IS MAGAZINE

IS - MY LIFE

Interview with
Mr. Derek Chan
CO-FOUNDER OF 9GAG

Mysterious Box
THE LATEST APP WITH AUGMENTED REALITY TECHNOLOGY

INSTANT MESSAGE APPS
DEVELOPMENT AND EVOLUTION OF IM APPS

IS CAREER

INTERN EXPERIENCE FROM TWO CUREENT STUDENTS

Foreword

It's my honor to gratefully thank all for your support to the issue 2013 of Information Syatems Magazine (IS Magazine).

Aiming to promote Information Systems as a field of study, Information Systems Association BEA HKUSU has been publishing publications annually to raise public interest through a series of articles related to Information Systems.

Since last year, the publication has changed from journal format to a magazine one. What we hope is to present ideas related in a way that readers can gain the concepts mentioned in a more interesting and interactive way.

Featuring 9GAG, we present readers an in-depth view into the development and rise-up of the company, together with an interview with Mr. Derek Chan, a BBA(IS) graduate and one of the founding members of this successful business. We also feature some latest information about Augmented Reality Technology and IM Apps in this issue. Lastly, we are glad to have two current BBA(IS) students to share their intern experience.

Rome was not built in one day. I hereby take the chance to thank my fellow Editorial Sub-Committees for their hard work.

Hope you all enjoy the issue!

IP Chun Yeung, Jason
Head,
Editorial Sub-Committee,
Information Systems Association BEA HKUSU
Session 2012 - 2013

The Editorial Sub-Committee

Head	JASON IP
Vice-Head	WATERY CHOI
Honorary Secretary	STEPHY IP
Members	CLIFF CHAN
	JASON KWOK
	CHRIS LEE
	HENRY NG
	NIGEL NGAN
	JASON SIT
	ANGUS TANG
	LAURIE TANG
	JOCELYN WAI
	SUNNY YUEN

CONTENTS

The Image-based Social Media Website

Just For Fun! --- the slogan of the popular image-based website summarises what 9GAG is all about. Since 2008, 9GAG has captivated millions' hearts and spread contagious joy around the world. The website is now an international success with more than 6 billion users worldwide. It all started off as a dream in Hong Kong by Derek Chan, one of our very own alumnae and his friends. We had a valuable chance to sit down with Derek Chan and he shared with us how all of this started.

and got recognize internationally. After launching a series of marketing promotion for the website suggested by their mentor, the number of users reached 10 million. When mentioning all of this overwhelming popularity, Derek Chan humbly said he still believed most of it was out of pure luck.

LAUGH MORE.

9GAG.COM

9GAG was initially a summer project in 2008 by Derek and his friends Chris Chan and Ray Chan. They created 9gag for fun and targeted the broad audience in Hong Kong. Despite the fact that 9gag was started with pure passion and with no marketing research at all, the website eventually gained attention in Hong Kong through social channels such as Facebook. But not until 2010, when they met their summer project mentor in the United States, could they bring this joke website to an entirely different level

The 9GAG company now has about 20 employees and is divided into 3 major departments. The engineering team is responsible for technical work such as server maintenance and program writing. The product team mainly focuses on creative changes on the website and the content team's job is to screen the content on the website. When asked about the working atmosphere in 9GAG, Derek described the working environment as playful and comfortable. There are ping pong tables and card games in the office for employees to have some fun.

With the enormous website inflow everyday, the website relies on computer systems to filter inappropriate content. However, employees still physically monitor statistics of item uploaded onto the website, such as the number of Facebook "likes". Derek considered the reliance of data in making major decisions the reasons why they managed to surpass other similar counterparts. The content team also deals with complaints on copyright-related materials and handles those cases by referring to the related blog posts.

The major income source of 9gag at the moment is advertising. Derek confessed that the company is not making a fortune with the Google Ads they are putting on their website but its still in a stable financial state. They managed to breakeven with the income source of advertisements. He reiterated that the current prime focus is to boost the number of views, but not to seek more income sources. The website's biggest challenge is to continue raising the views since it is a very important indicator of how well the website is doing and is also a crucial factor for other investment decisions.

