



Human Factor Technology Development for Human Input



Dean Devolpi
Managing Director

About MykeyO

myKeyO is a world leader in development of human factors technologies for human input. Our primary award winning products are related to man to computer/phone/tablet usability and organization. To date we have been awarded 9 major international/national awards for our keyboard organizer products. We are an intellectual property company with existing issued patents. The newest market we are seeing major growth in is the education market of K-12 because schools are navigating away from books to tablets. It is forecasted that within 3 years every student in the USA will be using a tablet in school.

Interview conducted by: Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor, CEOCFO Magazine

CEOCFO: Mr. Devolpi, what is the concept behind MykeyO?

Mr. Devolpi: The concept is to improve the interaction with the computer and tablet. We add efficiency in your workspace highlighting portability. This allows the individual the ability to have their office or “desk” in a small space.

CEOCFO: What do you see as the main areas of concern or distress for people?

Mr. Devolpi: Right now, we are in a pre-transitional period where people are moving from desktops to tablets. With this change, there are many things that we have to get accustomed to, such as the inefficiency of being able to input into a tablet as effectively as a full sized keyboard. This is what we bring to light. We bring the ability to have a full-size keyboard at the office and at home. The user only travels with their tablet giving them their virtual office everywhere.

CEOCFO: How has this been addressed so far? Are there similar concepts? Exactly how does your set-up work?

Mr. Devolpi: Our keyboard organizers have a utility function of an organizer underneath the keyboard. The way that that came about was a few years ago I was working and I could not find a place to really keep my pens organized. I did not like them just sitting out on the desk in a disorganized fashion, and I did not have enough space for my small items. In today's office, many times you do not really have drawers to put small items that you need readily accessible. What I did was I realized that the keyboards, through technology and time, were getting thinner and thinner, but they were still the same thickness. I took advantage of that room that they were creating inside and I made an organizer, so the keyboard actually opens up and you can keep multiple pens, stamps and various items like that right in the keyboard. At the same time, I wanted a stand on the top for my pens so that I could readily access the pen. I also put a pen rest on the top for stylus pens, and then I created a stand for the tablet to be resting right there. You do not have to use the tablet with the keyboard that sits at your office, but you can have it resting there so that you can see your alerts on your tablet or cell phone, or you can pair it with our Bluetooth keyboard that we would provide. You are able to type directly into the device. With that, you are able to clean up the desktop and organize yourself at your personal space. You can keep spare batteries in it and similar items and the same concept applies at home. Let us say you are in your kitchen, you are cooking and you have your tablet or smart phone lying flat. It is kind of hard to be able to read that without picking up your phone and interrupting your motion of continuance of cooking. In the kitchen too, we have a smaller model that you would have there and when you get a text you can type into it quickly as opposed to having to pull up the touch screen and touch the tablet. There is about a 50 percent increase in efficiency by using a regular travel keyboard versus the touch screen on a tablet, and it goes up exponentially trying to do it with the smart phone. We allow you to continue with your normal task in the kitchen and be able to cook, pull up recipes and have a nice stand where the tablet is also now at a proper angle. Other products out there: there are a couple different ones out right now where those are transportable so you can actually snap your tablet right into them and carry them to home and office. Our position on that is that you should just have one for your office and one for home and just take your tablet back and forth. You really do not need to have a keyboard with you when you are going between home and office. This allows the user to gain the features of the organizer while reducing the travel weight.

CEOCFO: How long have your products been available and where are you in commercialization process?

Mr. Devolpi: Currently, our products are available on our website and other popular online retailers. In a short period of time, we will be in several retailers. We do have an intrinsic problem with our product in that it is so different from what

anyone else has or seen, they do not immediately understand it's benefits. Somebody really has to explain to you what the product as I am doing right here, and then when you see it, it is an "aha" moment.

CEOCFO: How do you get around some of the skepticism that it may be a little flimsy?

Mr. Devolpi: Basically, once you set it down to start typing again, it just automatically resets itself. The silicon model that we make that is flexible is actually ideal for many contractors who work right out of their car now and they do their quotes when they are on scene. They step outside to their truck, they stand there and they can just type right into this and be organized and able to have the tablet at the right angle. They can type right in, and being flexible really gives them the advantage that it is going to contour to any type of surface or setting. The keyboard is still just going to lie flat because the keyboard is still a solid keyboard,

CEOCFO: Are you as surprised as I am at how much the tablets have taken hold when they are so hard to work with?

Mr. Devolpi: That is why I came up with a keyboard because I just really cannot type on the smart phones, and I do not enjoy the typing experience that I have with the tablet. For me, I just have quit a few of the devices at home, office and in the vehicle.

CEOCFO: It does not seem practical to input so much in a smartphone.

