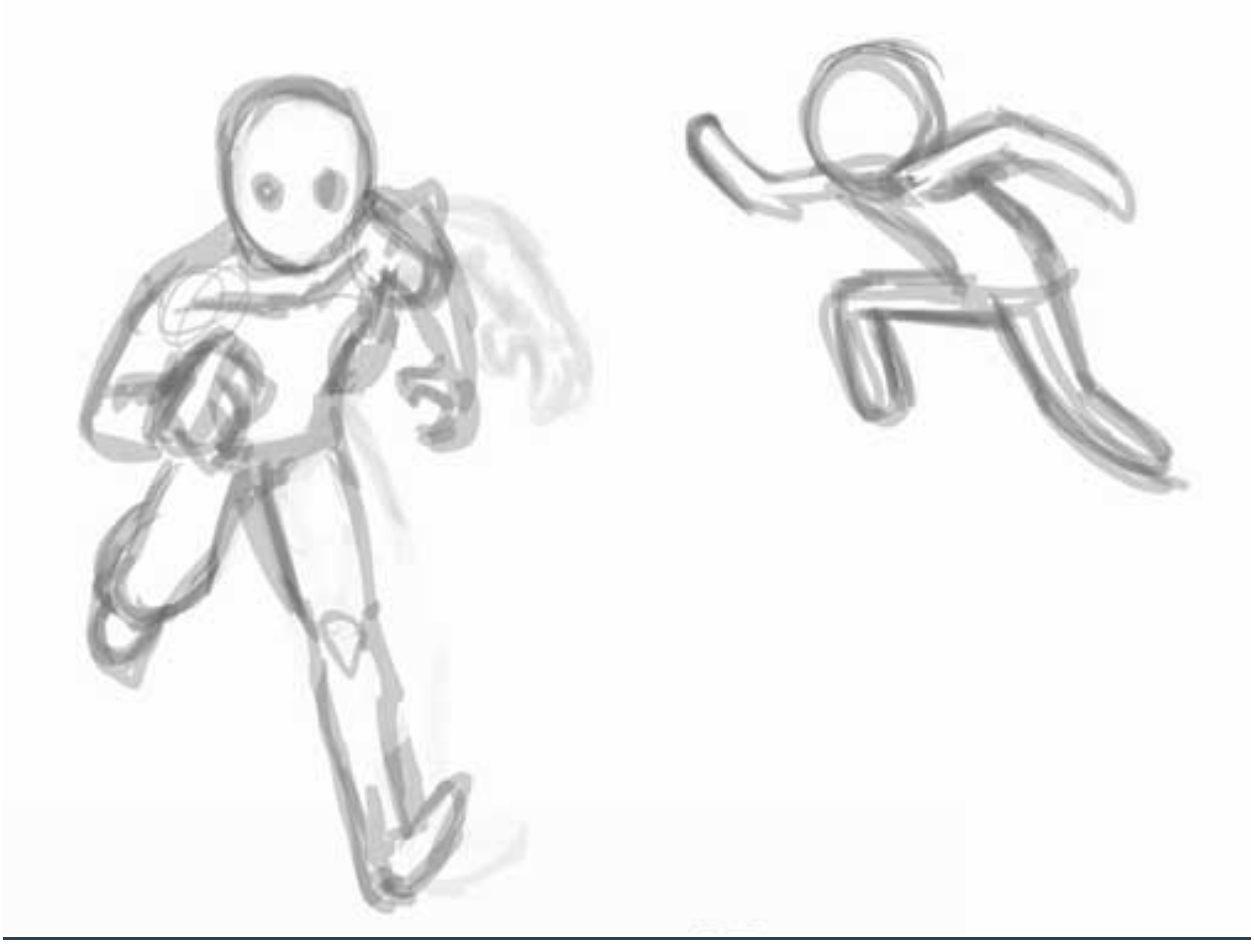
Brave Technology



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"Brave is a mobile app for urgent acts of kindness"

We dream of a world where anyone, anywhere can ask the 10 nearest strangers around her for help right now. And get it.

It will be a global, ubiquitous platform to ask for immediate, hyper-local, urgent help. Why should help be "on the way" if it's already here?