With an optimistic future, Derek mentioned a possible development of the site is to have separated 9gag pages for users in different countries. The 9gag team understands some jokes are more culturally relevant to users in a particular country. Sadly, due to funding and resource limitation, this feature might not be available in the short future. In the nearer future, users however could expect more personalization incorporated onto the website. The whole 9gag experience will be enriched with more personalized taste of humor. Contents will be separated into categories for users to pick from and we can also expect more diversified topics on the site.

The rise of 9gag not only gave immense satisfaction to its founders, it also benefitted billions around the world by bringing numerous laughters. Derek trusted they have truly fulfilled their purpose when they first started the page, which is to bring joy to people in the simplest way. The support of 9gag once again demonstrated that happiness truly has no boundaries. In this hectic and crazy world, I hope 9gag will continue to give us more and more reasons to laugh and chill.

Written by Joycelyn Wai

Little facts about 9

Founder	CHRIS CHAN
	DEREK CHAN
	RAY CHAN
	MARCO FUNG
Established	12 APRIL 2008
Website	9GAG.COM
	7 Million in 2013
	1 Million in 2013

MYSTERIOUS BOX

The Latest App with Augment Reality Technology

What is AR?

Augmented reality (AR) is a live, real-world environment where elements are supplemented by computer-generated sensory input such as sound, video, graphics.

How AR Comes Up?

The initial idea became possible when mobile network gained popularity in public. With mobile apps emerging as the easiest and most useful doorway to communicate with customers in the future, more companies started to utilize such new technology to link themselves with their customers via various electronic devices and increase interactions. As a result, more mobile apps were available in the market, providing various services and information to customers.

By taking advantage of mobile network and providing a common platform to expose their brands and communicate, the applications of mobile apps have further grown in an enormous speed. AR technology was not applied to mobile devices until recently, due to the limitation of hardwares. With advancement of processors for smartphones and tablets, those devices are now powerful enough to run the programs, enabling the application of AR technology.

How is AR in Commercial Industry?

Tailor-made apps, which can incorporate modules such as communication, Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Office Automation (OA) for business users, are now available through the Mysterious Box. On the other hand, the latest augment reality technology can be incorporated on smart devices to create awesome apps or live shows.

Last month, the Mysterious Box has also just won the second prize of Sichuan Provincial Zone in the 2013 China Innovation Entrepreneurship Competition with a press industry solution using augment reality technology.

How does the business develop?

With a large amount of potential cooperating opportunities with external parties, the Mysterious Box has been working to extend its application and cooperation network.

How the jobs are divided among different people?

Mr Wu: Actually, I am not an expert in coding. My brother and I started this company with a friend who is experienced in coding and augment reality, then we find other guys who can translate the programme to iOS / Android environment. My role in the team is to provide ideas and compile business plans for customers and the competition (the one mentioned above), while my brother mainly focuses on the sale and operation part of work. We are just a team of five right now. So, the division of labor is clear, the life is simple and we haven't seen the need of such policies at this stage of our development. We will work on that as soon as we have become big enough.

Written by Jason Kwok

IS CAREER

Intern Experience from Two Current Students

Business Field
Business Banking Division in HSBC

I would like to describe my experience as a 1-year intern at Hang Seng Bank, which I believe banking industry is a good alternative for BBA(IS) student. My duties there are not related to IT and I had worked as IT intern in another company before but I found that I am not interested in IT industry.

Many people asked me why I would decide to have a gap year for this internship. To be honest, at first I only wanted to enrich my CV with working experience in a well-known company. I have been staying in this bank for the fourth month, up til now. I would say what I learnt is far more than my expectation. The most valuable thing in this internship is that a mentor was assigned to me, who teaches me the working procedure and other important stuff throughout this year. It is not similar to any other mentorship programs because I work with my mentor every day and learn all the duties he is doing. It is a really inspiring way to learn from a mentor.

I am now currently working in the business banking division. At first, I didn't know much about the banking industry. After intensive trainings and completing tasks, I seem to figure out what should a banking job be liked.

