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The year of the ladybird

Times2

Float puts \$104bn tag on new era Facebook

Historic sale creates 1,000 instant millionaires

Murad Ahmed Technology Reporter

Facebook will make one of the most ambitious stockmarket debuts in history today after its founders valued the social networking website at more than \$100 billion.

The co-creator and chief executive, Mark Zuckerberg, will become a multi-billionaire and 1,000 present and former employees will be transformed into millionaires when the site launches on New York's Nasdaq stock exchange about lunchtime.

Five others will also become billionaires as Face-

Zuckerberg: from campus to corporate

Leading article, page 2
News, pages 8, 9



book, which began its existence in a dormitory at Harvard University, eclipses the likes of Disney and McDonald's as one of the world's biggest corporate powerhouses.

Last night Facebook set a price of \$38 a share, valuing the company at \$104 billion. Reports suggest that it was pushing for a higher price to net existing stockholders more cash but was rebuffed by sceptical investors.

Even at this share price, Mr Zuckerberg's stake is worth \$19.1 billion, making him the 23rd richest person on Earth, according to figures from the *Forbes Magazine* rich list. Facebook has

made about 420 million shares available in today's sell-off, which will raise \$16 billion. If, as expected, investors show strong appetite for the stock, it will become the second-largest IPO in US history behind Visa, and the largest by a technology company.

The windfall will give Facebook the muscle to compete with Silicon Valley's other blue-chip companies, such as Apple and Google, in its ability to create products and buy other promising start-ups.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime event," said Martin Garner, a senior analyst at CCS Insight, the research firm. "Whatever the price of these shares, Facebook will walk away with a lot of money. Whatever they build or buy with that cash, their focus will be, 'How can we get to the next billion users?'"

The float could also change the future direction of the social network, used by nearly 900 million people, including about a third of the British population. It may push the company to place more advertising on its pages or create new ways of making money from its enormous audience, as new shareholders pressure the company to find ways of increasing its revenues.

As well as Mr Zuckerberg, Dustin Moskovitz, 26, a co-founder, and the early Facebook executives Sean Parker, 31, and Eduardo Saverin, 28, also now have stakes worth billions of dollars in the company.

Some analysts doubt whether Facebook is worth such a huge sum. Joshua Raymond, chief market analyst at City Index, the trading research company, **Continued on page 8**



Musicians paid tribute to Donna Summer, the singer of hits including *I Feel Love* and *Love To Love You Baby*, who died aged 63. News, page 7; Obituary, page 53

Donna Summer, queen of disco, dies of cancer

Banknote printers dust off drachma

Nic Filides

A British company that produces banknotes for more than 150 countries is preparing for a potential reintroduction of the drachma, *The Times* can reveal.

De La Rue, which prints sterling and euros, has asked its production staff to select potential security threads for use in new banknotes and retrieved covers from an old collection of copper moulds, used for watermarks, should Greece exit the euro and an order come in from Athens.

Yesterday the country's debt was downgraded to CCC—the lowest level for a country not in default—by the credit-rating agency Fitch.

De La Rue, based in Hampshire, has not made drachmas for decades and has destroyed a lot of the equipment for the currency. However, sources said that some of the Greek moulds

Cameron tells euro leaders to act now

News, pages 12, 13

had survived as the watermark, a classical Greek head, was not very intricate.

The work is at an early stage. It can take six months to design and print a new counterfeit-proof banknote. De La Rue performed similar preparatory work for potential orders in Somalia, South Sudan and Libya. It has a big printworks in Malta that could be used to supply drachmas to Greece.

The company declined to comment.

De La Rue is one of the few businesses with the capacity to print new banknotes in great volume. It is one of the indirect beneficiaries of political instability and frequently picks up work when there is regime change, given dictators often design banknotes featuring their own likeness.

A large order from Greece would be a boost for De La Rue, which is still counting the cost of a scandal over the supply of inferior banknotes to the Indian treasury in 2010. The company has yet to win back the customer, its largest at the time, but has improved its performance as part of a restructuring.

IN THE NEWS

Tchenguiz deal offer

The Serious Fraud Office offered to drop its investigation into the Tchenguiz brothers in a deal under which they would have made a donation to charity. News, page 3

Coaching for couples

New parents are to be offered cheap relationship counselling in a bid to keep more families together. David Cameron is to announce. News, page 3



Jubilee water music

The Thames pageant for the Diamond Jubilee will feature a programme of weather-dependent music by the London Philharmonic Orchestra. News, pages 4, 5

HSBC warns of exit

HSBC raised the prospect of selling its British high street banking operation if new regulations soon to be brought in by the Government prove too onerous. Business, page 37

Capello on shortlist

Liverpool have tried to back up their claim they can attract the best managers by putting Pep Guardiola and Fabio Capello on a shortlist to replace Kenny Dalglish. Sport, page 76

Inside today

Conran on how to build our way out of recession



Inside