

Twitter co-founder launches app for asking about what you see

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Twitter co-founder Biz Stone is pictured on September 24, 2012 in San Francisco, California

Twitter co-founder Biz Stone on Tuesday took the wraps off a smartphone application that invites people to tap into their online social networks for answers about things they see.

Jelly, available free for Apple gadgets or mobile devices powered by

Google-backed Android software, let people reach out virtually to friends, or friends of friends, when interested in finding out more about where one is or what is happening around them at a given moment.

"Say you're walking along and you spot something unusual," said a blog post at the Jelly website.

"You want to know what it is so you launch Jelly, take a picture, circle it with your finger, and type 'What's this?' "

Jelly queries are submitted to friends who also have the application, and notifications pop-up when answers are provided.

Jelly meshes with people's existing social networks, such as Facebook and Twitter.

Facebook last year modified its search features to allow members to tap into the social network's public data for answers to general questions such as "What kinds of films do Republicans like?" but Jelly promises to provide insights to what is around a person at any time.

Online forums at services such as Quora and Reddit let people delve into broad issues and topics, with Jelly again distinguishing itself by dealing with queries relevant to real-time moments in life.

Jelly also saw it as an advantage to let people ask questions with pictures.

"In a world where 140 characters is considered a maximum length, a picture really is worth a thousand words," Jelly said in its launch blog post.

"No matter how sophisticated our algorithms become, they are still no match for the experience, inventiveness, and creativity of the human

mind."

San Francisco-based Jelly was co-founded by Stone, one of the creators behind globally popular one-to-many text messaging service Twitter, which made a blockbuster stock market debut last year.

Stone fired off word of the Jelly launch at his @biz Twitter account.

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