

# Out of Office

Big ideas that go beyond the boardroom | 精明理念足以燃亮辦公室以外的世界



## Virtually social

A new round of celebrity funding could help boost social virtual experiences

With virtual reality (VR) poised to dominate the world in the coming years, Hong Kong-based Sandbox VR recently received a welcome injection of US\$11 million courtesy of celebrities such as Katy Perry, Will Smith, Japanese soccer pro Keisuke Honda and American basketball star Kevin Durant.

This means more star power (and money) behind one of the most exciting technologies on the market today. Sandbox VR, founded by Steve Zhao in 2016, is a truly free-roaming experience where users wear backpack computers instead of being tethered to a console. It offers cinema-style, full-body motion-capture technology to create immersive escape rooms and activities so that Sandbox users can interact, form co-op teams or compete – a remarkable step for an activity often considered a solitary entertainment experience.

The technology could also be used for more immersive marketing opportunities. “We believe VR is finally ready to take off as a mass-market phenomenon in malls, where it can be optimised for a social experience,” David Sacks, general partner at Craft Ventures, told *Nikkei Asian Review*. Craft, who led this round of financing, has also invested in Elon Musk’s Boring Company and Reddit.

## 虛擬社交

獲得多位星級投資者支持的虛擬實境體驗，勢將成為一股大眾潮流

隨著虛擬實境 (VR) 技術有望於未來幾年普及全球，總部位於香港的初創公司Sandbox VR近期便獲得高達1,100萬美元的注資。其投資者粒粒皆星，包括著名歌手Katy Perry、電影巨星Will Smith、日本足球名將本田圭佑和美國籃球明星Kevin Durant等。Sandbox VR提供真正自由走動的VR體驗，玩家可佩戴背包式數碼裝備進行遊戲，毋須再受控制台束縛。該公司亦運用電影級全身動作捕捉技術，營造身歷其境的密室逃脫體驗，並非家用VR裝置或普通VR體驗館所能媲美。透過自由走動的模式，Sandbox VR的玩家可以互相交流、組隊和比賽。對於這種一般被視為單獨娛樂的活動而言，確是向前邁出了重要一步。走動式VR體驗的崛起，也為各大品牌和公司開闢了全新沉浸式營銷途徑。風險投資機構Craft Ventures合夥人David Sacks在接受《日經亞洲評論》採訪時表示：「我們認為，VR終於能夠發展成為一種可以在購物商場推行的大眾市場營銷模式，並可迎合特定的社交體驗。」



## By the numbers

真實數字



**500**  
MILLION

VR headsets will be sold by 2025

及至2025年，全球將售出五億部虛擬實境頭戴式裝置



**98.4**  
MILLION

global VR sales will be made by 2023

及至2023年，全球虛擬實境銷售額將達到9,840萬美元



**93%**

more VR gaming jobs posted between 2015 and 2018

2015年至2018年期間，與虛擬實境相關的工作職位增加了93%