

MySpace launches karaoke service in Japan

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Online social-networking titan MySpace has launched a karaoke service in Japan, expanding its amateur crooner channel to a nation rich with lovers of the pastime.

"If you had told me years ago we would launch an online karaoke site in Japan, I would have told you it is like selling ice to the Eskimos," said [MySpace](#) Karaoke general manager Nimrod Lev.

"Boy was I wrong. It seems like the land of karaoke has nothing even close to that. We met with all the leading companies there and they loved what they saw."

MySpace Karaoke lays claim to being the world's "largest user-generated music service," logging more than eight million visitors since it launched in May of last year in Canada and the United States.

In October, the News Corp-owned [social networking](#) website overhauled its karaoke channel to let amateurs post online video of themselves in all their singing glory.

MySpace has arranged licensing deals with music publishers to spare users of its karaoke channel from hassles regarding song copyrights.

MySpace bills its online [video recorder](#) as innovative, custom-built technology that lets people record themselves singing by using computers equipped with microphones, Web-cameras and Internet connections.

Users have submitted more than a million recordings of songs to the website, according to MySpace.

Workers at MySpace offices in Japan spent months tailoring the karaoke service to the local language.

"This was an extensive process," Lev said. "We had to adapt it to the smallest nuances of the Japanese language."

An estimated 40 percent of Japan's population, approximately 50 million people, do karaoke, according to statistics cited by MySpace.

"What we do is a form of self-expression through music," Lev said. "It definitely falls into the MySpace category of giving users more tools to express themselves."

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