

on{X}: Microsoft automatic-message tool is for (gasp) Android

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(Phys.org) -- Microsoft this week announced the beta release of on{X}, a combination site and Android application giving smartphone users extended control of their phones via remote programming. Suddenly smartphones get much smarter when the user can create numerous automated messages that send automatic text messages, alerts, jog the memory or relay a message to jog, as the case may be. The phone becomes a device to more dynamically react to a changing daily environment. This is a service for developers and what the team calls “technology enthusiasts” who are not timid about programming their mobile devices.

“The code we write is an action that we hook up to a sensor-based event,” says the team. Computation is taking place on the phone, in real-

time, as a reaction to the real-world sensor-based event. Users download the [Android](#) app and then configure rules on the on{X} site using scripts as so called “recipes.” There are ready-made templates that can be used such as ‘Launch the music app when I am walking’ or “text my wife I’m on my way when I leave work.” The site makes it a point to emphasize that users are free to create their own brand-new rules using a JavaScript API that outlines ‘triggers’ and ‘actions’. The team offers an example: ‘When I leave home remind me to buy milk’ (Trigger = leave home, Action = remind me to). Basic triggers run the gamut from weather to news to battery to location. Actions for acting on the triggers may run the gamut from show a notification, to open an app, open a URL, send a [text message](#), or call a web service. The user is free to alter rules, activate/deactivate a rule, or delete rules.

The creators of on{X} are from [Microsoft](#)’s Information Platform and Experiences (IPE) Israel group, which is part of the worldwide IPE team. Their work is focused on coming up with new applications and services. “We are excited to see how developers will use it to improve our day to day life,” said an IPE group member.

Project on{X} is only available now for Android. IPE's site has no specific information on a scheduled date for the issue of a Windows Phone release. Android, at this stage, was decided as an ideal environment for a beta. While it is an Android-only app now, observers say they expect this to be the outcome, where on{X} eventually becomes a Windows Phone feature.

“We start on{X} on Android phones; that will be followed by more platforms in the future,” said IPE team member Eran Yariv.

More information: www.onx.ms

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