Banking is about giving financial assistance to the customers by providing different kinds of loans and investment information. A bank is basically divided into frontline and back office. Frontline position is to deal with customers directly and tackle their problems while back office supports the general banking service and internal cooperation. Then, I would like to introduce you what business banking is. It only serves corporate customers. There are more financial needs for corporate then retail customers so our department is doing some planning for their financial situation and giving different kind of loan to them. A corporation may have faster expansion or maintain a stable operation after our financial assistance.

In these few months, I experience many new things in the office. Here, no one will force you to work, it is all about self-regulation. As an intern, I have to grasp every opportunities form my colleagues, so as to attain more from the work. With working out proposals, I can also understand the running of large corporations. In each proposal, there will be an analysis for the company in different aspects which is my duty to work them out so I trained to be analytical towards different situations and the financial data of a company.

Also, the wording used in the analysis should be able to describe the real situation precisely, therefore my language skill is also boosted. Client meeting is another great opportunity provided in this internship. Before providing financial assistance, we should have a full picture about client's business so it is important to meet the client and gather as many information as possible. Meeting in client's office is a common practice and it is an amazing chance to practise how to communicate with client in a formal way. If the client is a manufacturer, it is more fun, as there will be factory visit in mainland. I have gone to 3 countries for visit. In each visits, I observe the manufacturing flow in different products. It is interesting to have this kind of visit.

However, working is totally different from school life. Although you can learn to be mature and professional in your job, you will find studying in university is much happier than sitting in front of a desk and work every day. I started missing my school life after months of internship, so I advise everyone to treasure your remaining years in the university before entering the society.

Written by Sunny Yuen

IT Field
Infrastructure Division in Morgan Stanley

It is common for BBA(IS) students to find a summer internship during the study to gain more working experience as well as to earn money. However, some may wonder what they can gain in the internship, or what type of work they will be assigned to. The answer is - it really depends. Nevertheless, let me share my experience in summer internships, and hopefully you will understand more of it. One of my summer internships was at an investment bank, the Infrastructure division under technology. It was a 10-week program started in June.

The First Day - Induction Day

The first day was the induction day. The interns gathered and attended different presentations. I learnt different topics of the firm, including the history, culture, information security, compliance, and tips for how to be successful in the firm. I also had the opportunity to ask and to learn what interns do from analyst panel.

The induction lasted for whole day. Each intern received a reference book outlining the activities in coming weeks, which include different firmwide speaker series and division-specific speaker series, as well as firmwide interns networking lunch and social game. There would be mid-term evaluations and final evaluations as well, providing interns some timely feedbacks.

Responsibilities

I was placed in the tools team of an infrastructure department, which is responsible for developing and supporting the tools used by the department for daily operational tasks. Those various tools cover 4 main functions provided by the department, involving different technologies such as ASP. NET, C#, Java, JavaScript, Perl, SharePoint, and Sybase.

During the internship, I was responsible for developing a new tool for the department and resolving issues found in the currently used tools. At the end, I was required to present what I have learnt and the project I have been working on to HR and managers in technology.

Work Performed and Delivered

Developing a New Tool

I worked on a new tool assisting in external client connectivity troubleshooting, which is a tool developed using Perl CGI, SharePoint and Sybase, aims at assisting the department and the other teams to perform connectivity troubleshooting by (i) providing an organised and centralised web interface for different teams to input the required data and (ii) highlighting the common points of different client connections to ease the analysis during the incident.

First, I demonstrated the prototype to the regional team (Asia team) for collecting feedback using live meeting (with phone conference). Then, I continued to modify the tool, and demonstrated the tool to the global team and different teams (e.g. application support group, network services, IT security, etc.). I got good feedback and continued to fine tune the tool. When the pre-first version is finished, I helped run a simulation with different teams to use the tool, so that I can know how the tool will be used in the real situation.

By the end of the summer internship, the source codes have been put in the firm certified SCM repository. The first version of the tool has been put in QA (or UAT) environment, and pending to be turned over to production environment. In addition, the documentation, including User Guide and Technical Details, has been written and 'published' in internal wiki of the firm.