Before we get there, we're going local. Our pilot version of Brave for the Downtown East-Side (the "DES Pilot") will enable you to send an alert if you see someone having an overdose or otherwise at risk. The alert will go to people and groups already committed to helping solve this problem – so they can resuscitate and bring life-saving Naloxone to an overdose victim, administer first aid, hand them off to paramedics or shepherd them to a clinic or treatment center for appropriate intervention.

A second pilot will run at the end of the summer with incoming international students at UBC (the "UBC Pilot"). Being able to ask for location-specific help from day one could vastly improve their integration into student life.

We're building our startup as a multi-stakeholder co-op, also known as a platform co-op. We believe the community we gather around our service is the most valuable element of what we're doing. Starting as a co-op in which the users, as well as the workers and the investors, have control is how we're demonstrating our commitment to those users: no matter how the product changes, they will both retain control and be entitled to a significant portion of the financial reward.

We are not a non-profit but we are certainly a values-based organization (as detailed extensively in our Manifesto) and believe in radical transparency and free, open-source technology. (We are still, however, working to identify the appropriate tools to express these values.)

We look forward to welcoming investors who believe in this vision and who have the patience to invest for impact and community first, with reasonable returns coming second.

Background

Gordon Casey started working on this idea while living on Curaçao, in the Caribbean. Curaçao has emergency management services but they are about 75% reliable: you don't always know if they'll answer the phone, or come, or if they'll bring the equipment you need. The initial vision was for an app to ask the 'crowd' for help in case of an emergency.

We found 78 similar apps and then stopped looking: and all but two had failed in one form or another.

After analyzing some of these failures, using paper and interactive wireframes with about 300 potential users, (as well as some founders of other similar startups) we realized a couple of things:

1. People might support the idea, but they don't like downloading apps they would only use in case they were about to die. (The Morbidity Problem.)
2. Even if they install the app, they won't get a chance to test the technology, or the community using the technology, until a point in time where their trust and faith in it needs to be extremely high. So they are very unlikely to use it then either. (The Trust Problem.)

We then re-formulated the core of the idea based on the following assumptions, hypotheses and principles:

3. People fundamentally want to help other people and will do so, if they can, when given a clear opportunity to do so. We limit the alerts to the nearest 10 people.
4. If an app only allows you to ask for help from the people you already know, it is insufficiently distinct from a WhatsApp group or phone tree. The "stranger crowd" must be engaged. (Most apps use known contacts, a "circle of trust", to solve the Trust Problem.)
5. Asking people for smaller instances of help will allow them to test, and then trust, the technology and the community.

6. Hyper-local help requests (the nearest 10 people) can provide huge utility within the sharing economy, eliminating friction associated with many sharing platforms etc. (i.e. the logistics around actually meeting up so you can borrow my drill.)

What We Built

We have built a mini-Uber. Using a map interface, you send out a request, the app then finds the nearest 10 users (provided they are within a 1km radius), and notifies them – on a map – of your need for help. The responders indicate if they are willing to help, and if so, you will be notified that help is on the way. You can then start a dialogue with any users on their way.

This full-function version of the app is iOS only, is still in debugging and QA and will be used for the UBC Pilot at the end of the summer.

We also have another branch of the technology based on groups rather than proximity. This version is multi-platform, is fully functional and will be used for our DES Pilot in early summer. (It is not yet available for download as we are migrating to new servers and refactoring the code.)

Value Proposition

We are solving the problem of getting, and giving, local help. Immediately. That itch when you realize Google can't have the answer but someone nearby does, you just don't have a way to ask them. (And the complimentary itch to help people, but without any certainty as to how.)

But the **need** to be met (which Brave facilitates) is the need for community and human connection. And, "free with purchase", you get increased disaster resilience, safety and emergency response.

Brave can make manifest an abundance mindset within even the most downtrodden communities. And it's portable because the stranger crowd is always around you, even if you're far from home.

Many of the tech giants have tried to solve the "local" problem (providing local search results, recommendations, commerce etc) but we believe they will never solve it because the missing ingredient is people. Local means people. Brave is a way to connect people in the real world, not

online. Which is how it builds community. While we anticipate adding AI and blockchain to various elements of the platform in due course, those are just tools to better enable people and community.

Money

We have not yet achieved product/market fit and in this instance we believe it would be foolish to predict revenue or sales prior to doing so. We are currently bootstrapped with Gordon having contributed all of the funding so far.

