



## News Release

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**For Release: Immediately**

### **PlaceSpeak represents Vancouver in 'Disruptathon Cascadia'**

(Vancouver) -- A new mobile app for *PlaceSpeak*, a geospatial consultation platform developed in Vancouver has been voted as one of three startup technology companies to represent the city at the Disruptathon Cascadia Edition at the MoDev Tablet conference this weekend in Seattle.

*PlaceSpeak* and eight other startups from Vancouver, Portland and Seattle will vie for an award that includes a \$10,000 sponsorship to take part in the MoDev East conference this December in Washington, DC. The winner also gains a seat on the influential CTIA Mobile Innovation Council and an investment meeting with the Madrona Venture Group of Seattle.

The *PlaceSpeak* mobile app was developed by Chris Gibson of Belfast, NI as part of his Honours Computer Science program at Ulster University in Jordanstown. Chris had undertaken his placement year with PlaceSpeak in Vancouver, and continues with the company leading its mobile development. The new app will allow people to engage in consultations important to their neighbourhood no matter where they are.

*PlaceSpeak* promotes collaboration through open and transparent dialogue on community issues by authenticating participants according to where they live, producing more reasoned and civil discussions and overcoming the growing lack of trust in anonymous input. While personal details are kept totally confidential, all participants, including the sponsor of the topic being discussed get a clear picture of the public's interests and opinions, neighbourhood by neighbourhood.

In addition to the Urban Futures Study, *PlaceSpeak* has been used by municipalities, the development community and others to provide a sounding board on a wide variety of topics, from community and transportation plans to, in the case of Tofino, a test of the tsunami warning system.

Each finalist will make their pitch to a panel of judges, who will rate them using the Disruptathon mobile app. Disruptathon champions innovators who disrupt the markets they enter and contribute to the 'creative economy'. The winner will be announced on August 16<sup>th</sup>.

Founder Colleen Hardwick says *PlaceSpeak* is, by its very nature, 'disruptive' to the traditional consultation process. "It's been recognized internationally for being innovative and a 'game changer' as the first platform to promote genuine, verifiable and defensible digital consultation.

'Anonymous online feedback is too vulnerable to 'gaming', trolls and other disruptive elements. Thankfully, *PlaceSpeak* disrupts that model through authentication, which is what you get when you combine engagement and verification," Hardwick says.



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Full details on the MoDev Tablet conference are here: <http://gomodev.com/and-the-finalists-are/>

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