, reassuring yet crystal clear. Perfect.

I'm back on my feet again. With her by my side, I am ready to take on the world.

Accutone. The 910 - the very definition of audio engineering's excellence at its finest.



Channel News

[Chicago, US] One of the most important events in the development of Accutone happened in March, Accutone set up a new sales office in Chicago to engage in sales activities promptly and in a timely manner in a location close to its customers and gather market information with the objective of expanding its operations in America.

"Accutone has been winning new customers in NA every day, therefore we felt it was time for our physical sales office to be the sort of focal point we need for showcasing our technology to customers and recruiting the best talent available," Accutone North America president Sharad Jaiprakash said.

Accutone have been active in APAC and Europe market in the past 2 decades, they announced they established a new sales office in Chicago to keep up with the expectations of its North America customers, employees and growing brand.



(Photo Credit: Bert Kaufmann)



[RUSSIA] For the official launch of highly anticipated 910 series, Accutone Russia created a brand new TV commercial. Highlighting many unique features and user benefits of the headset, the video is both informative and elegant, illustrating a high-end professional mood which is exactly what the series stands for.

The Biz site biz.accutone.com has been revamped to highlight this video, but you should check out the full version with music and audio effects here: <https://youtu.be/osm4pbmrKy0>



[HONG KONG] Accutone launched their newest in-ear audio headphones in Hong Kong to festive the Chinese New Year and Valentine's Day. New products like Lyra, Pavo are well received by their sales channels including HK's Apple Stores, APRs and AAPs.

Channel growth are at an all-time high specifically for the HK market, as they enter audiophile shops, music retailers, premium electronic shops, as well as computer accessories channels. More activities are expected in the forthcoming Easter Holidays.



Lifestyle



OSCAR 2017: SURPRISE?

The formula for winning an Oscar is of course not an exact science, but with the success of Birdman (2014) and Spotlight (2015), both winners of Best Pictures, we should not be surprised by this year's results, or should we? In this year's Academy Awards, La La Land (2016) scored an incredible 14 Oscar nominations, tying with Titanic (1997) and All About Eve (1950) for a film with the most nods.

Should we be surprised? For a fact, we know that the Academy loves musical, and it sure feels like La La Land was planned from the very beginning for a big harvest at the Oscars. The 2nd movie to ever to win Best Picture at Oscars was a musical - The Broadway Melody (1929). Not familiar with that one? How about West Side Story (1961), My Fair Lady (1964), The Sound of Music (1965) or Chicago (2002). These are all Best Pictures, and

there are many more in between with excellent critical success just shy of "winning it all".

Yet, it isn't hard to understand why critics and audience are in love with La La Land - a feel-good, crowd-pleasing musical about love and dreams. Casting the hottest handsome heartthrob in Hollywood and an attractive sexy female lead who can sing and dance better than most. You then add a young (very young at 32) and talented composer in Justin Hurwitz, and an equally young and talented director in Damien Chazelle. Backed by an experienced production company like Lionsgate-Summit with a respectable cost-effective budget of US\$30M. Throw in a double or maybe a triple on promotion, advertising and "award-nomination spending", and you get yourself a Best Picture. If you are lucky, you might win big at the Box Office as well. La La "Landed" a whopping US\$432M.

But calculations aside, success of movies like La La Land is excellent news for audiences, especially in an era of super-heroes movies with big stunts and CGI "mo-cap" for a never-ending story in their "Movie Universe". Marvel, DC, Harry Potter, and now even King Kong has its own sequel-universe.

What constitute as a great movie is different for everyone. There's nothing wrong with people enjoying action sequences, punches or explosions, some will even argue that super-hero movies have a deeper and more complex story from its comic book origins than a 2-hour novel-adaptation or an original screenplay.

However, the Academy does not judge a movie's merit by its entertainment value or its box office. It is merely a subjective voting by the AMPAS' 6,300 members in two rounds of nomination and award. Of these 6,300 voters, 94% are white, 77% are male, with a median age of 62. So is it that much of a surprise that sci-fi movies or stories about latest trends and subculture rarely wins best pictures?

A good old simple musical about two beautiful white couple in Hollywood (where most of the voters resides and work in) seems like a good formula to win.

So the real surprise is, they didn't win. So much so that the mess created by the PWC accountants was not questioned by presenter Warren Beatty at all. Imagine if he was handed Zootopia's envelope, would he still went along with it?



(Credit: John Adams @Crunchies)

Tech News

A NEW FACEBOOK ERA

Throughout the last decade, Facebook has been aggressively changing users' expectations on its online platform, from stalking your classmates in the beginning, to being a platform for monetizing preferences, values and opinions. This year, Facebook is expected to make another disruptive change, which is allowing its over 1.86 billion monthly active users to enjoy a Facebook-Made Channel on their Facebook pages, including sports, games and TV series.