There are quite a few options for monetizing the service, some of which are mentioned below, but our focus right now is on delivering real value to the community we are trying to impact. As soon as we get it right, we will shift our focus to becoming financially sustainable while delivering the same value.

Here are the options we are most attracted to:

1. Kindness as a business value. We are in talks with one large US-based business with both kindness and cross-departmental engagement as core values. They believe the app might help them improve their goals in this regard and we hope to have a pilot with them by the end of the year.
2. Senior care and alerts. The market for alert communication from those using remote care services is heavily reliant on single-use expensive hardware and software systems. Introducing a system with minimal (or zero) additional hardware could give access to this type of service to a much broader population of users.
3. Community-based administration. Residential and educational communities still largely use paper and bulletin-board technology to communicate. By limiting the scope and nature of communications we could add substantial value at zero or low cost. (Cf. Nextdoor & React Mobile.)
4. Security-based services. Companies in this market are usually unable to get customers to install proprietary apps but the same functionality sitting on top of an app they already use – or with secondary utility – would enable them to have greater contact with each other for alerts and triggers. (Cf. Warnable.)

5. Platform as a service. Assuming we achieve some measure of scale/penetration within a particular region, other software and hardware startups could access the platform, and network, to provide additional niche services and products. (Cf. Pet trackers, safety alert jewelry etc.)
6. Ride-sharing. We can't pretend not to have noticed the applicability to ride-sharing inherent within our core functionality. Our vision is of authentic peer-to-peer "I'm at a party and I need a lift but don't want to ask every single person here" kind of ride-sharing. However, if a taxi company (or similar) wanted to try and use the app to coordinate rides, we would look at this opportunity more closely.

Business Model Canvasses

Enclosed with this application is:

a. The business model canvas for the DES Pilot – note this excludes any costs or revenue streams.
b. The business model canvas for our more general vision of hyper-local alerts for urgent acts of kindness. This is the modality we will roll out during our UBC Pilot.
c. A third canvas – please see below.

This third canvas is, we believe, more appropriate for Brave. Based on the BMC, it is called the Platform Design Canvas and is intended for two-sided markets; situations where the customer segment that is the target of the primary value proposition will not be paying a fee to the platform creator. It is hard to digest the full value of this canvas without reading the explanatory work of its creator to understand the specific phraseology used; and viewing the supporting worksheets necessary to create the canvas itself. With apologies for this we have nevertheless included the canvas, as it may still be of some assistance in understanding the vision and value proposition here.

Our Team

Our founder is Gordon Casey, based here in Vancouver. Gordon is an entrepreneur and former lawyer who has started, or been a key part of, more than a dozen businesses globally – some of which have failed completely. He brought one internet startup public in London in 2005 – and then brought it private again in 2006 and joined the executive team, he's written a book, run his

own consultancy for 12 years and made some bad real estate investments. He sold his consultancy and moved here from the Caribbean with his family in June 2016 to focus exclusively on Brave. Gordon is an optimist and an idealist, his experience tells him it's worth doing things the right way with 100% of your values embedded in your vision.

Byron Coetsee is our lead iOS developer, and Weylin Renison is our lead Android developer. Byron and Weylin developed a similar app, called Panic, in South Africa and they have recently joined the Brave team. They are both young, enthusiastic and talented developers who are passionate about solving this problem.

We are working with a host of volunteers, mentors and stakeholders to move the project forward. PHS, HxBIA and Mission Possible in the DES have all provided critical insights to us. A team of International Scholars at UBC worked with us over the winter to sketch out what a university pilot would look like and some of them are staying on to implement the UBC Pilot. Positivity Branding developed a strategic positioning and branding outlook for us and the FairShares Association worked with us to finalise our organizational structure so as to embed the values we believe are key to our success. (We are still working to 'translate' their work into BC-compliant documents.)

Needed: product manager, community engagement, marketing, sales and the ever-elusive growth hacker – we hope to find all of these wonderful people to join the team but we are not actively looking for any of those roles yet.

Our Next Steps

We have essentially been in stealth mode for the past 14 months – not hiding but not trying hard to be seen or heard. We have, nevertheless, assembled a small community (155 people) through our activities to date and we will be trying to grow this more actively in advance of our pilots.

In the immediate future we will be incorporating the co-op, making our code open source so more developers can join on a volunteer basis, participate in this competition, participate in the Women's Safety XPrize, design and roll out the DES Pilot and communicate with our community at least once every two weeks.