



Company Profile and Creative Process

Interview with Brian Cavallaro, Chief Creative Officer

History

MANDT BROS. productions is a Los Angeles based production company that was formed in 2001 by two brothers, Neil and Michael Mandt. The company produces content for television, film, internet and mobile audiences and also runs two production facilities. MANDT BROS. has worked with numerous companies and celebrities such as ESPN, ABC, Disney, Oprah Winfrey, and Adam Corolla. The company consists of approximately forty employees. After noticing what they considered a hole in the market MANDT BROS. started to enter the virtual reality sector by creating recruiting videos for college football programs. This led to the creation of MANDT VR. I spoke with Brian Cavallaro, MANDT VR's Chief Creative Officer, about their creative process, how they produce content, and what they see in the future for MANDT VR. Brian came from a background of being a producer and did a lot of work with Disney. He first got into VR by producing the first live hosted VR stream at a red-carpet event. After that experience he moved to MANDT VR.

Creative Process

MANDT VR works with a number of different clients and a lot of branded content. Brian explained that their process does not necessary deal with idea creation but taking clients ideas and concepts and making them a reality, or in this case virtual reality. Basically, the client comes to MANDT with an idea and they work backwards from the concept to build a VR product for them. They use their knowledge of how to produce VR and what works to tailor their approach to meet the client’s needs. One example of this is their work with the NFL football team, The Pittsburgh Steelers. They get the idea of what the Steelers



Pittsburgh Steelers. They get the idea of what the Steelers are looking for, work with demos and then build a product from there. Brian described the process as beginning and ending in post-production. They shoot for post, meaning they spend a good amount of time planning out what needs to happen during the actual production stage so that they only get the shots and footage that they actually need. This helps with not having to stitch a lot of footage that they don’t need to use because the stitching process can be very time consuming. An example of this process can be seen in the video “Pittsburgh Steelers 360 Experience” which can be found on YouTube and the Steelers website. This 360 degree video was the collaboration between MANDT VR and the Steelers to “deliver game day experience to Steelers fans through immersive 360-degree virtual reality video” (Pittsburgh Steelers, 2017).

Equipment

Brian stated that MANDT VR is camera agnostic, meaning they don't exclusively use any specific camera system or equipment. They use whatever equipment is best for the project and will help produce the best results. Some of the camera systems that they have used in their productions include GoPro rigs, Samsung Gear 360, Nokia KeyMission, and the Nokia Ozo. Also, MANDT VR has developed a proprietary camera that they use for producing 360 podcast videos.



Projects and the Future

Currently MANDT VR is continuing to work with college and professional sports teams to help build 360 content for their programs. MANDT is also working on producing more serialized content. They have an exclusive contract to work with PodcastOne, a podcast network with over 200 podcast available, to produce all their podcasts in VR.

MANDT has created content for PodcastOne such as Forbes 30 Under 30, 360 Degrees of Tom Green, Single in the City, and The



Adam Carolla Show, just to name a few. In an interview about this collaboration, founder and CEO Neil Mandt commented in an interview *“For perspective, a cable network like History Channel, A&E or Discovery Network will produce 450 hours of original content in one year. We will be producing 450 hours of content in VR per week. That’s 23,000 hours of VR content per year, and that’s just one channel of our vertical.* (Wong, 2016)

As for the future MANDT VR hopes to move into 360 live streaming of podcasts and they are also working with TV shows to help build content. Additionally, MANDT VR is “looking to move beyond PodcastOne to create other live content in the music, sports and news space and are planning on moving toward a livestreaming network” (Wong, 2016). They are also looking into creating more long form shows. They feel that as more people adopt VR there will be a need or desire for longer content. In the end of 2016 they were working on development of a 30-minute live audience hosted talk show. However, it would be cut down into segments for more “consumable viewership” (Wong, 2016).

MANDT VR is certainly one of the top VR creators in the space at the moment and has plans to continue their growth and content creation. One thing that Brian said that I wanted to end with which I thought was fitting for the class is that it is all about telling stories and that MANDT VR is interested in working with anyone to help tell great stories.

For more information about MANDT VR visit:

Official Website: <http://mandtvr.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MANDTVR/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/mandtvr>

References

MANDT VR. (2017, May 1). *MANDT VR*. Retrieved from Home Page: <http://mandtvr.com/>

Pittsburgh Steelers. (2017, Jan 12). *Steelers to release 360 game day experience*. Retrieved from Steelers News: <http://www.steelers.com/news/article-1/Steelers-to-release-360-game-day-experience/a22837e3-5867-4604-9f38-629d6a6b9d06>

Wong, S. (2016, Nov 9). *How Mandt VR Is Pioneering Serialized Content*. Retrieved from Alist Daily: <http://www.alistdaily.com/media/mandt-vr-pioneering-serialized-content/>