Supporting Tools

I also worked on resolving the issues found in some SharePoint utilities (Perl scripts) caused by web container upgrade.

I first investigated which part is broken exactly in the tools after the web container upgrade. Then, I searched and studied the ways to fix it through different documentations and internal wiki. I have also reached web operations to set the required development environment to test if the new codes work. In addition, I have opened a ticket in the project management software and a job in SCM repository for this issue to meet the standard practice in the firm.

By the end of the summer internship, all the codes were preliminary fixed. The source codes were submitted in SCM repository and linked with the corresponding job in project management software. The codes were put in QA environment and the full test

More than Work

Knowing About the Others Divisions

It's not only about work in the internship. During the internship, interns had the opportunity to meet with other interns in the weekly intern networking lunch. Then, we attended different speaker series to learn about different divisions of the company. There were different e-learning for interns, in order to learn the policies and presentation skills during work.

Interns Networking Game - Quiz Night

There was more than that. The most unforgettable experience was the intern social networking event - Quiz Night. No worries, it's not the "quiz" at school. Interns were grouped as teams (or "table" with food and drinks) in the size of 10, to compete with each other by answering questions. Questions were split up into different rounds with different topics, and each team needed to submit the answers at the end of each round. The scores of each round then would be shown. The questions were quite "trivial" and most of them were not related to the business. For example, I remembered that the first round was all about books. The first sentence of a book was given in each question, and we needed to answer the book title and author of the book! At last, my team won the championship and got the prize! Guest what? The prize was the opportunity to have lunch with Co-CEO of Asia Pacific!

Volunteer Work - Charity Day

Interns went to a non-profit organisation to do volunteer work for a half day. There were different types of work we can choose, and I remembered I helped moving and checking the donated electrical appliances which will be delivered to developing countries. The work was a little bit tough but fun.

Values of the Internship

Technical Knowledge

For the technical knowledge, I have learnt many technologies that haven't been taught in the university. For my project, I was required to use technologies that I haven't learnt before, and I was able to finish it and received a very positive feedback. I have learnt Perl, SharePoint, and Sybase during the project, and most importantly, different infrastructures and practices in the firm. For example, it requires different approval and permission to setup the software and environment - it's quite different from home or school environment.

I was given chances to work with and learn other departments in the firm. Although I was placed in infrastructure division, I have learnt what the others do in front office and those technologies they use.

It was a very valuable and irreplaceable experience that I can learn how technologies were applied in real business situation, apart from school and theoretical usage.

Professional Skills

For professional skills, I was given opportunities to work with different teams globally. For example, I have demonstrated the tool to global team, in which team members are located in Hong Kong, Tokyo, London, and New York. I helped run a simulation utilizing the tool with different teams (e.g. web operations, IT security, etc.), in which I can receive feedback and foresee how the tool will be used in the real situation. In addition, I have presented about my summer internship experience to HR and managers in technology with PowerPoint slides.

Besides, the primary language used in the firm is English, and the employees in the firm are diversified. I got lots of chance to use English to communicate with each other (e.g. chitchat, meeting).

In this aspect, I have improved a lot in communication using English (both verbal and written). I get used to work in an English-medium environment, in which may not be found in the university truly. This experience was unique.

Summary

So, after the 10-week summer internship programme, I have worked on a project, met interns from different divisions, learnt their business, and also had fun in different interns networking events and volunteer work. I learnt a lot in technical and professional skills, and I enjoy working in the firm very much.

Hope you find this sharing useful, and have a more understanding of it.

Written by Angus Tang

INSTANT MESSAGE APPS

Development and Evolution of IM Apps

The Early Days

Integrated Services

Mobile Chat Engines

"Random Encounter" Services

Into the Future...?

The Early Days:
ICQ, AOL Instant Messenger

ICQ and AIM were the fore-runners in the field of instant messenger software. The first versions of ICQ puts users in private chat sessions, where every message they send is almost immediately relayed to other participants. The model has become a hit and led to the spawning of future variations.

