

Fudan Students' APP Gets Venture Capital to Solve Dining Problem

By Zong He

"There are three major challenges in life: What is for breakfast tomorrow? What is for a simple lunch? And what is for dinner together?" These are the challenges to people with food selection difficulty. Han Yu, a major in mathematics in Fudan University and his team have developed an APP "What to eat", trying to help people with food selection difficulty make the right choice.

Han Xu, CEO of Shanghai Riceball Internet Technology Co., Ltd. does not consider himself an entrepreneur. "I have been telling people that I am just trying out a new variety," he said.

The variety he is trying out is the tailor-made platform "what to eat" that he has developed to serve himself and people that have difficulty making decisions on what to eat like him. Although there are many kinds of mobile phone software targeting to solve the problem of "what to eat" in the market, those software haven't solved the original problem.

In the eyes of Han Xu, the platforms that are available on the market only provide the lists of restaurants. These cold lists do not sense what the favorite food of the users is. "When you use our APP, you can get the recommendation based on your favorite tastes," he said.

The background program of the APP was originally created by Han Xu. "When I got a problem, I just want to write a program to solve it," he said. Han took part in program design contest as recommended by his teacher when he was in Grade Six. He gradually developed his hobby of typing codes and even wrote a program to facilitate himself in remembering the English words. "When I found everyone was bothered by what to eat, I just wrote a program to help solve the problem," said Han.

In the end of last year, Han Xu who just returned from Oxford University as an exchange student was introduced by his friend to a venture capital. Han introduced to the investor his vision to develop intelligent software to recommend restaurants to people. "I didn't expect that they all supported me," said Han. His solid software programming capability and his interesting vision captured the heart of the investor. "They offered the project a fund of a few million yuan," he said. With the capital support, Han became even more ambitious and started to look for foodies who share the same passion to solve the problem of what to eat.

Fang Yuanyuan, COO of the company, is a graduate from the Journalist Department of Fudan University. She has the same food selection difficulty as Han. After knowing Han, Fang and Han hit it

off instantly and started this great undertaking--solve the problem of what to eat.

Riceball Internet Technology Co., Ltd. was thus born and has been attracting more and more foodies to the undertaking.

Now the company has ten formal employees, all graduates from Fudan University, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, and Shanghai Normal University respectively. "I want to do something that I like when I am young," said GuoTiantian, editor of the company. Graduated from Shanghai Normal University this year, Guo is enjoying the business journey that she is taking together with the inspirational foodies.

Team members who are mostly newly graduates also faced the employment pressure. "Global Fortune 500" and high income are not what they are pursuing in the first job. "Doing the right thing with the right people" is the key drive for them to join the company without a second thought.

"We have one fundamental requirement for employees, i.e., she or he must be a foodie," said Fang Yuanyuan. When they have time, they will explore what to eat and how to eat, etc. "Putting some clams into the hot pot will spice up the pot." "Freshly cut mutton is much better than frozen boxes."

To ensure the products are satisfactory, the team has been producing, revising and starting over

repeatedly. The APP was launched officially in Apple Store in the end of June this year.

If the user posts one picture with the APP, the picture will be recommended to people with similar tastes based on algorithm. In this way, the showing of pictures is not attracting resentment for showing off but helping other users who have difficulty making decisions on what to eat.

"The advantage of this APP is that it is close to me and also its recommendations are better suiting to my requirements in terms of price and novelty," said a user with the nickname of "Zhu Erer". She is a foodie and has been bothered by the food selection difficulty. She has tried a good variety of related mobile phone software and has deleted them all. "What to Eat" will make recommendations to me. I can thus show off pictures to other foodies without any concern. I don't need to worry if I am showing off if I post the pictures to my friends circle on wechat," she said.

"If the user sends us the location, the APP will recommend restaurants nearby," said Fang Yuanyuan. Except APP, the wechat is greatly different from other food recommendation platforms.

From 10:00 am to 20:00 pm, wechat users can get personal recommendations by having simple but fun dialogues with "What to Eat".

"What is your budget, sir?" "Salty or light?"

Besides the column "Ask Me what to Eat", the public account has been launched since the start of this year. Editors of the company have been producing original rank list, introducing restaurants on discount or favorite stores with authentic foodie language, interviewing interesting eaters and sharing their stories. Among the interviewees, there are Zhao Ruohong, owner of "No Waiting at Ms Zhao's", Ju the illustrator who shared the foodie painting stories. They have also introduced how the "Cooking Master Boy" prepared cooking. This original content has won the compliments from the interviewees and also the restaurants. "Everyone is serious and the content is very good," said Ju the illustrator.

The serious attitude has won the APP rapidly growing fans from the original five people to more than 50,000 foodies. "We will continue to create original and quality stuff and develop interactive tools," said Fang. Fang is hoping that the wechat can connect the offline and the online and drive forward the development of the software. In July and August, the company will launch offline and online activities that target white-collar workers and she also has plans to promote the software onto the campus when the new semester begins.



On July 13, two footpaths for local residents in KailuSancun and KailuSicun, two residential quarters, were officially put into use in the central garden. This is an achievement made with joints efforts by Yangpu District Sports Bureau and Yinhang Sub-district. The footpaths, with width of 1.5 meters, are 300 meters long in total and paved with standard footpath rubber which is soft and resilient. There are also signboards put up along the footpaths telling people the right way of walking, how to keep fit and things to notice, etc. So that local residents can enjoy the runway in the comfortable environment and keep feet.

Photography by Zheng Xiaomeng

Yangpu Extends Opening for Two Parks in Summer

By Mao Haiping

Following six parks that extended opening in summer last year, i.e., Yanchun, Pingliang, Songhe, Boyang, Gongnong and Neijiang, Yangpu has extended the opening of two more parks this summer. Plus Siping Technology Park and Minking Park, Yangpu now has eight parks that open from 5:00 am to 9:00 pm from July 1 to September 30. On every Sunday night except rainy days during

this period, there will be one movie on show in Yanchun Park.

Before the extended opening, Yangpu District landscaping authority has examined the road lamps and monitor equipment in the parks to ensure the implementation of safety measures and emergency plans. On disastrous days in summer, all parks will take emergency reactions based on the actual situations, close the parks and make notification and explanation to the public.

Interactive Safety Education for Youngsters

By Zhou Lin

Wujiaochang Sub-district Women's Federation and Shanghai Wulixiang Community Service Center jointly introduced "China Children and Teenagers Fund · AXA China Mobile Safety Experience Classroom" on July 13, offering youngsters who are on their summer vocation a brand-new class on safety experience. More than 100 youngsters and parents attended the class at the commu-

nity cultural activity center. China Children and Teenagers Fund and benevolent AXA jointly presented this experiential and interactive safety education whose slogan is "Fastening Your Safety Belt Before Hitting the Road". With the purpose of enhancing self-protection awareness and emergency avoidance capability of the children and their parents, the event covered education on traffic safety, fire safety, emergency rescue and mutual rescue knowledge and skills.