According to the Wall Street Journal on March 10th, Facebook has signed a deal with Major League Soccer and Univision to stream more than 20 regular-season soccer games in 2017. Meanwhile, Facebook is also planning to produce their own TV shows and TV series, and negotiating with movie

studios on future cooperations. These deals aim at creating exclusive content solely for Facebook, as a way to drive eyeballs to the new format.

This new move is potentially disruptive to the way we think about TV programming, because Facebook would be able to curate content to audiences based on personal interests. By consolidating social media and streaming service, the process of "watching TV" on Facebook can potentially become more interactive and users are likely to be more engaged than in the current habit of TV viewing. Facebook users tend to subscribe and react to pages and other users with similar views, values and interest. Once Facebook can provide relevant video recommendations, the opportunity there is in creating personalized

pages or channel for each user. Users will be watching and interacting with more content that is personally relevant to them, which also means the overall user experience will be that much better.

These channels will be also a new commercial tool and will become an additional income source for Facebook. In the future, they are likely to become a giant streaming provider like Netflix since they already have a huge number of active users. By creating their own library of original content, including big audience draws like sports, this can help Facebook chart a better path towards monetization on the platform both for itself and other partners who are already using the network to push their videos. Ultimately, this will lead to more video content, resulting in bigger, stickier audiences staying inside the Facebook community.

We can expect this Facebook Channel to be yet another milestone in social media history. Before, we treat social media platform like as a place for us to share everything in life. But this new streaming service may change user behaviors from sharing themselves to watching professional-produced contents which may not necessary lead to sharing. Will there be a day when all Facebook feeds are generated by professional media instead of sharing be normal users? Let's hope not.

New Products

STUDIO IEM

This April, Accutone® will finally launch their first In-Ear Monitor series, which is called the Studio Series. The philosophy behind Studio series is to deliver top quality high-resolution audio monitors at an affordable price. There are two models under the Studio series, the Studio S1 and Studio S2.

Both the Studio S1 and Studio S2 are guaranteed 100% handcrafted by in house engineers, and each unit are carefully tuned and thoroughly tested to ensure only the best audio quality for sound engineers, musicians, audiophiles and every music-lover. By applying the detachable MMCX cable system, both the Studio S1 and Studio S2 are compatible to most accessories already in the professional market.

Inside a transparent blue UV curable resin earphone housing, the structure of the Studio S1 is a single dynamic speaker design, which is built by a super-hard beryllium membrane, allowing clean and rapid vibration output and offering unparalleled clarity and accuracy sound preference. For a single unit full-spectrum dynamic speaker in the Studio S1, the 8mm HD driver from Accutone is one of the best in the market for audio responsiveness, making S1 the best dynamic-driver monitor.

The Studio S2 is built inside a sharp-looking transparent Red UV curable resin earphone housing, feathering a 1+1 hybrid design. S2 houses one dynamic driver and one balanced-armature unit in each ear. S2 is able to provide the best of both driver types with this hybrid design, using WBFK BA driver from Knowles® and a 10mm dynamic speaker from Accutone®.

Kickstarter Monthly

CAMORAMA: 4K VR!



As a reader of my column, I assume you know of Virtual Reality. You have probably heard that both Facebook and YouTube now support 360° videos. If you haven't seen how it works, go see Google Map's 360° street-view, except it's video.

Now imagine you can record 360° video, in 4K ultra HD, sounds pretty cool right? This month's Kickstarter idea is the Camorama - a 4K action VR & 360-Degree camera made for sharing.

Of course, Camorama uses a super-wide angle lens, that is how it records 360° video. You can record image and video with different views,

including circular 360° mode, little planet mode, virtual mode and 360° panoramic mode. It also comes with a microphone and speaker for audio recording and playback. Supporting PC, Mac via USB and Android and iOS for 4K video Edit, the best part about Camorama is its ability to share via most social platform wirelessly.

Camorama has been tested in the most extreme environments, from 30,000 feet in the air to freezing cold temperatures. It's also designed for scuba diving, surfing, adventure sporting or even attaching it to your favorite drone for aerial recording.

Personally, I love the most about the virtual mode, since I own a VR goggle. Using this device I can re-live any happy moments in virtual reality not just as a stilled picture, but moving videos. This is the thing Sci-Fi movies are about. You can also share your experience with your friends by allowing them to live through your moments in first person perspective, and vice versa!! Imagine the possibilities... :)

Camorama will be available on Kickstarter at USD 239, I am looking forward to it, and you?