

Sustainability news gets a tech makeover with new launches from Curation

Maddyness caught up with Sandy Jayaraj, the new CEO of Curation. The company has gone through a major rebrand and positioning within the technology space. Having been around for more than seven years, Curation was looking to scale at growth.

Sandy knew in order for that to happen, he had to re-evaluate, rethink and re-invent the idea of what a service product in the “sustainability” industry looked like. We all know the sustainability buzzword is an overused and under-explained term, so Maddyness spoke with Sandy to learn more about how we can all become better educated and empowered by how we learn and digest information.

Sandy, can you explain to us what Curation is? I know you have both a B2B and a B2C offering, which is pretty unique!

Curation identifies and follows key emerging trends around the globe, pointing out risks and opportunities long before they become breaking news. Our

service uniquely empowers both individuals and companies to be proactive, strategic and sustainable. In essence, we want people to have access to the information they need to make informed decisions. This is why we have both B2B and B2C offerings.

Curation is very unique in the way it sources its curated content. We use a combination of both proprietary AI and human editors to meticulously pick out the most pertinent, trusted information from more than 80,000 sources. Our content team writes easy-to-digest abstracts (less than 100 words) and, with our breadth of expertise, we can add further insight enabling the reader to get a handle on important themes quickly.

Sustainability and ESG (Environment, Social and Governance) are vitally important to companies and individuals, regardless of age or background. By extending our offering to reach a B2C audience in the form of our weekly newsletter Sustt and Sustt+, our app, we are able to reach a wider range of adults keen to be empowered and make informed choices. We recognise our platform is mainly for business users, but our B2C offerings allow everyone to be knowledgeable about sustainability.

Why is sustainability such a misunderstood topic?

When you hear the word sustainability, the first thing that most people think about is the environment and climate change. I think of the Cambridge dictionary definition: *“the quality of being able to continue over a period of time”*. This really implies a holistic approach to problems with the long term in mind.

For example, we can treat the symptom of a disease or we can improve the overall base level of health and wellbeing to make us more resilient to disease and more sustainable. This is why we base our thematic tagging around the United Nation’s 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Why did you choose to focus your writing around the UN’s 17 Sustainable Development Goals?

These goals look at more than just saving the planet and go into detail about social and governance issues, such as diversity and inclusion. [Take a look](#) as you would be surprised just how many inequalities they seek to draw attention

to!

Where there is collective impact and consequence, uniformity of understanding is critical. We live in a connected, interdependent world and big issues require a coherent global strategy. The goals strike a balance between simplicity and nuance, so we're able to structure our output around them in a way that will make sense for our users

What makes Curation different to the traditional publishing model? I know you do not call yourself a publisher but more a service provider?

We are indeed a service provider! People are time-poor and don't have the capacity to search through the ever-increasing global news and research portals. As a result, things can get overlooked. Curation solves that problem. Our Professional+ platform will have our team work with you and your business to make sure you are getting the answers you need. We can deliver content to you daily, so really saving you time to make more informed business decisions.

As global citizens, we are committed to improving the understanding of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, and how these might be applied to your business.

As I mentioned earlier, the word "sustainability" is really an umbrella term and the goals also focus attention on things that need to change if we want our ecological, social and economic life to be long-lasting. Zero hunger, diversity and inclusion, low carbon emissions, for example, are just a few of topics that I think - now the world has gone through a pandemic and our perception has shifted - we realise more as a collective we can't take these things for granted. It really is up to us to make the changes as individuals and as companies to step forward into a better, healthier way of living.

It sounds like there are a lot of branches on the Curation tree. Are there any more

coming soon?

Absolutely! As I mentioned earlier, we have Curation's free weekly newsletter Sustt, which has just launched. This comes out every Saturday morning so you can read it with your coffee! This will swiftly be followed by Sustt+, which is an app dedicated to continuing to pose the questions that the articles from Sustt ask. We are following a number of questions that will be updated regularly, so individuals can glimpse a section of the knowledge we have on our platform. Readers will be able to identify key areas of interest thanks to the newsletter and then track progress over time on the app Sustt+.

Launching later this year is Curation Academic, which was born out of a desire to help support university students – both undergraduate and graduate – and researchers working within the “sustainability umbrella”. We hope institutions will want to enable their students with the best research tools that can be accessed from home. This is something I'm personally really excited about, because it is incredibly important to educate those who may someday be making big and key decisions in these areas!

You are new to the CEO role and your latest hires (COO and CCO) are new to Curation. What are you most excited about in terms of Curation's future?

I was brought in by the cofounder Nick Finegold to take Curation into hyper-growth. We needed to extend and build our offering out to reach more people if we really wanted to make changes to the world.

For me, I bring my knowledge in building both teams and products. I immediately hired two very bright women in the form of Victoria Foster, our Chief Commercial Officer, and Lee Shave as our new COO. Both women come from big financial institution backgrounds and both are passionate about sustainability. We also have the very brilliant Nick Jardine, our Chief Content Officer, who has more than a decade of editorial experience at specialist publications under his belt. I believe we have a unique team of individuals whose skill sets complement each other. We have really been able to creatively rebrand and reposition Curation in the marketplace.

Regarding future thinking, there is nothing quite like a pandemic to bring sharply into context the importance of understanding emerging themes.

Curation flagged the need for corporates to have a pandemic plan in place in May 2019, long before the COVID-19 outbreak.

Why? Because we were already following work by Amesh Adalja of the John Hopkins Center for Health Security and the re-emergence of previously under control infections, such as measles.

We really are ahead of the curve in terms of risks and opportunities. I am excited to be able to get those insights and knowledge efficiently into the hands of everyone.

That sounds incredible! What can we expect to understand from a Curation product?

Curation's focus is on emerging themes, particularly in sustainability. I thought it was important to reflect that people have different ways of working and consuming content, so Curation delivers in different ways:

Sustt is a free weekly newsletter on sustainability, discussing topics that are not on people's radar, but we believe they should be, or they are on people's radar, but we look at them from a different angle. Thinking laterally is one major route to unearthing emerging risks and opportunities.

Sustt+ is an app coming soon that works on answering big sustainability questions clearly and concisely without dumbing down the content. It will be available as an iOS app and via the web.

Curation Professional & Professional+ is a web-based discovery platform enabling people to effortlessly discover content, organised according to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The platform can be tailored to suit the key themes impacting the user's organisation.

Curation Consult provides a more bespoke offering where we help organisations engage with their stakeholders on sustainability and other themes.

Curation Academic, coming soon, is a version of the Curation Professional

platform designed to provide students with a further learning resource to support their studies, add examples to their essays, theses and project work and stimulate lateral thought. In addition, it is a sustainability and ESG resource for both faculty and CIOs of university endowment funds.

What is your favourite quote that you like to live by?

“Tomorrow belongs to those who can hear it coming” – David Bowie

Sandy Jayaraj is the new CEO of Curation.

Sign up for Sustt by Curation

Article by MADDYNESS UK