

## Twitter founder feeling 'Super' as he heads in new direction

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In this Jan. 7 2015 photo, Twitter co-founder Biz Stone speaks on stage at National Geographic Channel 2015 Winter TCA in Pasadena, Calif. Stone is hoping a change in direction pays off again as he heads down a new path at Jelly Industries, a San Francisco startup he launched shortly after leaving Twitter three years ago. (Photo by Richard Shotwell/Invision/AP)

Biz Stone knows abandoning a struggling project to try something else can be a smart move. After all, he was part of a team that dumped the

seldom-heard podcasting service Odeo nearly a decade ago to work on a new idea called Twitter that transformed how people communicate and made him a multimillionaire.

Stone is hoping his latest change in direction pays off as he heads down a new path at Jelly Industries, a San Francisco startup he launched shortly after leaving Twitter three years ago.

Jelly made headlines 16 months ago with the release of [mobile app](#) that taps into social networks to find experts who can answer questions that stump Internet search engines. Within a few months, Stone and Jelly co-founder Ben Finkel realized the question-and-answer format wasn't catching on so they came up with a different app called Super for sharing opinions.

Super's name reflects how Stone feels about the app about five months after it was released.

"We know in our guts that this has legs, just as we knew in our guts that it was time to stop working on Jelly," Stone says.

Super is trying to broaden its appeal with an app update available Wednesday. The new features will enable users to select and post the faces of other people who have set up profiles on the service. After "facetagging" people, their images mingle with the selection of emojis and large, colorful text that Super provides for its users to create emphatic messages declaring their passions and peeves.

The goal is to infuse Super with a fun-loving vibe that was notably missing from the more scholarly Jelly app.

"Super is more about expressing yourself with an emotional bent," Stone says. "Unfortunately, Jelly was too much like doing homework. People

literally did their homework on it. It just wasn't the business we wanted to be in."

Stone, 41, knows many people think Super is stupid. The derision only reinforces his conviction that he is on the right track because he remembers people mocking Twitter in its early days too.

"Something has to be fun to use before it can become important," he says. "Look at Snapchat, Twitter and Facebook. They all started out to be fun at first, now they are important. If you want to build a platform capable of toppling despotic regimes, it also has to support fart jokes."

Although he no longer works at Twitter, Stone remains an adviser and major shareholder. He meets weekly with two other co-founders, Twitter Chairman Jack Dorsey and former CEO Evan Williams, and recently had drinks with Twitter's current CEO Dick Costolo. He says he is holding on to all of his Twitter stock, which has fallen by 27 percent since the April 27 release of the company's first-quarter results that renewed concerns about user and revenue growth.

"I love, love what they are doing," Stone says.

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