Mr. Devolpi: When you lose that much of an efficiency, it is just very frustrating for people to be stepping back in time, per say.

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CEOCFO: You have a number of different models and colors. What has been the most popular so far?

Mr. Devolpi: Right now, our most popular model is the MK1150. The bright colors, compact size, and Bluetooth keyboard creates mass appeal.

CEOCFO: Your products are quite inexpensive. How did you decide on the price range?

Mr. Devolpi: We know that you can buy Bluetooth keyboards that are cheaper. But when you add in our stands and organizer, nothing can compare. An individual can spend another 20 to 40 dollars on just a tablet stand. We offer what no one else has with the stand that incorporates our organizer as well as a pencil stand, and a business card holder.. It is combining everything into one that makes your desk a more organized and efficient place.

CEOCFO: MykeyO has received recognition from the media and at various shows. What stands out for you?

Mr. Devolpi: The part that has the wow factor is the organizer itself. That is one that I mentioned as a hard concept for people to understand because it is actually fooling you. Your eyes are tricking you to say it is just a regular keyboard, but when you actually see it open then that is the aha or wow factor that it has. We are the only one in the world that has an organizer, a pen stand, a business card holder and we also have a credit card stand at the very front right in front of the tablet for your online purchases. Let's say you are trying to order a widget off the Internet and you have to hold your credit card so that you can see all your numbers. You really need to enhance type, so we put a left hand and right hand position so that your credit card can be held up while you just type in the numbers and the information depending on which part of the screen that you need to enter the data on. That is why it is left handed and right handed.

CEOCFO: Did you think of it all before the first model or did you realize one or two things were missing after you started developing the organizer part?

Mr. Devolpi: It has all evolved because initially tablets were not out when the original product came out. Once tablets came out, that is when everything just fit together.

CEOCFO: What awards are most meaningful for you? What has helped push the product along?

Mr. Devolpi: CES Innovations was a major step as well as Best New Product at the New York Stationary Show. Both of those are probably the ones that gave us the most attention and stood out because those are very coveted awards to receive.



CEOCFO: *What is the strategy for the next year or so?*

Mr. Devolpi: Our focus on the coming year is the education industry. Schools are shifting away from textbooks to using tablets as the one stop source. Because many kids no longer have lockers like we had during our day, and many schools do this for security issues, kids now have to take all those books home in a backpack. You see an eight-year-old with 40-pound books and they weigh 80 pounds. It is pretty amazing to see kids not have back problems with that. Schools are moving to tablets completely for the schools. With that, they have now recognized that while the efficiency is down when they have to type on a tablet, a student cannot pay attention to the teacher when you have to be staring at the tablet to type on it. With proper training on a keyboard, you can focus on the teacher. Right now, schools are starting to look at putting in a keyboard with every tablet at every desk also. With that, they are also looking at if the tablet needs to be upright so that the student can also see it because it is too difficult for a student to just hold it. They are looking at buying a stand. With our product, we have the stand and we have the keyboard built into one.

CEOCFO: *How do you get the attention of the schools?*

Mr. Devolpi: I returned from one of the larger technology school trade shows. That was ISTE Show in Atlanta. We currently have the L.A. school district in testing with 40 tablets. They do an initial test on it first and if they like the product enough they will put it in mass testing as it is right now. They will come back with the feedback of saying they would like changes, they would like it one inch shorter or one inch wider and they would like the battery life to be a little better. With that testing, they are also testing the human factors of it and if it agrees with the school program or they need it to be a heavier device. They will come back with their feedback and then we will adjust from there, and then they will put out a request for bids to all companies with what they want for the students.

CEOCFO: *Are you funded for the steps you would like to take or will you be seeking investment or partnerships?*

Mr. Devolpi: Right now we are basically set for where we are at, but as we start moving into the school space, we would possibly need a seed capital-type investment.

CEOCFO: *Why pay attention to MykeyO?*

Mr. Devolpi: Schools are just starting to get into tablets. The L.A. school district has budgeted one billion dollars for tablets and accessories for the coming year, and we expect all other school districts to be doing the same. That is going to be 60 million total students with tablets at their desks. The keyboard will be very similar to books. Students are a little bit rough on books, and they will have to be replaced every three years, so we are looking at a replacement cycle of about 20 million units every year, which is a great opportunity.

BIO: Dean Devolpi is a serial entrepreneur who has been VP of Engineering, Director of R&D for other high volume consumer and computer companies with 30 years' experience getting things done from a lean environment. Dean also has over 20 patents to date. Other areas of patents and business ventures have been self-service bicycle rental systems, headlight anti-glare using a multiplexed LCD and strobing headlights, online used parts for motorcycles, save your data cloud about 15 years ago, and several others.

Mr. DeVolpi considers his core strength as a futurist and focuses on technologies that will be accepted in 10 years.



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