《未来移动技术将向何处去？》

Hong Kong-based Green Tomato is feeding the city's seemingly insatiable appetite for mobile devices, having launched more than 80 applications for the iPhone and iPad since 2009. Getty Images

???????Green Tomato??????????????????????????2009???????????iPhone?iPad???80???????

The developer is behind apps for Pizza Hut, the newspaper Apple Daily and Hong Kong Disneyland. Established in 2003 as a mobile-solutions consultancy, in 2007 Green Tomato was named one of Red Herring magazine's 100 top private technology companies world-wide. In addition to its 80 mobile applications, the company has created 150 mobile websites that it says reach around three million subscribers in all.

Green Tomato?????(Pizza Hut)???????(Apple Daily)????????(Hong Kong Disneyland)??????????????????????????2003???2007???????????(Red Herring)?????????????100???????80??????????????????150????????????????????????????????300???

Business started off locally, says chief executive Sunny Kok, but has expanded globally-with projects that include the world-wide app for car maker BMW. Green Tomato now has offices in Singapore and Qatar, and Mr. Kok wants to prove Asia's gift for innovation around the world.

???????????Green Tomato?????????????????????????——?????????(BMW)?????????Green Tomato??????????????????????????????????????

"People think that China can only copy something," he says.

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Mr. Kok and marketing communications officer Jacqueline Chong talked to the Wall Street Journal about the future of mobile technology in Hong Kong and beyond.

Green Tomato????Green Tomato??????Jacqueline Chong????????(Wall Street Journal)????????????????????????

What's been a game-changer in the world of technology in the past few years?

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Mr. Kok: The iPhone changed everything, including consumer behavior. On the MTR [subway], you see that people

are watching their phones rather than listening to their phones. People are using apps much more than before. We think this will continue with devices like the Blackberry Playbook and Nokia's new smartphones with Windows Mobile. People using apps on their mobiles will be a must and it's going to be an increasingly crowded app market.

????iPhone???????????????????MTR???Blackberry Playbook????Windows Mobile???

What technology are you excited about that's not on the Hong Kong market yet?

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Mr. Kok: NFC [Near Field Communication] modules-it's a general technology like Bluetooth or Wi-Fi that will be embedded in upcoming phones. The concept is like a Hong Kong Octopus card-you can make transactions like a credit card. I think this concept will totally change behavior of people while they shop. Your transactions can then be displayed on the particular app.

??????????(Near Field Communication???NFC)??——?????????(Bluetooth)??Wi-Fi?????????????????????????????????????(Octopus card)——??

What are you hoping to do with NFC technology?

???????????NFC???????????

Mr. Kok: We have corporate clients, and more than 90% of them have membership systems. Applications that are NFC-enabled can organize all the loyalty points right there [once you buy directly from your phone]. This will be the trend for the next one to two years.

??????????????90%???????????NFC???

What else are you looking forward to?

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Mr. Kok: We're excited about glass, plasma and LCD surface devices that can connect to the Internet. So far it's been too expensive, so it's not that popular. I think the technology will be cheaper in just one to two years. The usage will be different from a tablet or a mobile device-it's more like furniture. You can interact with it while brushing your teeth, cooking food. But I think the potential is more on the commercial side rather than domestic use. It can be used in a shop window or a display table in a commercial building.

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Android is now the world's most popular smartphone software, but it lags behind the iPhone for apps. Will this change?

??????????(Android)??????????????????????????????iPhone??????????

Mr. Kok: Android is very important because it's got a lot of hardware brands that support the software. It has a lower price point-that's why it's more popular right now.

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Ms. Chong: But the Android market is quite segmented. Manufacturers and operators each develop individual app markets. Some of them even block the original Android app market, so it's difficult for users to explore good apps. Jacqueline Chong?

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And it seems like the Android market will continue to be fragmented as more and more operators develop smartphones. Different parties will have different interests. They can't touch IOS if they're not Apple, so Android is the only way to go. While Apple is very centralized, Android is largely fragmented-you're seeing two extremes.

??(Apple)?????????IOS??????????????????????
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What smartphone system do you prefer?

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Mr. Kok: Developers love iPhones-the IOS software is much easier to use. We're looking forward to the iPhone 5. Supposedly, NFC technology can be hooked up to the iPhone 5.

??????????iPhone——IOS??????????????????iPhone 5???????????NFC???

Developing Android apps is 10 times more difficult than iPhone apps. According to our experience, for our Hong Kong Movies app, we have only 20% downloads coming from Android.

???????????iPhone??10?????????????“????”(Hong Kong Movies)???????20%???????????

What do you think of Nokia's recent announcement that it will partner with Windows Mobile software for its smartphones?

???????????(Nokia)??????Windows Mobile?????????????????????

Mr. Kok: Nokia still sells the most phones in the world, so it's in a good position. But it really depends on how it will integrate with Windows Mobile. We're not sure whether it will fit. Windows will only support English-it will still be a long, long way before it can host different languages-but Nokia is very popular in developing countries. Windows's interface and overall experience is gorgeous, though.

??Windows Mobile?????????????????????Windows?????
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What are your most popular apps?

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Ms. Chong: Our Hong Kong Movie app on the iPhone [which aggregates show times, seat plans and theater information] has accumulated more than 700,000 viewers and 70,000 unique visitors. Our new Top Box voice-messenger app [for sending short voice messages] reached a million users in two months and sends more than four million messages a day. Right now it's only on the iPhone but we want to launch Android and Blackberry apps by the end of the year. What was really surprising was that our Top Box app, which is only in English, became the No. 1 social networking app in China for a couple of days.

Jacqueline Chong????iPhone??????“????”????????????????????????????????????70?????????????7?????????TalkBox?????????????????????????????100???????????????400???????iPhone???TalkBox????——?????????——?????????????????????