
SCISOC Presents

The View

A reviews publication



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Fortune City

Fortune City is a 'gamified' finance app that incentivises you to track your money spending. As you record your expenses, you build more buildings specific to the category. For example, recording a food expense would build a restaurant building, and recording income would build a bank in the app.

The app allows you to record your expenses with in-depth structure; you can record it under different customisable categories (food, drink, income, shopping etc) and under different accounts (cash, card and you can also customise your own account e.g. paypal).

The game integration is very enjoyable and the in-app economy is also fun to play around with, as you can hire workers to work in your buildings to earn coins, which can be used to merge and level-up your buildings. As you earn more coins/diamonds, you can redesign your city with different themes, and also increase the number of builders, meaning that you can increase the number of recordings that build buildings each day.

What I like most about the app is that it automatically creates charts to allow you to have a clear understanding of your personal finances and spending, over a specified period of time, or under each account.

Only 5 of the recordings can be built as buildings, otherwise it is only recorded, meaning that if you have more than 5 expenses/income in a day, your city will not completely accurately reflect where you spend your money. The game has good incentive; however, it gets overwhelmingly messy if you don't organise your city frequently. Another negative aspect of this app is that although you can record expenses in different currencies, you cannot customise the exchange rate, meaning that there is a set exchange rate within the app, that does not accurately depict the current economy.

Ever since I've downloaded this app, I no longer need to manually track my spending and income, and this makes it so much easier and simpler to budget. Overall, I would recommend this app for anyone and everyone who would like incentive to record expenses.

Hilary Cao



Forest

Forest is a game-changing app that motivates you to stay focused on your work, helping you stay away from your phone. Whenever you want to stay focused for a certain amount of time, you can 'plant' a tree in the app. Your tree will grow for a set amount of time, while you do your work and leaving the app will cause the tree to wither. Over time, you can visualise your effort and productivity as a forest.

There are also customisable tags you can use whenever you start planting a tree, such as work, study, social, rest, entertainment, sport and more. This feature, along with the overview, shows how you spend your focus time over days, weeks, months or years. The overview includes analytics such as focused time distribution, timeline, most focused day and period of the week, focus trend, and tag distributions. To further keep you accountable with your time spent, you can plant together with your friends – the withering of one person's tree will cause the withering of everyone else's tree.

Bringing out the inner collector in all of us, Forest has an in-app coin system that you can use to buy new and different tree species to enhance the aesthetic of your forest.

What sets this app apart from other productivity apps is it actually partners up with Real Forest, which is an organisation that plants trees in real life, improving the livelihoods of impoverished farmers by revitalizing degrading lands.

Overall, Forest is an innovative app that has good intentions to keep you focused on your work, and it is definitely worth the money.

Hilary Cao



Taskade

Taskade is a free all-in-one collaboration platform for personal use, and for remote teams. It organises your tasks by allowing you to create task lists, mindmaps, calendars, boards, agendas, video chats, and many more templates for productivity.

Taskade helps me organise all my tasks, with the ability to make personalised templates for recurring task lists; I make a wide variety of lists such as prioritised task lists, grocery shopping list, uni to-do list etc. Taskade also lets you categorise your lists into different workspaces such as 'personal', 'work', household etc, so that they don't get messy, and also so that you can control who is able to access it, for example, family, your team, friends etc.

There is such a huge range of versatile templates that you can use for your lists and these are sorted out into categories such as organisational, growth, roadmap, research, mindmap, meetings, team management and so much more.

Some things that I wished this app would have is the ability to send reminders, say, 1 hour before a task is due, and also the ability to manually add an event to the calendar. At the moment, it only reminds you at the time you set for the due date of the task, and the due dates are automatically put into the calendar - you cannot input an event directly to the calendar.

In general, I love how easy it is to access Taskade both as a phone app and also on my home page on desktop and there's an offline mode as well. It keeps all my tasks in one accessible place and keeps my life organised!

