



Community

Dragon's Chamber Taiwan: Turn Your Dream into Reality



Feliciano Hsu 2017/11/18



林冠羽

This year's Meet Taipei Startup Festival 2017 saw Business Next cooperating with three international organizations.

Two of these, Startup World Cup and La French Tech, we have covered in previous articles. Here, we are taking a closer look at the third one, the Canadian government-supported Dragon's Chamber Taiwan and its startup presentation at Meet Taipei 2017.

The Dragon's Chamber was organized by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce Taiwan (CCCT), which has served as Canada's semi-official representation on the island nation since 1983. Part of the CCCT's Small Business Network, the Dragon's Chamber aims to connect small business entrepreneurs with industry leaders in Taiwan.

At Meet Taipei 2017, the Dragon's Chamber and CCCT continued these efforts through an international competition for startups. Besides the winning team of Woodpecker Learning, startups Eatsmart and My Room Abroad stood out in particular thanks to their innovative pitches.

Woodpecker Learning: No more textbooks

Woodpecker Learning takes aim at the lack of innovative methods for learning foreign languages. "There is a dearth of digital tools that can help language learners and teachers alike to use content designed for native speakers as learning materials," CEO Peter Sutton explained during their pitch.

Their solution is called "Woodpecker Watch," which is a platform where learners and instructors can use video content intended for native speakers. Rather than relying on

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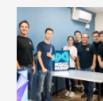
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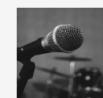
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Instructors can use video content intended for native speakers. Rather than relying on textbooks, they may use materials that are more challenging and interesting to further their language skills.

Besides English and Chinese, Woodpecker Learning offers a vast amount of free content and training methods in Japanese, Vietnamese, Spanish, French, German and Portuguese. Soon, they will add Russian to the platform as well.

Thanks to their student-focused approach to language learning, as well as their exciting presentation, Woodpecker won the grand prize of NTD30,000 at this year's Dragon's Chamber Taiwan competition.

Eatsmart: Healthy catering

The rise of E-commerce is slowly incorporating catering services that seek to provide fresh produce and meals conveniently via internet shopping. The latest to join the fray is Eatsmart, a Taiwanese startup dedicated to promoting a healthier lifestyle through customized meals.

During their pitch, the Eatsmart team demonstrated the ease of use with which one can order food from their platform. All one has to do is create an account, enter basic information about one's preferences and where the delivery shall go. Eatsmart then cooks up delicious choices from which the user may choose their meal.

True to their credo, Eatsmart's choices are well-balanced and highly nutritious. Besides providing options such as vegan or gluten-free, the platform also gives users choices for special programs designed to support their lifestyle. For instance, the "lift program" supports exercise-heavy routines through meals high in protein and natural fibers.

My Room Abroad: Connecting international students with certified landlords.

Probably anyone who has studied abroad has come across a fair share of problems related to housing. Be it the difficulties in obtaining an affordable place, or solving subsequent troubles with the landlord, settling in a foreign city as a cash-strung student comes with certain risks and challenges. The Belgian team behind My Room Abroad now wants to minimize these through their new platform.

At My Room Abroad, users can find information about cheap rent opportunities even before they have left their home country. In essence, the platform connects international students with landlords that are certified according to a strict set of criteria.

According to My Room Abroad's founders, the idea stemmed from their experiences as exchange students. While enjoying their stay in a foreign culture, finding a suitable room was a painful experience for them. The first city for which they are offering their services is Taipei, incidentally one of their initial exchange destinations.

Founded only in February 2017, the platform has skyrocketed from an initial 150 rooms to well over 850. What's more, My Room Abroad has struck partnership's with nine local universities and language schools in Taipei, as well as 12 partner universities in Europe. If things go as planned, they want to expand their services to other destinations.



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Feliciano gained her MSc of Media Power and Public Affairs from Royal Holloway, University of London.

After graduating from London, she started her career of being journalist at Business Next Media and Meet Startup @TW Website, and specializes in interviewing about innovation and technology.

Within her career, she has interviewed various experts in their field, including Mr. Jimmy Wales, founder of Wikipedia; Fleur Pellerin, former French Minister of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and Sir Christopher Pissarides, Nobel Prize Laureate in Economic in 2010.

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