As the chat engines develop, they can also support limited file sharing functionalities and integration of games and other applications.

Although their popularity has greatly diminished over the years, there are still active releases available for various platforms and operating systems.

Integrated Services:

Yahoo! Messenger, MSN Messenger →

Windows Live Messenger, Tencent QQ,

Aliwangwang, Facebook Messenger

With the trend of instant messaging on the rise, many internet service companies also incorporates instant messenger capabilities into their product suite. The instant messaging functions can be integrated with the suite's other applications and complementing the making of a more all-rounded user experience.

Mobile Chat Engines:

Whatsapp, LINE, WeChat

As the smartphone becomes a gradually commonplace in the global market, new chat engines has been devised to suit the needs of smartphone users. One main attraction of this generation is that people can send messages to other phones through the internet and hence bypassing higher charges imposed by the latter.

Many releases of the previous stages of instant messaging history can also be seen with mobile application re-releases to take a slice at this surging market.

"Random Encounter" Services:

Chatroulette, Omegle

In addition to the more conventional services that connect you with people you know, there are actually websites that offer to pair users up randomly. Webcam functionalities can be enabled as the user wishes.

Into the Future...?

As we all saw and experienced, instant messengers have jumped out of the frame of computer screens to mobile phones impressively and incredibly. In the future, mobile IMs would develop into a more user-friendly and social interactive way. To be more social interactive, location sharing of mobile IMs (WeChat or Whatsapp) may work with the check-in function of social networks (Facebook, QQ or Weibo). Status can be updated simultaneously in both messengers and social networks. Friends would be suggested from social networks to IMs and vice versa. IMs can also fit in with daily life by adding group event voting, notice board and event reminder functions. Mobile IMs may also work together to form allies, so more users can be served.

AliWangWang

AliWangWang is a supplementary service to the Chinese trading site Taobao Marketplace, with which buyers can directly contact sellers (or customer service representatives for larger-scale companies). Taobao shoppers frequently use the application to ask about products or bargain on the price before confirming their purchases.

WeChat

WeChat is the product of Tencent Inc. based in China. One of WeChat's specialties is its creative methods to connect with other users, for example locating nearby users who are also shaking the device at the same time, and sharing messages in a drift bottle across the virtual ocean.

LINE

LINE is the instant messaging application developed by the Japanese subsidiary of the South Korean search engine Naver. In addition to typical chat functionalities, LINE also incorporates social networking elements, giving users a public profile for posting different post.

LINE is popular with many users for its wide range of stickers, or stock images that can be used alongside regular textual chat. In addition to original sticker designs, LINE also features a lot of licensed sticker sets featuring themes like pop idols, video games and animation films. Many companies use releasing sticker sets on LINE as a means of advertising efforts. It also enables integrating emoji (small stock icons) with textual chat and has a library of textual emoticons.

LINE's group capabilities are also groundbreaking in the instant messaging field. Each group comes with a notice board where members can post and comment.

Development of IM

Early IMs in computers such as ICQ and AIM are equipped with searchable user directory, status sharing function and emotional icons. They provided us a platform to have multi users chat, transfer limited size files and send offline messages.

With more similar IMs being published, more functions of the IMs are developed by the companies in order to stay in competition. The following IMs and IMs nowadays in computer have been developed to be more user friendly and they enhance interactions among users. "Random Encounter"

services, games, voice-record transfer, real-time voice chat and video chat are included for users to communicate with each other interactively. We can store chat history and edit the previous messages. Some of the IMs such as Skype allows users to receive calls on their computers dialed by conventional phone subscribers to a local Skype phone number. There is also a trend for IMs to cooperate with each other as messenger companions to enlarge the user base. Web-based instant Messengers such as Ebuddy and imo are also published so users can reach them more easily.

Following the trend of increasing ease to reach with the raise of mobile networking and Wi-Fi, instant messengers in mobiles, Whatsapp, WeChat and LINE, are introduced. With the support of basic functions developed, mobile IMs can also connect account to social networking sites to allow instant photos and videos taking and sharing.

Written by Nigel Cheung and Herny Ng