

Mobility



Mobile app development startups mean opportunities in and out of IT.

By Rikki Kite



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In a recent blog post, Canonical COO Matt Asay announced that he is leaving the company, which he joined in February 2010, for a new position at Strobe, an HTML5 startup [1][2]. In his new announcement, Asay speaks highly of his Canonical experience and colleagues but says, "What I love is to be knee-deep in customer issues. I love growing a business, customer reference by customer reference."

I suspect that most folks working in IT don't have the luxury of moving between jobs right now. Many of us feel fortunate to be employed while we see friends and former colleagues pounding the virtual pavements and refreshing their résumés. Nonetheless, Matt Asay's announcement stood out to me for a couple of reasons: He's moving from Canonical to join a startup, and the startup, Strobe, is an HTML5 app development company.

On December 9, 2010, I searched Google for "mobile app startup" and found 2,200,000 results for the past month. To give some perspective, searching under the term "Kevin Bacon" [3] yields 1,370,000 results in the same time frame; "Jono Bacon" brings up 24,800; "Android" yields 816,000,000; and "iPad" returns 899,000,000. Thus, mobile app startup news falls somewhere between Kevin Bacon and Android news.

My search uncovered an *Austin Business Journal* report that said Austin-based Mobile Mutual Inc. recently opened a new office in San Francisco and has grown to 77 employees in the past two years [4]. The article quotes executives as saying, "... the burgeoning mobile space is fueling enough business for it to reach 200 employees during the coming year" [5].

My search led me to another article about a Michigan-based company that won startup money last year. Mobile Sign Language Systems is working on a mobile app that will translate spoken words into sign language video in real time [6]. Through another link, I learned

that Citrix Systems recently announced an incubation program for mobility technology innovation [7].

All this mobile startup news is exciting for entrepreneurs, mobile app users, and app developers, but it also means new job opportunities in other areas, such as design, public relations, marketing, and journalism. In fact, the mobile app development boom has affected Linux New Media, too. Besides covering mobile app development in our monthly Linux magazines, we're now serving this rapidly expanding market with our newest publication, *Smart Developer*. Launched in November 2010, *Smart Developer* is now available on newsstands worldwide and by subscription [8]. If you have mobile app article ideas, send your proposals to: edit@smart-developer.com. ■■■

LIKEABLE LINKS

- [1] Leaving Canonical: <http://voices.canonical.com/matt.asay/2010/12/08/leaving-canonical/>
- [2] From Alfresco to Canonical: http://news.cnet.com/8301-13505_3-10447913-16.html
- [3] Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Six_Degrees_of_Kevin_Bacon
- [4] Mutual Mobile explodes onto Austin tech scene: <http://www.bizjournals.com/austin/print-edition/2010/12/03/mutual-mobile-explodes-onto-the-scene.html>
- [5] Mutual Mobile: <http://www.mutualmobile.com/>
- [6] Mobile Sign Language Startup Not Tone-Deaf to Ann Arbor Area's Promise: http://www.xconomy.com/detroit/2010/12/01/mobile-sign-language-startup-not-tone-deaf-to-ann-arbor-area-promise/?single_page=true
- [7] Citrix funding entrepreneurs: http://blog.seattlepi.com/techchron/archives/231021.asp?from=blog_last3
- [8] *Smart Developer* Magazine: <http://www.smart-developer.com>