Hilary Cao



Life Cycle

Life Cycle is an app that automatically keeps track of how you spend your time. It shows you your daily activities, places you go, and who you spend time with, in an easy-to-read pie chart.

I love using Life Cycle because it is an app that works in the background, tracking what you do and where you are throughout the day. With the full integration of Apple Health, it imports all movements, mindfulness and sleep data into Life Cycle to automatically record the time spent commuting, and sleeping etc. The Life Cycle Weekly Journal provides weekly personal insight to activities, viewed daily, weekly, monthly or even yearly to record your progress.

I downloaded Life Cycle because I was curious as to how much time I spent doing certain things and this app really puts things into perspective. I did not realise how much time I spent commuting, compared to how much time I actually spent doing productive things. Since then, I had decided to make most of my commute by studying efficiently.

A few things that I would critique is the tendency for this app location tracking to be inaccurate. Oftentimes, I need to manually change the location and hence, the activity of the recording, even though the app should automatically do it for me. Furthermore, there are some activities that are unchangeable and therefore provides an inaccurate depiction of how I spend my time. However, if these faults could be changed and improved, Life Cycle would be a great app to use to reveal your habits and time spending.

Hilary Cao



CUT

CUT is an American Youtube channel that creates videos featuring general members of the public. It is quite well known for the series “Truth or Drink”, “Fear Pong” and “Line Up”. Since the people in CUT’s videos are just regular, everyday people, it is quite interesting to see different points of views and stories in today’s society.

My favourite series is “Fear Pong” where two people (whether it be exes, couples, family, strangers, etc), play a game of beer pong and each cup has a dare that they must do, or else they drink. This light-hearted content is purely for entertainment and it is enjoyable to see people do daring things, knowing their relationship.

Although they create light-hearted content, CUT’s diverse demographic sheds light on their underlying values, through the “This Matters” brand, which encourages discussion, theorizing and aiding victims of unfortunate events.

Overall, CUT is an entertaining yet serious youtube channel that reflects society and simultaneously raises awareness of its issues.

Hilary Cao

ASAP Science

ASAP Science is an educational youtube channel that “makes science make sense”. The channel creates videos discussing a wide range of topics including the functions of the human body, psychology, debunking science myths, and current relevant topics such as COVID-19. Furthermore, they sometimes make songs to assist with explaining science, such as “Science Love Song” and “Periodic Table Song.”

The videos are easy to follow and understand, as the scientific concepts are expressed through coloured animations, drawings and voice-over narration. Most videos are around 5 to 10 minutes, making it easy to go through (...and binge).

Overall, ASAP Science is a very informative channel that covers relevant, scientific world topics that you may not even have thought about before, in a very easy-to-understand manner.

Hilary Cao



Jimmy Zhang

Jimmy Zhang is a youtuber who is most well-known for pranks including “using a naruto ID at clubs”, as well as interviewing strangers on the street on topics such as “what is the cringiest DM you’ve ever been sent?”, “college confessions” and “what is the worst date you’ve been on?”

Unlike most prank channels that rely on other people’s reactions for content, Jimmy Zhang’s upbeat and easy-going personality is what makes his videos so entertaining, bringing out other people’s inner wildness. An influencer who keeps it real and open about their life is what a lot of viewers respect, and Jimmy is exactly that. He’s shared about his relationships, life growing up, and shown us his vulnerable moments, letting us empathise with him.

What’s often overlooked is the sheer production of Jimmy’s videos. As a youtuber who often references anime, his high-quality video introductions imitate anime opening theme songs, incorporating himself and the video-stars as anime characters. Since his channel’s main content is not anime-related, a downfall is that you would probably have to understand the anime references to get the most enjoyment out of all his videos.

Overall, Jimmy Zhang’s youtube channel is purely for entertainment, and it is evident of the amount of effort he puts into producing his videos.

