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A Chat with Spock Co-Founder Jay Bhatti

■ ■ ■ ■ This week we chat with Jay Bhatti, the Co-Founder of [Spock](#). Prior to Spock, Jay worked at Microsoft in product management. Jay obtained his MBA from the Wharton School, and did his undergraduate in Systems Engineering from Rutgers University.



ASE: Hi Jay, welcome!

Jay Bhatti: Thanks for having me.

ASE: Where does the name- Spock- come from?

Jay Bhatti: Spock stands for “single point of contact by keyword.”

ASE: Prior to Spock you worked at Microsoft. What’s the most valuable lesson you learned there and how have you applied it at Spock?

Jay Bhatti: Best thing I learned at Microsoft was how to hire great people. When Jaideep (Spock’s co-founder and CEO) and I started Spock, we placed hiring great people as our #1 priority, and I used what I learned at Microsoft to make that happen.

ASE: How did Spock come about? What was the inspiration?

Jay Bhatti: Spock came about due to our frustration on how hard it was to search for information about people – especially the frustration with our ability to keep up to date with the people in our lives and what they were doing.

Think about this – how many people do you know who went to your high school and live in New York City? You probably would have to think really hard or research a lot of different sites to learn that information. With Spock, we want to make it possible for you to do that search within .5 seconds and get a great answer.

ASE: How is Spock different from PeekYou?

Jay Bhatti: Spock is a search engine and we place a great emphasis on search and click-offs to other sites that we index. We are really big on deep science and technology. Many other good companies like PeekYou are taking a different approach and building their index with a greater focus on social networking engagement. So our strategies are very different. We feel that our investments on deep science and scale will pay off in the long run.

ASE: *Who is your target audience? How are you targeting them?*

Jay Bhatti: Everyone in the world is our audience. Every day people are doing searches for other people.

ASE: *Do you have a marketing budget?*

Jay Bhatti: We do not have any marketing budget. We made a real big focus on growing organically with the quality of the product. So, all of our traffic is direct and we are letting our product speak for itself.

ASE: *What is Spock's most unique/valuable feature?*

Jay Bhatti: Great people search is our best feature overall. One thing that users really love is the ability to quickly find the people in their address books (gmail, outlook, etc) on the web.

ASE: *Please talk about the proliferation of personal information and privacy on the web. Any concerns about having so much personal info readily available to the world?*

Jay Bhatti: We do not display personal information on Spock (such as people's email, IM, phone number, etc). We are also only showing public information that is on the open web. So, we do not have a privacy issues like other sites. In addition, we see that people are now a LOT more open to placing information on the web as opposed to keeping it hidden. The world is moving to more openness and more sharing of information about them. We think that people now understand the best way to protect privacy is to know where you are on the web, and Spock makes that possible.

ASE: *What's your five year plan for Spock?*

Jay Bhatti: To be the #1 people search engine in the world. Whenever someone in the future thinks about looking up a person (celebrity or regular person), their first thought should be Spock.

ASE: *Thanks, Jay! Best of luck to you and Spock!*

Natalya Murakhver is a freelance writer/PR consultant based in New York City.

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