

Oyvind Henriksen

Co-Founder & CEO of POQ

I'm the CEO and co-founder of Poq. Before that I was the CTO of an ecommerce agency for ten years.

Coming to London, I noticed that companies were building apps the same way that I built websites in the nineties - by hand and from the ground up every time.

Meanwhile, most ecommerce websites have moved on to powerful platforms such as Magento, Salesforce Commerce Cloud or Hybris. Looking at the app space, there was no good technology to use for building apps for retailers. That's when we had the idea to build Poq, as a commerce platform for mobile apps.

I've always been into technology and entrepreneurship, I started coding when I was 11, and when I was 12 I started building computers from parts and sold it at a profit to friends and family. I grew up in Norway, and pursued a professional life in visual design and computer science.

I'm pleased that my group of friends from school has stuck together for decades now. We were into movies, music and gaming back then, and I still have that passion with me today. Life in Norway was very comfortable, and I came to London in 2010 looking for the next challenge.

I found lots of opportunities waiting in the big city, London has been really great. Doing a venture-backed startup while having a young family is fun, challenging and lets you learn faster than anyone else.

Outside of work I spend most of my time with our young family, I enjoy cooking for guests and travelling. And sometimes I'm able to squeeze in an hour or two of Playstation after kid's bedtime.

POQ in the news...



POQ has raised £9.5 million in Series B funding.

Leading the round is Smedvig Capital, with participation from previous backers Beringea, and Revolt Ventures.

For more information: <https://techcrunch.com/2018/05/02/poq-closes-9-5-million-series-b/>

Oyvind, can you present your company, POQ?

It's our mission to make App Commerce bigger than ecommerce. We believe that retailers should have apps, because that's what consumers prefer.

It's clear that websites don't perform well in retail. Apps provide a better shopping experience, which leads to much better engagement, retention and conversion.

While everyone would love to have an app, apps are notoriously hard to build and maintain.

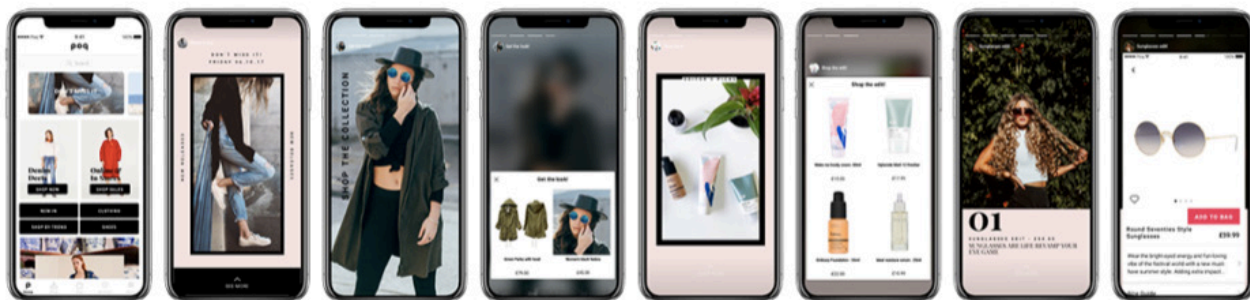
The traditional way to build apps with an agency or in-house team is slow and expensive.



Using a SaaS approach get the product faster to market, keeps it up to date, plugs into an ecosystem of pre-built integrations to technology providers, and offers great tools like content management system, developer centre and sophisticated analytics.

Our typical customer is a large pureplay or multichannel retailer. Our first major customer was House of Fraser, and that's when we proved ourselves as an enterprise-ready software provider. Multichannel customers such as Holland and Barrett and House of Fraser use apps as a new digital channel, and it powers their loyalty programs in the stores.

Pureplay retailers such as Missguided, Made.com, Pretty Little Thing and Beauty Bay use the app as their best digital channel to create a direct relationship with their customers.



Can you share a success story or a failure that has helped you move forward, Oyvind?

Early on in our journey, we had the opportunity to bid for an app for House of Fraser. We were only servicing smaller simpler customers at the time, and we were far from enterprise-ready. We put the entire company on the line, sacrificed everything else and went all in on House of Fraser.

After a year of intense effort our technology was rebuilt to handle their scale, and their iOS and Android apps were live in the app store. It was so risky and so much painful and difficult work, but in the end that's how we made our name in the industry.

Read more here:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/trevorclawson/2017/08/17/risk-and-reward-how-app-commerce-company-poq-won-its-first-big-client/#3973e43444fa>

To know more about POQ

www.poqcommerce.com

