
Can Uber deliver Postmates(?), a social media crackdown, and the extreme Vespas of Indonesia



June 29, 2020

Monday! Hope you enjoyed the weekend.:)

Top News

Uber has made a takeover offer to buy **Postmates**, the upstart delivery service, according to the New York Times, which says the two are discussing a price of about \$2.6 billion, or slightly more than the [\\$2.4 billion](#) that Postmates's private investors decided the company was worth at the time of its last funding round in the fall of last year. [More here.](#)

India's government banned nearly 60 Chinese mobile apps today, including **TikTok**, citing national security concerns after a deadly clash between their militaries this month. More [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#).

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With New DOJ Charges, Former VC Mike Rothenberg Could Face Substantial Jail Time

While some in Silicon Valley might prefer to forget about investor Mike Rothenberg roughly four years after his young venture firm began to implode, his story is still

being written, and the latest chapter doesn't bode well for the 36-year-old.

While Rothenberg earlier tangled with the Securities & Exchange Commission and lost, it was a civil matter, if one that could haunt him for the rest of his life.

Now, the U.S. Department of Justice has brought two criminal wire fraud charges against him, charges that he made two false statements to a bank, and money laundering charges, all of which could result in a very long time in prison depending on how things play out.

[More here.](#)

Massive Fundings

Artiva Biotherapeutics, a 1.5-year-old, San Diego-based developer of allogeneic natural killer cell therapies, has raised \$78 million in Series A funding from **5AM Ventures**, **venBio Partners**, **RA Capital Management**, **Medivate Partners**, **GC LabCell**, and **GC**. FierceBiotech has [more here](#).

solarisBank, a four-year, Berlin, Germany-based infrastructure company that offers financial services to other fintech companies through a set of APIs, has raised \$67.5 million in Series C funding at a post-money valuation of \$360 million. **HV Holtzbrinck Ventures** led the round, with earlier investor **yabeo** committing a substantial follow-on investment. Other new investors include **Vulcan Capital**, **Samsung Catalyst Fund** and **Storm Ventures**. TechCrunch has [more here](#).

Xingsheng Youxuan, an-11-year-old, Hunan, China-based e-commerce platform in which convenience store chain operators in China sell fresh products and household goods to online community groups, is raising around \$300 million at a \$3 billion valuation from backers like **Tencent** and **Primavera Capital**, says Bloomberg. [More here](#).

Zuoyebang, a six-year-old, Beijing-based startup that runs an online learning app, has raised a stunning \$750 million in Series E funding led by **Tiger Global** and the Hong Kong-based private equity firm **FountainVest Partners**. Earlier backers are chipped into the round, including the **SoftBank Vision Fund**, **Sequoia Capital China**, **Xiang He Capital** and **Qatar Investment Authority**. Zuoyebang has now raised \$1.33 billion altogether. TechCrunch has [more here](#).

Big-But-Not-Crazy-Big Fundings

Area 1 Security, a seven-year-old, Redwood City, Ca.-based email security company, just raised \$25 million in funding led by **ForgePoint Capital**, with participation from earlier backers **Kleiner Perkins**, **Icon Ventures**, and **Top Tier Capital**. The company has now raised more than \$80 million altogether. VentureBeat has [more here](#).

Artist, a four-year-old, Tel Aviv, Israel-based startup that sells a full suite of royalty-free licensed music, stock video clips, and sound effects, has raised \$48 million in funding. **KKR** led the round, joined by earlier backer **Elephant Partners**. TechCrunch has [more here](#).

Codefresh, a six-year-old, Mountain View, Ca.-based company that builds a continuous integration and continuous delivery platform to help developers release code faster, has raised \$27 million in funding. **Red Dot Capital Partners** led the round, joined by **Shasta Ventures**. Crunchbase News has [more here](#).

Cynet, a five-year-old, New York-based autonomous breach protection company, has raised \$18 million in extended Series B funding. **Deutsche Telekom's** Telekom Innovation Pool led the round, joined by **BlueRed Partners**, **Merlin International**, **Norwest Venture Partners**, and **Ibex Investors**. VentureBeat has [more here](#).

Enko Chem, a three-year-old, Woburn, Ma.-based startup specializing in small-molecule pest-control products to protect crops, has raised \$45 million in Series B funding. The **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** led the round, joined by **Finistere Ventures**, **Novalis LifeSciences**, **Germin8 Ventures**, **TO Ventures Food**, and earlier investors **Anterra Capital** and **Rabo Food & Agri Innovation Fund**. Chemical & Engineering News has [more here](#).

Prisma, a four-year-old, Berlin-based, open-source database toolkit for developers, raised \$12 million in Series A funding led by **Amplify Partners**, with participation from **Kleiner Perkins**. [More here](#).

