

App to save motorists from parking fines

May 9 2014, by Mark Schroder



ParkingMaestro co-founder Mark Schroder said he developed the app with Patrick Acheampong to solve a significant issue he faced while living in Sydney and then in Brisbane.

A smartphone app developed with support from The University of Queensland's ilab start-up accelerator is set to save motorists hundreds of dollars in parking fines.

ParkingMaestro is a 'set and forget' solution that warns the user when they should start their return journey to their [car](#), based on the distance to the vehicle and the time remaining before the [parking](#) expires.

Users either scan the street parking sign using the [app](#)'s image

recognition function or manually enter the details of the sign or parking ticket.

The app then tracks their movements and uses an algorithm to determine how long it will take to walk back to the car.

ParkingMaestro co-founder Mark Schroder said he developed the app with Patrick Acheampong to solve a significant issue he faced while living in Sydney and then in Brisbane.

"Whether I was at home, at work or going out with friends, I realised my car was nearly always parked in a restricted area," he said.

"There are few people living in inner city areas who have their own garage and don't have to worry about when their parking is expiring," Mr Schroder said.

"It is a 24 hour a day problem.

"What compounds the issue is your car is nearly always parked in a different place every day, which can be hard to keep track of, and the time it takes to get back to your vehicle is easily misjudged, or you forget, which results in an expensive fine.

"Our solution was to develop an app that alerts you when you need to start walking back to your car, regardless of how far it is."

Start-up accelerator ilab is a division of The University of Queensland's main commercialisation company, UniQuest.

"Being part of ilab was fantastic. They were able to guide us through the complex process of turning an idea into a finished product," Mr Schroder said.

"It is not until you are in the thick of developing an app that you realise how complex it is, and being able to turn to the ilab mentors for advice was absolutely invaluable."

ilab Program Director Bernie Woodcroft said the ParkingMaestro developers were outstanding participants in ilab's Germinate Program.

"The program provides access to industry mentors, successful entrepreneurs and funding support, giving applicants like Mark and Patrick the opportunity to develop their digital business ideas into reality.

"Parking is a huge problem in the world's cities and I'm excited to see the continued growth of their business with this release." he said.

More information: ParkingMaestro is available for iPhone via iTunes and through www.parkingmaestro.com.

Provided by University of Queensland

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