

GIZMOTEK

NEWS GADGETS DESIGN SCIENCE TV HOME



PEOPLE

Techie triumphs



How two teenage entrepreneurs turned their ideas into successful business projects!

Nick

Nick d'Aloisio developed a fascination for computers when he was very young and by the age of ten, he was the proud owner of an Apple MacBook. He loved the iMovie application, but he soon wanted to move on and create his own apps for iPhones. To do this, he needed to know how to use computer code. Since programming wasn't taught at school, he worked out how to do basic computer programming by himself from online videos and technology websites.

As a teenager, Nick used to spend his spare time creating apps. The turning point came when Nick was fifteen. He was revising for his school exams at the time. While he was searching for useful material on the Internet, he would often waste a lot of time scrolling through pages of information to find what he needed. This gave him an idea: what if he designed an app that could summarise lengthy news stories in a few short paragraphs? People would be

able to access this summary on their phones and follow up whatever interested them most. So, in 2011 Nick created *Trimit*, an app which did just that. It was an immediate success.

Then, quite out of the blue, Li Ka-shing, a Hong Kong billionaire, decided to invest \$300,000 in Nick's idea. This made it possible for Nick to develop an improved version of *Trimit*, called *Summly*, which he launched a year later. Yahoo quickly put in an offer to buy it – for a reported £19 million – and Nick became a multimillionaire overnight! One thing he found great in all this was the response he got. 'The proudest moment for me has been seeing these tweets coming through from teenagers saying, "You've inspired me," and I'm so excited about that!' Nick says.

Nina

Nina Devani is a teenager who has also found success with an app, but this came about due to a misfortune that happened to her father, Atul. When Atul's Facebook account was hacked into one day, he was faced with a problem. Since he had used the same password for other Internet accounts as well, he suddenly had to create a new password for each different account. It was impossible to remember them all!

Nina's dad was trying to find a solution to this when Nina came up with the idea for a new app, one that would give users prompts or tips to help them remember their passwords more easily. There were already apps available, but they all involved giving your password to someone else, which wasn't ideal. An Internet entrepreneur invested a sum of money in her app, Nina hired some developers and fairly soon afterwards, *Prompt Me Nina*, as she called her app, was up and running!

At fourteen, Nina had her own company and was involved in talks with US developers. Quite amazing for a young girl who was still at school! She would even answer business emails in her lunchtime break! Nina found things tough in the beginning, but she strongly believes that you can do whatever you set your mind on: 'Once you get going, problems that seemed like mountains become smaller, and even disappear. What was impossible is suddenly achievable and real.'



SWITCH ON

A handy app page 30