Smaller Fundings

Aclaimant, a seven-year-old, Chicago-based workflow platform for safety and risk management, has raised \$10 million in Series A funding led by **Mercury Fund**, with participation from **Aspen Capital Group**, **Royal Street Ventures**, **EBSCO Capital**, **KEC Ventures**, and **RRE Ventures**. The company has now raised \$13 million altogether. [More here](#).

Arena, a three-year-old, San Francisco-based customer engagement platform, has raised \$2.3 million in extension seed funding. **Redpoint eventures** led the round, joined by **Incubate Fund**, **Plug and Play**, and **Intango Ventures**. [More here](#).

Nacelle, a year-old, Santa Monica, Ca.-based startup in the burgeoning "headless" e-commerce space, has raised \$4.8 million in funding from **Index Ventures** and **Accomplice**. TechCrunch has [more here](#).

Restore, a five-year-old, Austin, Tex.-based chain of national alternative wellness and cryotherapy centers, has raised \$8 million in funding from **Level 5**. [More here](#).

Thoughtexchange, an 11-year-old, British Columbia-based platform that allows employees to provide anonymized answers to open-ended questions by company leaders, has raised \$10 million in new funding from earlier backers **Information**

Venture Partners, Yaletown Partners, and Voyager Capital. The company had raised \$20 million in Series B funding just six months ago. GeekWire has [more here](#).

ThriveFantasy, a four-year-old, New York-based daily fantasy sports and e-sports betting platform, has raised \$1 million in seed funding led by **Stage1 Ventures**, along with members of the New York Angels, New York Venture Partners, and other individual investors. [More here](#).

Work Shield, a two-year-old, Dallas, Tex.-based service for reporting and investigating harassment and discrimination, has raised \$4 million in Series A funding led by **Hoak & Co.** Dallas Innovates has [more here](#).

New Funds

Scotts Miracle-Gro, the lawn care and fertilizer giant that has opened up a secondary business as a pioneer in cannabis and hemp cultivation, is launching a \$50 million corporate venture capital fund called 1868 Ventures. TechCrunch has [more here](#).

Tech Square Ventures, a six-year-old, seed and early stage venture fund based in Technology Square in Atlanta. has raised over \$26 million for its second fund, according to an SEC filing. [More here](#).

VentureWave Capital, a two-year-old, New York- and Dublin-based venture fund, says it has held a first close on a new fund called Impact Ireland that will support local "technology for good" companies to scale internationally. Tech.eu has [more here](#).

Exits

Lululemon today announced plans to acquire the New York-based home exercise startup **Mirror** for \$500 million. The fitness apparel company said in a release that it hopes to close the sale by the end of the second fiscal quarter of this year. Mirror had raised \$74.8 million from investors, including Point72 Ventures, Spark Capital, First Round Capital, Lerer Hippeau, BoxGroup and Lululemon itself. TechCrunch has [more here](#).

Personal Capital, a fintech company that had attracted more than \$265 million in private funding, says it's selling itself to **Empower Retirement**, a company that provides retirement services to other companies. The deal is worth \$825 million upon closing, with another \$175 million in "planned growth" incentives, according to a release. TechCrunch has [more here](#).

Both **Amazon** and **SoftBank** have made approaches to Russian conglomerate Sistema about a possible acquisition of its online retailer, **Ozon**, according to Sistema's majority owner Vladimir Evtushenkov. It's not immediately clear if talks

are still under way or have ended. Sistema has said it was looking for partners to invest in Ozon, in which it holds a more than 40%. Reuters has the [story here](#).

Banned!

YouTube has banned at long last several prominent white supremacist channels, including those belonging to Stefan Molyneux, David Duke, and Richard Spencer. The Verge has [more here](#).

Today, Reddit separately announced that it has banned about 2,000 subreddits, including one of the most prominent pro-Trump forums, r/the_donald. According to Reddit CEO Steve Huffman, "The community has consistently hosted and upvoted more rule-breaking content than average, antagonized us and other communities and its mods have refused to meet our most basic expectations." Engadget has [more here](#).

And Twitch confirmed today that it has temporarily suspended Donald Trump's account. "Hateful conduct is not allowed on Twitch," a spokesperson for the streaming giant tells TechCrunch. "In line with our policies, President Trump's channel has been issued a temporary suspension from Twitch for comments made on stream, and the offending content has been removed." More on what happened [here](#).

Data

Tesla shares are up [more than 4,000%\(!\)](#) from their debut 10 years ago.

Essential Reads

Amazon will now let you [co-watch Prime Videos](#) with other members in the U.S.

Detours

Broadway will [remain closed](#) until at least January (though you can still try to get a ticket to this [live performance](#) from London's Old Vic Theater).

[Extreme Vespas](#) in Indonesia.

The Zoom shirt.

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