

## **New Visual Search App PHIND is the Shazam for Places, Bringing Information with the Push of a Single Button**



**Rishi Jhunjhnuwala**  
Co-Founder & CEO  
PHIND, Inc.

**CEOCFO:** *Mr. Jhunjhnuwala, your website indicates that PHIND is a new way to discover places. How so?*

**Mr. Jhunjhnuwala:** We are simplifying search by taking out all of the guessing and digging through websites in order to find information. We allow users to press one button and get all the information they would want about a place. Users can take a photo of any place, such as a statue, monument or building. We recognize that and then aggregate content from services that people are already using such as Yelp, Foursquare, Wikipedia, TripAdvisor, and bring back information such as history, facts, reviews, shared photos etc.

For example, you are in a new country and see a monument you can't identify. Typically, most people would jump on Google and type in a few key words, such as "tall brown monument in Barcelona," and end up with a list of websites to dig through to find exactly what they are looking for – all frustrating and tedious. And even if you manage to find it, if you want to find reviews, shared photos or buy a ticket, you would have to create multiple search queries and jump around to different apps. With PHIND, people can find all of this in one place, with the single push of a button. How do you search for something if you don't know what you're looking at? Well, you use PHIND.

**CEOCFO:** *What were the biggest challenges to do this technologically?*

**Mr. Jhunjhnuwala:** The biggest challenge was being able to recognize a place, have an accurate result and also have speed in doing so. Many image recognition apps that use visual search right now either have really great accuracy, but a great deal of latency; many inaccurate results; or simply fail to recognize the photo. For us, the biggest challenge was to have that balance between speed and accuracy, yet still bring back contextual results to the user, so that it is still a great user experience.

**CEOCFO:** *How do people know about PHIND?*

**Mr. Jhunjhnuwala:** You can find us is through our website, [www.phind.it](http://www.phind.it), or download us for free in the iTunes App Store as PHIND. We have not started actively marketing the product yet, as we have been working on some major updates to improve the overall user experience. We are also adding new features, which will be available in our latest update. This is all a result of the feedback we received after we were at TechCrunch Disrupt this past May. But after we release this update, we will be focusing on spreading the word so more people will know how PHIND is revolutionizing the search process.

**CEOCFO:** *What changes have you made to your app?*

**Mr. Jhunjhnuwala:** One of the major changes is the inclusion of a type search feature and a category search feature. This gives the user more choice and agency, so now they have 3 distinct ways of discovering the world around them – visual, text and category. Our category search feature allows people to find the top places around them in any category, such as Food, Shopping or Outdoors. If I am going to Paris tomorrow, I can change my location to Paris, press Food and see all of the top restaurant choices instantly. We have also struck a partnership with Viator, a TripAdvisor company, making it easy for users to book tickets for their favorite attractions and tours in almost any place around the world.

Lastly, our latest update provides a much simpler and seamless user experience. The app intuitively connects with your favorite apps – Uber, Foursquare, TripAdvisor, Yelp, Wikipedia, Maps and now Viator – so that you no longer have to jump from app to app to collect bits of information.

**CEOCFO: Are you funded for the next steps? Are you seeding partnerships or investment?**

**Mr. Jhunjhnuwala:** Currently, we are raising funds for our seed round. We are still in that whole process, but it is coming along.

**CEOCFO: What surprised you as you have gone from concept to bringing an actual product to the market?**

**Mr. Jhunjhnuwala:** What surprised me was the user reaction. Initially we thought that it was a great idea to be able to take a photo of any place and get information, but the reactions from people using it has been mind blowing. People have really started to love PHIND's unique search method. Some have even told us that our app has changed their lives in that they have visited the same place for years, but never realized how many things they were missing out on.

**CEOCFO: What is the plan for marketing? Will you be doing conferences?**

**Mr. Jhunjhnuwala:** Our primary goal for marketing is to make users aware that PHIND exists and to show them how it can change their lives. So far, we've relied on word-of-mouth and some news coverage, but we are now jump starting a digital marketing campaign to really promote the app and build traction, so you'll be hearing a lot more about us soon. As for conferences, we do try to participate in as many as we can. This year, you will see us at Phocuswright in Florida and Web Summit in Dublin. In the past, we've attended TechCrunch Disrupt New York and CES.

**"People do not realize how much simpler search can be, and that is where the true power of PHIND comes in." - Rishi Jhunjhnuwala**

**CEOCFO: So much today is driven by search.. What categories would you search under for PHIND?**

**Mr. Jhunjhnuwala:** Right now, we've been seen as a travel app because we help you discover new places and gather information. While travel is a huge market for us, with our new update, you'll see us transition into more of a lifestyle app. We are now targeting the everyday user and simplifying the search process for them in an effort to show users that there could be a lot about their own city they haven't yet discovered. For example, people can search for brunch, lunch or a place to watch a movie, all within our app. No switching back and forth between Yelp or Foursquare or Google. So in this way, we're encompassing more than just the traveler.

**CEOCFO: Can you also find information in places and monuments that are not famous or generally recognized as, for example, your typical office building?**

**Mr. Jhunjhnuwala:** Currently PHIND works almost all over the US and in most major cities around the world. We try to recognize almost every single place, whether it is famous or not famous, because that is the whole benefit of PHIND - to provide information on places that people have not heard of, or seen.

**CEOCFO: Put it all together for our readers. Why pay attention to PHIND?**

**Mr. Jhunjhnuwala:** We are revolutionizing mobile search by simplifying the discovery process for users. No other app in the market right now has been able to identify places by simply taking a photo. On top of that, we aggregate a large amount of content for users in 3 to 4 seconds and we integrate with their other favorite apps. People do not realize how much simpler search can be, and that is where the true power of PHIND comes in.

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

**For more information visit: [www.phind.it](http://www.phind.it)**

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