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With millions of people regularly tuning in to his YouTube video blogs every morning, Casey Neistat has a millennial fan base coveted by both marketers and media companies. Now, one of those big media outlets is bringing Mr. Neistat — and, it hopes, his youthful audience — in-house.

CNN announced on Monday that it had agreed to acquire the technology and talent behind Beme, the social media app built and started by Mr. Neistat and Matt Hackett, a former vice president of engineering at Tumblr. Beme's 12 employees will join CNN as part of the deal, the terms of which were not publicly disclosed.

Beme was intended to be a social sharing application that Mr. Neistat described as "more authentic," a way of putting four-second bursts of video out into the social sphere without giving users the ability to edit or tweak the content. Taking video was as simple as holding a smartphone's front-facing sensor to one's body, as if the camera were an extension of one's chest.

Mr. Neistat hopes to bring that idea of authenticity to a news and media environment to draw in a younger audience largely untapped by the cable news network. CNN will shut down the Beme app, which had 1.2 million downloads before losing steam.

"A huge part of my particular audience sees news and media as largely broken," Mr. Neistat said in an interview. "My dad sees it as the word of God, but I think the young people definitely do not."

Beme saw early traction, especially among Mr. Neistat's avid personal following, but failed to capture a large part of the social sharing market amid competitors like Instagram, Facebook and others. Snapchat, the disappearing video and photo sharing app, seemed to tap into much of the raw types of content and feelings Mr. Neistat said he and his team were trying to capture.

Many of the ideas that came out of Beme will be applied to a new, separate start-up company that will exist as an extension of CNN. Mr. Neistat and his team will be given full creative control to come up with a new project.

Beme's audience is something that CNN, a 36-year-old cable news destination, is striving to attract. Jeff Zucker, president of CNN Worldwide, has frequently stated the network's ambition to become a "digital company," far from its roots as a 24-hour news channel.

The deal comes as other established media outlets attempt to branch out from their core offerings and invest in outside start-ups and new ventures. NBCUniversal recently invested \$200 million in BuzzFeed, the new media start-up, and also put \$200 million into Vox Media, a competing company that is home to technology, sports and political news sites. AMC, the network known for the hit series "The Walking Dead," announced this month that it had taken a minority stake in Funny or Die, the digital comedy site founded by Will Ferrell

and Adam McKay.

“Casey has tapped into nearly six million really powerful viewers, most of which do not tune in to CNN,” Andrew Morse, global head of CNN Digital, said in an interview. “To build this audience authentically, we believe we need to build something new.”

Mr. Neistat will largely be given free rein to do just that. The new venture will exist as a stand-alone company, affiliated with but not inside the larger CNN organizational structure. It is modeled after Great Big Story, a video series project co-founded by Mr. Morse that works as a start-up within CNN, aimed at attracting new audiences.

It is unclear what shape the Beme project will take, but the plan is for Mr. Neistat to present some of its early ideas in the first half of 2017.

One thing is for sure: Mr. Neistat, fluent in broadcasting himself in the digital age, is far from beholden to traditional cable news conventions. Instead, he is being asked to find the next medium and mode of delivering news to an audience more skeptical than ever before.

“What we did on Beme was connect with people and strike that chord of honesty,” said Jeremy Liew, a venture capitalist at Lightspeed Venture Partners and lead investor in Beme. “That, combined with the size of Casey’s following on YouTube, validated exactly the kind of understanding that traditional media companies are looking for.” – ***New York Times***



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