Hilary Cao



The Umbrella Academy

With the release of season 2 having just passed, I'd call this a perfect opportunity to either start or catch up on the show 'The Umbrella Academy'. For those of you who don't know what it's about, The Umbrella Academy (TUA) is a show featuring a wide cast of people with superpowers ganging up to stop the impending apocalypse. The plot twist? These people are all a part of an adopted dysfunctional family with a screwed-up upbringing, and are incredibly reluctant to work together after they all cut contact with each other just a decade prior.

For a show revolving around superheroes, TUA focuses surprisingly little on the powers, and a lot more on the meaning of family. TUA manages to strike a balance between humorous scenes as the adopted siblings try to stop the apocalypse, and heart-felt moments between the family as they try to reform their emotional bonds and work through the trauma caused by their late father. This doesn't mean it slacks off in the action department, however; the fight scenes are all wonderfully choreographed, usually paired off with an upbeat song and enough gore to satisfy the die-hard action fans.

Currently, TUA has two seasons with 10 hour-long episodes each. While both seasons have a slow beginning, with the show trying to juggle multiple character arcs and trying to establish them as individuals, the show definitely starts picking up the pace plot-wise throughout the later halves of the seasons, with endings that definitely make the wait worth your while. Despite its large cast of characters, TUA manages to establish a strong character arc and motivation for each of its main cast of characters without feeling like it's neglecting the other characters or the plot.

With an intriguing plot, a brilliantly chosen soundtrack, and a widely talented cast on top of all that to boast, TUA remains an action-packed, fun-filled adventure that never fails to draw out a laugh or make you shed a few tears. Its small amount of episodes makes it an easy show to binge, and is absolutely worth your time if you're willing to give it.

Sylvan Tam



Black Mirror

Black Mirror is a sci-fi dystopian show created by Charlie Brooker all about the era of technology we find ourselves fast encroaching upon, and the downsides that come with it. With exactly 13 approximately hour-long episodes to its name, as well as a fun choose-your-own-adventure style movie, Black Mirror makes for a very fast, if not highly thought-provoking watch.

Each of its 13 episodes feature a completely different world with a new cast of characters. Season 1 Episode 1 starts off with an incredibly shocking premise, which never wears off even as you continue through the show. Every episode is a well-crafted story, full of completely unpredictable plot twists that makes the show incredibly fun to watch.

Black Mirror brings up many issues with technology that could definitely become a possibility within the next few decades, which makes its horror element hit that much closer to home rather than having it be half a parallel universe away from reality. It brings up issues that we as a society find controversial, from the overuse of social media, to government surveillance and how that could affect the population as a whole.

Most seasons tend to meet expectations, each bringing its own host of thoroughly entertaining stories. Black Mirror is known for its lack of happy endings, although the more that the showrunners seem to abandon this notion, the more the quality of the show seems to sink, and this becomes heavily apparent within its latest season: Season 5.

Black Mirror: Bandersnatch is the show's only movie, with its main draw being its choose-your-own-adventure feature. This feature gives the movie a sense of novelty, however, once you strip that away from the movie, all that's left is a somewhat average film with thin characters and a mildly interesting plot.

Overall, Black Mirror is an incredible and unforgettable watch, filled with many mind-breaking stories that provokes the audience and forces us to consider the question: are we moving in the right direction with our progression in technology? Are there ways that we could prevent the issues that we see occur in the show? And most importantly: are we ready to look into the mirror as a society and see ourselves for what we truly are?

Sylvan Tam



Strawberry and Watermelon Cake

This beautiful layered cake tastes as good as it looks. The layered watermelon, almond dacquoise and cream perfectly balances out each other, making it super delicious and refreshing. The mellow flavours of the rose and the crunchy pistachio pieces on top, adds to the uniqueness of this cake. This cake encompasses everything you can ask for in a cake, the freshness and the floral aroma, as well as the combination in texture, which all makes every bite so enjoyable and satisfying.

