

Banding together across generations

INTERVIEW BY MATTHEW CZAJA

Sidly is a medical telemedicine startup that is working to develop and market its remote monitoring device – a wristband that will transmit vital diagnostics between loved ones or to medical professionals. It may be the right tool for piece of mind of the elderly, handicapped as well as care-takers

WBJ Observer: You are both doctorate students at institutions of higher education (Michał Pizon at the Military University of Technology and Edyta Kocyk at the Warsaw School of Economics).

How did you get off the ground with the start-up?

Michał Pizon: About a year and a half ago, we framed our concept at the Military University of Technology. Together with our partner from the Academic Incubators of Entrepreneurship we assessed the scalability of the project positively. It was to be a device that measures blood pressure, but we've moved away from this idea.

Edyta Kocyk: We've initiated cooperation with two telemedicine companies and the City of Warsaw. Therefore, we made a pivot to the B2B model and we're currently developing solutions in cooperation with our partners. At the same time, the ergonomics of our telemedical wristbands have evolved over time.

What role did your respective universities play in the creation of the idea?

MP: Our university cooperation resulted in plenty of contacts, as well as a grant project at the Faculty of Electronics at the MUT that we implemented in August/September of last year. We've gathered a group of specialists, among them biomedical signals processing researchers, from the MUT, who are key in the development of Sidly.

Do you have a patent for the product?

EK: The patent process is quite long. We've already entered a patent application

for an invention and utility model. We do hold rights to all work completed within the framework of our startup, including our error correction algorithms.

How did you arrive at the name Sidly?

MP: Si is the chemical symbol for Silicon, an element that modern technology depends on. At the same time, the letter Y in the logo design tries to mimic a circuit board connection, drawing comparisons to our main goal of connecting people.

What are the main benefits of the Sidly wristband?

EK: The product is not another gadget to be used by active young people. It is a telenursing product that will be used in conjunction with medical care to take care of the elderly or handicapped. It has dedicated algorithms that are adjusted for older patients (e.g. suffering from Atherosclerosis) as well as ergonomics that take into consideration changes due to aging.

Is there competition on the market?

EK: We are the first such company in Poland based on my discussions with others in the business. Similar solutions do exist in Western Europe, but have implemented slightly different ideas.

From your observations, is the telemedicine market, or simply nursing care an increasingly important field in Poland?

EK: Consciousness of Poles with regard to this field is growing, although it is only in its developmental stage. When we consider more developed countries, the



telemedicine market is quite well-developed and has a broad reach. Audit firms are reporting a lot of potential in this field in Poland. Our society is definitely aging and telemedicine will allow us to be close to our loved ones, to care for their health and come to their aid when aid is needed. For me personally, the idea was connected to an increasing concern for my own grandparents. I wanted to do something for them.

In your opinion, what chances do young inventors have on the Polish market?

MP: Young Poles' chances are increasing every year. AIG's Seed Capital has done a great job to this end. There are also a lot of spin-off projects and increased cooperation with local authorities has shown great promise. This includes the recent legislation regarding higher education, which allows universities to support and partake in innovative processes. All things considered, the best thing is when young people meet each other and motivate each other in the process. This is the case with our colleagues from academia and on the start-up scene.

Sidly is a telemedicine start-up that has shown great promise in developing its remote monitoring devices.

The founders have received grants (including the aforementioned grant, as well as another one from the Voivodship Marshall) as well as awards for their activity in business development: Ready to Go Shanghai 2014, Business in Germany, TOP 10 – the best startup in Business Link Poland. In addition, Edyta Kocyk has received the Debut of the Year and Woman in Technology awards in 2015.

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