**Flinger.co**  
by [Mote Labs](http://motelabs.com/)

Microsoft Imagine Cup 2014   
Windows & Windows Phone Challenge

**Founders**:

*Robert Dale Smith* - CEO / Engineer

*Alexander Smith* - Creative Director

**Partner**:

Hurl.net (Hurl Development, LLC.) - Houston startup

* + *Lawrence Johnson* - CEO, Hurl (lawrence@hurl.net)

**Project Overview**:

Flinger.co is a web platform that enables users to Fling just about any web content with a URL to any other screen to create an innovative second screen video sharing experience unlike anything else. The number of people using their tablet or smart phone while watching TV is continually on an upward trend, although there isn't any consistent way to take easily take what you have discovered on your second screen device and launch it on the big screen. Flinger.co bridges this gap by tapping into the standard share buttons built into most modern operating systems and sending the currently viewed URL to any other screen and then automatically loading the appropriate embedded player.

Getting started is as simple as just visiting Flinger.co on the screen you want to use as the viewing screen and then clicking the ‘create new channel’ button. Instantly you will be presented with a six digit code that you can use to pair any number of phones, tablets, or laptops to. Once paired you can either find content within your browser and use the Windows share charm button to fling it to the viewing screen, or you can use the in-app YouTube search to find videos to fling. Not only can you fling content and control a single screen, but you can invite others to your unique URL to have a synchronized viewing experience across any number of screens.

We aim to make the service as frictionless as possible. Users are not required to go through any complicated signup process. Flinger consist of three core parts, the viewing screen web app, the remote mobile/desktop apps, and our custom built back-end server for synchronizing commands between screens and remotes. The viewing screen is designed to run on just about any modern browser that supports HTML5. This overcomes a large obstacle to opening up our service to as many devices and platforms as possible, such as smart TVs and video game consoles. The remote app has a consistent and responsive design and is currently available on the Chrome Web Store, Google Play Store, and Windows & Windows Phone Stores. Remote apps tap into each platforms sharing tools to not only make it easy to control the viewing screen but to also send anything with a URL to it.

The third piece of the puzzle is Node.js back-end running as an Azure Cloud Service. The Flinger.co back-end is the magic sauce that brings everything together. Every screen and remote that is connected to a single channel will have content and commands synchronized in real-time between all of them. This is accomplished using similar technique used by the late Google Wave service. Flinger.co uses a set of operational transformation algorithms to manage the traffic of the remotes and screens. This way users can have a real-time shared experience with very limited latency issues.

Currently Flinger.co is running a live public beta to gauge audience interest. Long term plan is to offer a core freemium service. We believe that not only do users want to share and watch content in real-time but that they always want to discover new content. A small percentage of users garner a much larger following than others. This is where we will be offering premium features within a subscription model ($400 a year) to allow popular content creators to have a larger audience and complete control of multiscreen injected advertising opportunities. We think this has great potential to disrupt television as we know it and to democratize the creation of new smart, crowed sourced TV channels.

**Collaboration**:

Shortly after our initial launch we had a local Houston startup, Hurl.net, reach out to our team with interest to collaborate. The startup is very similar to our own but focused on enabling the same sort of functionality in public spaces, venues, restaurants, etc. Hurl is a social video jukebox that enables owners of public establishments to turn any TV screen into a digital billboard that patrons also use to share videos with each other. We stayed in touch and have been bouncing ideas off of each other to advance each others' startups.

After participating in the Microsoft Imagine Cup Accelerator in 2013 and then our acceptance into the University of Houston's startup accelerator, Red Labs, the CEO of Hurl, *Lawrence* expressed his, "thirst to work with me" to implement our back-end into Hurl. Since then we have been actively working together to retire Hurl's existing, over extended prototype back-end and to replace it with the same infrastructure running Flinger.co.

Although similar products, Hurl is focused on public spaces where Flinger.co is focused on the home and office. We are working on a branding merger within the coming months. The initiative we have been planning is to rebrand Hurl to 'Hurl powered by Flinger'. Together we have been working on raising capital and applying for various startup accelerators like Y-Combinator and TechStars in order to accelerate our efforts. After many weekly meetings and long hours we have been able to continually grow our individual user bases.

*Lawrence* doesn’t "think that it is a coincidence that two startups so much a like both came out of the Houston startup community, and that we were meant to be partners". The impact for Hurl is huge, by using the Flinger.co backend technology that we have developed Hurl will be able to scale the number of active users by ten times while utilizing only half of the cloud resources required by the existing back-end.

Partner Links:

<http://hurl.net/>

Mote Labs Links:

<http://MoteLabs.com/>

<http://Flinger.co/>

<http://motelabs.com/flingerForWindows/>

<http://www.windowsphone.com/en-us/store/app/flinger-co-remote/2f650882-776e-4d95-9cc1-d0e5951eae97>