Milk Tea Cake

If you are a huge milk tea fan like me, then you are guaranteed to enjoy this cake. There are many variations of this cake including the milk tea lava cake, but they all taste similar and equally amazing. It is essentially a sponge cake or a layered sponge cake, with milk tea cream and pearls poured over it. The softness of the milk tea cream and sponge will surely bring a smile to your face.

Matcha Mille Crepe Cake

The matcha mille crepe cake is made up of thin layers of matcha flavoured crepes stacked on top of whipped cream. This cake isn't too sweet and the subtle bitterness of the powdered matcha comes through the thin crepes and the soft whipped cream. What is amazing is that you can taste each individual layer of the crepes and then it all melts in your mouth with the cream.

Erica Jin



Ferrero Rocher

Does anyone buy a box of Ferrero Rocher when they go on half price during Christmas? I do, and definitely not just one box. I love nuts and chocolate so Ferrero Rocher is without a doubt one of my comfort foods. The nutty outsider layer, which is coated over a wafer shell, filled with smooth chocolate and a hazelnut center balances out the texture and sweetness perfectly. The satisfaction of eating layer by layer is also amazing. The Ferrero Rondnoir (dark chocolate) is also super nice. The slight bitterness is integrated perfectly within the chocolate, giving it a good balance.

Nestlé KitKat Original

"Have a break...Have a KitKat!" is a slogan we are all familiar with. But honestly, the perfect balance of the chocolate and wafer is amazing. There is always satisfaction after having a KitKat. It's a chocolate that brings a smile to my face. There are so many flavours of KitKat and I believe the original flavour is still the best. However, cookies and cream, matcha, dark and peach follow closely behind. These are also a must try.

Lindt Excellence 50% Cocoa

I love dark chocolate but for me, 70% cocoa is my limit so 50% is a nice go-to when I don't feel like something too sweet or too bitter. Lindt chocolates are always so smooth and consistent. However, the blocks are so thin, I feel like I could finish the entire block way too easily.

Toblerone Milk

Love the chocolate that compliments the honey and nougat. The soft chocolate and the chewy bits gives it a more interesting texture and is super enjoyable to eat. The unique shape makes it easy to break off one piece at a time, but one piece is never enough. The size of each piece makes it super easy to snack and eat.

Guylian Sea Shells Original

I haven't had these in a while, but every time I do, I always enjoy the slight creamy hazelnut praline and how it all just melts inside my mouth. Moreover, there is always a thrill in opening the box and picking which seashell to eat first.

Erica Jin



Stuff You Should Know (SYSK)

From Carbon-14 dating to amnesia, AI facial recognition to simply how grass works, the *Stuff You Should Know* (SYSK) podcast presents a plethora of information on things you didn't even know you wanted to know. With episodes that are approximately an hour long, the hosts Josh Clark and Charles Bryant, explore these topics with wit and insight. SYSK has a vibe of friends having a discussion, sharing interesting topics they have just discovered. The episodes are lengthy, so these are best listened to while on a long car ride, or to accompany you during walks or long sessions of household chores. With over a thousand episodes and being one of the most popular podcasts in the world, you should definitely give SYSK a listen.

Science Vs

This podcast is both thoroughly entertaining and educational. Let your host Wendy Zuckerman guide you through what's fact, what's fiction, and everything in between. Learn about peanut allergies, serial killers, birth control, and meditation, and discover the science behind it all. This podcast is an enlightening take on popular fads, trends, and opinions and investigates them through an objective lens. Each episode seems like a journey as you explore all the details, truths, half-truths, and plain old lies, all packaged in a well produced podcast. One of my favourite episodes, although different from the usual investigative pieces, is titled "PANDEMIC!!!" and was published in October 2019 with advice from Dr. Anthony Fauci. In this episode, you are immersed in a story of a pandemic that spreads across the world, the situation seeming so real that it sent shivers down my spine. All episodes have shownotes dedicated to all of the sources *Science Vs* pulls from, with some episodes having over a hundred citations! If a topic here interests you, it's a fun way to start diving deeper into the science behind it.

