

# Infinite Monkeys makes smartphone 'apps' simple

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Parked on the expo floor at an AppNation gathering of software entrepreneurs in San Francisco this week was the used-cooking-oil-powered "eco-roamer" truck that Jay Shapiro has called his home for the past year.

Shapiro designed the mobile abode with three bedrooms, a composting bathroom, and a kitchen featuring cabinetry made of sustainable bamboo

and faux-stone counter tops of recycled paper.

Solar electric panels on the roof and a system that uses the truck motor to heat water for the kitchen and bathroom contributed to a zero [carbon footprint](#) for the vehicle where Shapiro, his wife and two young children have lived.

"It's home, corporate headquarters for the business and school for my two kids," Shapiro said while giving AFP a glimpse inside the eco-roamer.

"We are 12 months into a five-year trip around the planet."

Shapiro posted his design for the truck online as "open source" material for anyone to copy.

He wrapped the North America portion of his family's odyssey at AppNation, where he and his far-flung Infinite Monkeys team converged to launch a service that lets even software simpletons make mobile social network applications.

"Infinite Monkeys is allowing anybody who is passionate about some niche community, a children's soccer team a church group or whatever, to create a mobile app to bring that community together," the startup's founder and chief continued.

"Rather than joining a huge [Facebook](#) where you invite all your friends, you get your own little walled garden that is for your community."

The self-service system online at [infinitemonkeys.mobi](#) guides people through simple steps to creating applications tailored for Apple iPhones or smartphones powered by Google-backed Android software.

"Technically, they don't need to know anything more than how to click a button," said Dane Johnson, whose title at the startup is "human overlord of the designers."

"It goes into our magic machine, the monkeys get to work, and they will have an app on their end."

The applications aggregate photo-sharing, Twitter feeds, chat rooms, blogs, news feeds, contact lists and other information pertinent to people in groups.

Only those who download an application are privy to what a group is sharing on their smartphones, according to Johnson.

More than 700 applications had been made at Infinite Monkeys by the time AppNation wrapped on Thursday.

There was a one-time fee of \$49 to make an Infinite Monkeys application that gets downloaded to smartphones. It was free to make a version for mobile Web browsers.

Application templates were tailored for music bands, restaurants, schools, work teams, churches and more.

"It is about pulling social information already online and putting it in one place away from the noise of the big Web," Johnson said.

Shapiro, a Canada native who lived in Asia for 13 years but now considers New York City his base when not on the road, was heading for South America with his Russian wife and their children, who were born in Singapore.

"We have a fun time crossing borders," Shapiro quipped.

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