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By [Sarah Kessler](#) ^[1]

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With a new 12,000-square-foot video suite in Menlo Park, Randi Zuckerberg is betting on the Valley to be the next big media town. It's right in the sweet spot, she says.

When [Randi Zuckerberg](#) ^[2] first toured the building that would later become her studio, it was so run-down she needed to use her smartphone as a flashlight. But the place had its perks: 12,000 square feet of space, an existing zoning classification for production, and, perhaps most importantly, it was close enough to [Facebook](#) ^[3]'s headquarters to share a Starbucks.

For a company with dreams of turning Silicon Valley into the capital of the entertainment world, it was perfect.

Silicon Valley is far from Hollywood in more than one way. Technology pundits and [most critics](#) ^[4] recently reacted to *Start-ups: Silicon Valley*, the reality show that Zuckerberg executive produced for Bravo, with, as one cast member put it, "[unabashed hatred](#)" ^[5]. But Zuckerberg didn't let the hate slow progress on the Menlo Park headquarters of her tech-driven entertainment vision, which will open in February as the company expects its first round of funding to close. "I always like to push the envelope and be first," she tells me after a short tour of the now freshly painted and well-lit 12,000-square-foot [Zuckerberg Media](#) ^[6] studios.

Here's why Zuckerberg thinks her production company is ahead of the curve: Video gets made

in Los Angeles and New York because those cities also house distribution platforms such as television stations and the media companies. But the distribution platform of the future is the Internet. Platforms are only as valuable as the content on them, and [YouTube](#) [7], [Hulu](#) [8], [Yahoo](#) [9], and [Netflix](#) [10] are all investing heavily in creating original video while Twitter is becoming more and more of a media company every day. The biggest online platforms live in Silicon Valley, not Los Angeles, and so should the company that produces content for them.

Zuckerberg first started producing video inside of a janitor's closet at Facebook that she commandeered for [Facebook Live](#) [11]. Then the director of marketing at the company her brother Mark founded, she used her own camera to launch the program, inviting big stars like Katy Perry into the broom closet for live online chats. Now she's got a much bigger space, and a much broader offering.



Zuckerberg says one aspect of the studio that sets it apart from others in the area is an ambition to produce original content.

Though there are plans for at least one glitter wall, the new office is sparsely decorated. It has no sign over its door ("We want you to feel like you're in the know when you get here," Zuckerberg explains), and its CFO is still constructing office chairs when I arrive. In an unfinished room hums a small pillar of broadcasting equipment, including a VCR-sized box that enables high-quality live video broadcasts. The walls switch from white to black in a control room made for a 12-camera shoot, a soundproof booth for editing audio, and a stage big enough for six sets and a live audience. In a separate second studio, I'm told there's enough space for a news organization to set up a pilot studio.

Using Zuckerberg's home as an office, the team has already produced everything from live-streamed marketing documentaries with Cirque de Soleil to the Bravo television show. It plans to rent out its studio space. It plans to work with brands for marketing projects. And it

also wants to create original content. Finding the common thread in the ambitions isn't easy, which is partly because, like any early-stage startup, the company is keeping its options open. "I think one thing that's overarching about everything we'd like to do is that we'd like to make this crazy, awesome Silicon Valley world we live in feel a little more approachable to mainstream America," Zuckerberg offers.

That's essentially the middle ground between Randi and the company's COO, Bradley Lautenbach, who is a former producer for *Good Morning America*. The two met while working on a [2008 presidential debate collaboration](#) [12] between ABC and [Facebook](#) [3]. "There's big media and big technology, and in the middle there are the little guys doing innovation, Lautenbach says, plotting the two industries and their midpoints with his hands on the table.



A second stage in Zuckerberg Media's studio is currently being used for box storage, but has room for a news team.

"I'd add to that big brands in New York," Zuckerberg adds before she plots a third point on her own tapped-out-map. "So there's this triangle of the platforms are created out here. The content are created in mostly L.A., some in New York, and then you have the brands that are trying to be in both places at the same time."

The melding of worlds is well on its way. Entertainment world celebrities such as Ashton Kutcher and Justin Bieber and Timberlake are becoming tech investors. Startups are becoming subjects of reality shows such as Bravo's, [documentaries](#) [13], and a [sink-or-swim game show](#) [14]. Zuckerberg Media is not Silicon Valley's first production company--down the road in Mountain View, [TransVideo Studios](#) [15] also rents out studio space, handles production, and flaunts its position in America's techland--but Randi Zuckerberg is angling it to become the Valley's ambassador.

"My dream," she says, "is that 10 years from now, people will look back and say, media has really changed and shifted to Silicon Valley, and Zuckerberg Media was the first to lead the charge."

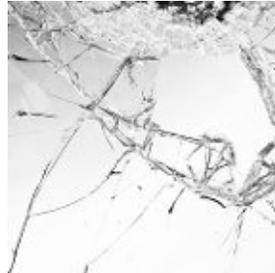
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