Sawbones: A Marital Tour of Misguided Medicine

This podcast is exactly what it says on the tin. Join Dr. Sydnee McElroy and her husband Justin McElroy as they explore all of the weird ways people have tried to fix themselves through the ages. From the true story of how Chicago reversed the direction of a river to combat typhoid and cholera, to the odd history of heliotherapy and taint tanning. Dr. Sydnee brings the facts and expertise as she discusses the history of medicine, while Justin is the entertaining layperson who contributes insights that resonate with the listener. With over 300 episodes, they tackle medicine and diseases large and small.

Aileen Heal



Think: Sustainability

Discover the technologies that are paving the way for a sustainable future. Interested in the movement of sustainability? This podcast addresses all of the issues we face today: from antibiotic resistance and ethical supply chains, noise pollution and the built environment, there are many opportunities to evaluate the impact of our consumption and create better alternatives. Even if you're eco-conscious, there is a wealth of ideas to explore and opportunities for growth presented in this podcast. Think: Sustainability is a great resource to discover new concepts and to keep updated on the progress of technology and ideas when it comes to all forms of sustainability.

The Science of Happiness

Learn about how to lead a happier and more meaningful life with research-backed strategies, hosted by award-winning professor Dacher Keltner. Each episode is a 20 minute dive into a guest on the show practicing a strategy to achieve a goal, such as developing patience, gratitude, a sense of belonging, or even meaning, and discussing their experience. The episodes conclude with an exploration of the science behind these strategies and how they work exactly. This podcast is great to listen to in the morning or on your commute, to inspire yourself as you begin your day.

Overheard at National Geographic

This podcast reveals remarkable insights into the world around us. In each episode, they explore the story of curious conversations that have been overheard around National Geographic's headquarters. Learn about how zombie mice on Marion Island are threatening seabirds, or how the carbon footprint of beavers in the Alaskan tundra can be seen from space, or the story of a scuba diver exploring underneath a pyramid. This podcast is a deep dive into the experience of explorers, photographers, and scientists that are researching and discovering the most bizarre and odd things at the edges of the beautiful planet we call home.

Aileen Heal



The Rise & Conquer Podcast

Ready to turn your dreams into a reality? Learn the tools and actionable steps to inspire you to conquer your goals with guidance from Georgie Stevenson alongside a range of guests. She talks routines and habits, mental health and motivation, intuitive eating, and tips for starting a business based on her experiences. Although the target audience is women, the information and guidance can help anyone master their mindset and thrive.

My Millennial Money (and Gen Z Money)

Join Glen James and John Pidgeon as they take a light-hearted angle on money issues for millennials in Australia. With their tips and guidance, develop your money mindset, strive for financial autonomy, learn about shares and microinvesting, as well as set money goals such as buying your first home! Their knowledge and mindset combined is worth its weight in gold when it comes to setting yourself up financially. This podcast is a wealth of information but, trust me, skip season 1. Glen James also hosts a podcast for those under 24, gen z money, and has great discussions with other young adults about starting a business, paying off debt, and how to save money and invest in yourself.

The Adventure Zone: Balance

Words cannot begin to express the story-building masterpiece that is The Adventure Zone! Join Justin, Travis and Griffin McElroy, alongside their dad Clint, as they go on the most heart-pounding, tear-jerking, and laugh-inducing Dungeons & Dragons adventure. Follow this trio of incompetent adventurers as they solve a murder mystery, participate in a mostly-illegal death race, get stuck in a time-loop, protect the entire universe, and much, much more! The first season, TAZ: Balance, is 69 episodes of pure comedic gold, which will become an emotional story that will wreck you from the inside out. The season starts out rough, with the players figuring out the game in real-time, but the podcast evolves into a stunning exploration of the characters and their world, with an amazing plot, and accompanied by gorgeous music.

Aileen Heal