



# MobJet: An Exciting Technology Marvel

MOBJet is a multimedia microblog that allows anyone, anywhere, to post anything – videos, photos, audio, and text well beyond 140 characters, just by emailing them to [post@mobjet.com](mailto:post@mobjet.com). *MillionaireAsia's* **Brian Yim** finds out who is the brain behind this exciting new technology.

James Skinner's profile is colourful. He was a former chairman of Cayman International Financial Holdings, a hedge fund group managing over US\$2 billion in client assets. He was astute and had perfect timing selling off the business just before the financial crisis hit in 2008.

Apart from the hedge fund business, the other companies James founded were in, private equity, internet and executive education fields, most of which have concluded in successful trade sales.

He could have retired rich and never have to work again but live in his sprawling Nassim Road bungalow right in the heart of Orchard Road where he is now based. But taking things easy is not part of his plan. I asked myself "If I died today, would I be OK with that? The answer was No. There are still too many things in my head that I needed to get out to people.

James is also a prolific writer and the first book he wrote and published was a translation into Japanese of Dr Stephen Covey's hugely successful *The 7 Habits of Highly Successful People*. James is fluent in Japanese and lived in Japan for 22 years. His books, including the 9 Steps of Success, have sold over 1.5 million copies in Japan and Korea.

James' early career included postings with the US Embassy in Tokyo and work as a sales engineer for NEC, where he sold over US\$80 million in computer equipment in his first year. James then went on to work in financial communications, assisting over 100 blue-chip Japanese multinationals in their global capital procurement activities.

### Dissatisfied

Asked where he got so many ideas for his business James said that like every entrepreneur, it comes from dissatisfaction and a refusal to accept the status quo. "You feel that the way things are sucks and I can do it better. "He felt that way when he tried to log on to Twitter. "I went to the site, logged in and got confused. First I can't see anything on the site if I

don't register. Then I realised I can't post anything but text on the site. Even then the text is limited to just 140 characters."

James went on to create his newest invention a brand-new multimedia social networking site called MOBJet. Anyone, anywhere can post videos, photos, audios, and text well beyond 140 characters by emailing them to [post@mobjet.com](mailto:post@mobjet.com). They site also syncs with such existing networks as Facebook and Twitter.

This proprietary file conversion engine is one of the most powerful on the web and belongs to a company James founded called YouPublish Limited in 2006.

The company is a web applications development lab focused on the creation of technologies for the internet.

### Technology Rich

YouPublish Limited has also developed extensive technology in the area of delivering multi-media content to mobile phone devices, including a data base of over 11,500 device types and their supported file formats, the ability to detect the device, and a system for serving up content based on the phone type detected.

MOBJet.com is one of two websites owned by YouPublish Limited. James likes to see MOBJet as a multimedia version of Twitter with no 140 character limitation while YouPublish.com is akin to YouTube for video, audio, photos and text; free or paid.

Although it was incorporated only in 2006, the company has already filed 184 patent claims in areas such as storage and distribution of electronic publications, in-line viewing of files over a network, viewing of multiple file types over a network using a single player, media player architecture, subscription to information feeds, and more.

One key reasons why the company is so prolific in creating new technology is its ability to attract some of the top talents in the field.



### Big Name Support

The formidable YouPublish team include: Roice Krueger (Senior Advisor) who co-founded Covey Leadership Center with Stephen R. Covey, which merged in 1997 with Franklin Quest to become Franklin-Covey, the largest training company of its type in the world; Mark Victor Hansen (Senior Advisor) co-creator of the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* empire. His books have sold over 157 million copies, making him the best-selling non-fiction author of all time; and Andrew Heywood (Talent Czar/Recruitment/HR), a strategic hire responsible for assembling a dream team for YouPublish. Andrew has played an integral role in building both domestic and international teams from scratch including the Google Tokyo R&D engineering teams, Japanese product focus team based in Mountain View, and YouTube engineering monetisation teams.

"The quality of minds in this space is very central and we believe we have an impressive technology team behind it."

MOBJet and YouPublish together have over 15,000 registered users, currently growing at a little less than 1% per day, with over 200,000 unique visitors from 206 countries.

James is still fascinated with Japan where he regards as having the greatest potential for MobJet.

"The reason is simple. No one in Japan uses SMS. It is the only country in the world where the three major cell phone providers' SMS network is not inter-compatible. But each Japanese cell phone at time of shipment has an in-built email address. That means you don't need to configure it to send emails. The Japanese just send emails to each other and never bother with SMS which limits what you can do. Twitter is not suited for the Japanese market but a huge opportunity for MOBJet."

To date, YouPublish has received US\$3.25 million in financing from the Buckingham Group at a valuation of US\$35 million. It is currently looking for just one strategic investor to take it to the next level.

Born in New Jersey, USA, James is an ardent philanthropist who champions causes for orphans and disaster relief. A month ago, he organised a trip for several hundred Japanese children to Disneyland. He has advised numerous charitable foundations, and is currently a director of the Mark Victor Hansen Foundation. He spends his free time running Ironman races and travelling the world. ■