Silicon Alley Start-up, 'Wizpert,' Launches Advice Platform to Instantly Connect People for a Chat with Experts in a Wide Range of Topics

Programming Advice Goes Live with Wizperts in 10+ Computer Programming Languages

NEW YORK, Sept. 24, 2013 /[PRNewswire](#)/ -- Struggling with a computer programming issue at 2 a.m. on Saturday? Need advice on a problem you're having with your boyfriend/girlfriend? Not sure whether your resume is too detailed or positions you most favorably for a job opportunity? Now, you can seek out a "wizpert" online at any time of the day or night, and have a trusted and knowledgeable advisor provide you with the advice you need.

A Silicon Alley, New York City start-up, Wizpert^{TM}, Inc. ([wizpert.com](#)) is setting out to transform the advice market through its launch of a new expert platform, designed to make subject matter experts more accessible than ever before.

Its launch topic, computer programming, features 'wizperts' (experts) in over 10 computer languages (including C/C++, PHP, Python, Java, Ruby, HTML/CSS, Objective C, JavaScript, C# and SQL) who are available nearly around the clock to provide advice via text-based chat. More topics, including relationship advice, travel, wellness and business, remain in beta and will be introduced later. More than 4,000 wizperts and 9,500 users have joined the Wizpert community during its private beta period.

Management Team
Wizpert was co-founded in 2011 by Michael Weinberg, age 38, chief executive officer; and Stefan D'Heedene, age 33, chief technology officer and co-founder. The pair met while working for Merrill Lynch in New York.

Mr. Weinberg has been in the advice business for most of his professional life with a background in financial services, a legal degree from Bar Ilan University in Ramat-Gan, Israel, and a MBA in finance and entrepreneurship from Columbia Business School. He served in the Israeli Defense Force for three years where he was stationed in the highly prestigious Intelligence Corps' Computer Division Unit.

Mr. D'Heedene is an engineer who enjoys tackling problems seemingly insurmountable to others. Previously, as vice president of Merrill Lynch's Alternative Investments group, he founded and built the group's customized advisory platform, served as director of information management, and developed portfolio construction tools, analytics and trading strategies as a quant. Mr. D'Heedene earned his Ph.D. in Computational Engineering (wavelets) from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and was the recipient of a Belgian American Educational Foundation Fellowship. He received the degree of Burgerlijk Ingenieur Architect from the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in Flanders, Belgium.

Funding
The company has raised $850,000 in seed funding from several prominent early stage investors including **Entrepreneurs Roundtable Accelerator**, an early-stage seed fund and technology accelerator committed to building the next generation of great New York tech companies; **Greg Kidd**, advisor/investor in **Twitter** & **Square**; and **Robert E. Cohen**, an early investor/board member in **AVG Technologies**.

How It Works
Once users register for a free account by providing their email address or through Facebook, they can browse the available topics to find a subject area on which they would like advice. By clicking the 'Talk to a wizpert now' button, the platform's matching engine instantly connects users to a highly rated available wizpert. They also have the option of searching profiles of wizperts to make their own selection.

The Wizpert platform is set in a fun and social environment allowing users to rate their wizperts' advice and help the wizperts build their community reputation via a simple thumbs-up or thumbs-down metaphor reflecting the wizperts' knowledge, professionalism and general helpfulness. These reputations are later used to influence Wizpert's matching engine algorithms and affect the wizperts' utilization on the platform.

Instead of charging users a flat fee to chat with wizperts, they are encouraged to compensate their wizperts for the value they receive from their chat. Users purchase virtual currency 'coins' to compensate wizperts; the coins can also be earned by users for participating in certain activities such as promoting wizperts or just by returning frequently to the platform. Experts' earnings are split with Wizpert; earnings can be converted to cash and redeemed via PayPal.

Wizperts and Users Speak Out

Wizperts are indicating they enjoy sharing their expertise and helping others:

"Wizpert gives me a chance to do what I love... help other programmers. And in the last few months, I've been able to help a wide variety of learners. Some are college students who get stuck on an assignment; some are professionals looking for guidance on a new technology. Whether I squash a pesky bug or point users at a helpful article or do an ad-hoc demo, it feels great to help people get moving in the right direction again." **– Wallace Kelly, software developer and wizpert in C#, .NET, F#, ASP.Net**

"Having suffered through hundreds if not thousands of Message Boards full of self proclaimed 'experts' this past few decades that I have been programming I am painfully aware how hard it is to get a quality answer to problems from a REAL Expert. Wizpert.com takes the guessing out of the equation and connects you with actual experts in various fields without you having to do a thing! Add to that the fact that you get instant results and Wizpert.com becomes a no-brainer. It just works!" **– Pete Soheil, CEO, DigiOZ Multimedia, Inc. and wizpert in C#, Java, PHP, SQL**

Users too are indicating extreme value in chatting with wizperts:

"The Wizpert professional I talked to had a grand amount of knowledge on the topic I was researching. Within a couple of minutes of showing my snippet of code that I was working on and stating my issue, he already had an idea of how to help. He was very engaging and helpful throughout the entire process, and to top it off, he was really personable. I loved that! He was so easy to talk to and easy to understand when explaining my options to go about my Ruby issue. I'll always go to a Wizpert for help after that incredible helpful experience!" – **Krystle Frisbie, Seattle**

"Wizpert saved the day! I needed to fix a programming problem for a client but didn't know how. Thank God I found Wizpert. I was talking with an expert within a minute or two and had my solution soon after that! Invaluable." **– Philip Stancil**

About Wizpert
Wizpert (www.wizpert.com), founded in 2011 and headquartered in New York City's Silicon Alley, is an innovative online platform providing real-time expert advice on a wide variety of topics. It instantly connects people with 'wizperts,' or experts, who provide live one-on-one advice around the clock via text-based chat - all set in a fun and social environment. Wizpert is the most accessible - and social - expert platform.

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