THE PERSEUS BOOKS GROUP

EVOKE CHOSEN THE WINNER OF FIRST PUBLISHING HACKATHON; AWARDED $10,000 FOR NEW APPROACH TO ONLINE BOOK DISCOVERY

Judges Spontaneously Fund and Award a Second Place Prize

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New York, NY (June 2, 2013) — The finals of the first-ever collaborative digital programming event for the publishing industry were held on Friday, May 31st at BookExpo in the Javits Center. The Publishing Hackathon finals featured 6 teams competing for a top prize of $10,000 and a pitch meeting with Ari Emanuel, co-CEO of William Morris Endeavor. Each of the 6 finalist teams had 5 minutes to present their solution for online book discovery to a panel of judges spanning publishing, venture capital, and technology.

The judges included David Steinberger (CEO of the Perseus Books Group), Jennifer Rudolph Walsh (literary agent and board member at William Morris Endeavor), Doug Rushkoff (digital thinker and author of 10 books including *Present Shock*), Alexis Ohanian (publisher, and co-founder of Reddit), Stephan Evans (principal at venture capital firm Silver Lake Partners) and Randi Zuckerberg (former digital marketing executive at Facebook, CEO of Zuckerberg Media, and author of the upcoming title *Dot Complicated*).

The winning team, Evoke, presented their innovative approach to discovering fiction through characters. Evoke was developed by a team of three – entrepreneur and social scientist Jill Axline, developer and entrepreneur Lisa Maione, and coder Jason Pearson. "The way to a story's heart is through its characters," said team member Jill Axline in describing their solution, "and despite the importance of characters to our enjoyment of stories, they are not currently central to the way we discover books online. So we created Evoke to be a platform that empowers characters and readers to find each other online. Evoke is the first platform to humanize online discovery and allow readers to find new characters based on ones they already know and love."

The judges were impressed with the level of innovation of all the finalists, and as Randi Zuckerberg announced at the conclusion of the event, "While we only had one trophy, we decided to 'hack the rules' a bit ourselves because it was so difficult to choose just one winner." So the judges spontaneously awarded a second place prize of $2,500 funded on the spot by William Morris Endeavor. The team Captiv won the second place prize for their event-based solution of mining twitter posts to "bring you better book recommendations at the speed of life." The Captiv team included a number of data engineers with a love for literature from industries as diverse as financial services and healthcare, and the members were Christina Zou, Lucas Lemanowicz, Russell Huang, Dmitry Pyatin, Kane Hsieh, and Wei Yin.

The members of the winning Evoke team actually met each other for the first time and formed up as a team at the Hackathon only 13 days before the finals. Said Evoke team member Lisa Maione, "I came to the Publishing Hackathon and Jill happened to be sitting in front of me and we started chatting, and ended up spending two or three hours talking about books and our relationships with books—why we had read certain books, and what it is to love a book."   Added Axline, "We thought a lot of what it means to love a book has to do with your relationship with a character—that's at the core of what you describe when recommending a book to a friend. When we talked about our favorite books, we really found that pattern repeating. When we talked to Jason about our idea, he got it in two seconds flat and was ready to start building."

The Publishing Hackathon was organized by The Perseus Books Group and Librify, a social reading startup, and was sponsored by a group of major industry participants including William Morris Endeavor, AlleyNYC and BookExpo America. (Other sponsors are listed at www.publishinghackathon.com).

The Publishing Hackathon started on May 18-19 at the digital co-working space AlleyNYC, and featured over 200 participants who formed 30 teams and worked 32 straight hours to come up with new approaches to online book discovery.

Those 30 teams were narrowed down to 6 finalists who were invited to BookExpo on May 31st. The four other finalist teams besides Evoke and Captiv were:

BookCity (Vincent Trivett, Charlie Gaines, and Nathan Gao) – a way to find books set in the place you plan to travel to

Coverlist (Dani Fankhauser and Chris Ciabarro) – a discovery solution focused on the joy of browsing jackets

KooBrowser (Sage Wohns, Ahmed El-Kholy, Marmina Abdel-Malek, Tarek El-Elaimy, and Mohamed Altantawy) – an approach to making better book recommendations based on browsing history

LibaryAtlas (Michael del Castillo, Monica Katz, David Lau, Andrew Leung, Peter Rood, Aaron Siewert, and Gabriel Troia) – a book discovery solution based on geolocation

"The amount these teams accomplished in the 32 hours of the hack and the 13 days since is inspiring" said Rick Joyce, CMO of The Perseus Books Group and master of ceremonies for the Hackathon finals. "We can learn a lot from these digital entrepreneurs about innovating at speed."

The finalist teams had 13 days before BookExpo to sharpen their pitches and improve their solutions with feedback from publishers and digital mentors. Each finalist team was invited to attend BEA and was featured in a special section of the conference to meet and discuss their solutions with attendees of the annual gathering of the publishing industry.

"Technology is a tsunami coming onto publishing," said Steve Rosato, Event Director of BookExpo. "And today's event, bringing together venture capitalists, entrepreneurs, publishers, agents and others at BookExpo not just to discuss – but to create – the digital future is so exciting."

The finalists and fair attendees were also invited to attend a panel on building successful startups at BookExpo moderated by Joanna Stone Herman, CEO of Librify and co-creator of the Publishing Hackathon. Key venture capitalists on the panel included David Pakman from Venrock, Jordan Bettman from Bain Capital Ventures, Brian Hirsch from Tribeca Venture Partners and publishing insider Brian Napack, from Providence Equity Partners (former President of Macmillan). These players expressed enthusiasm about the opportunities they see in the digital book space. "It's always possible for the new to unseat the old," said Brian Hirsch. "There was a

time that Yahoo was the dominant search engine and people said no one could beat them. We're looking to invest in book startups with big ideas, and maybe that player is right here." (at BookExpo).

Panelist Brian Napack of Providence Equity Partners added, "Content matters, and discovery of content matters. It's fantastic the way Perseus leverages its infrastructure to further this (next wave of content and discovery)"

"As a founder, investor, publisher and soon-to-be author, it is so awesome to see a Hackathon about publishing," said judge Alexis Ohanian at the conclusion of the event. "To see this kind of energy and inventiveness is fabulous."

Added judge Doug Rushkoff , "This means a lot to me, to see this, the salvation of our industry."

Said judge Jennifer Rudolph Walsh, "Books find people when they need them most, and these teams really mirrored that in their invention, and in their passion."

Added judge David Steinberger, "We are really amazed by the quality of the work from these teams – the effort and the ingenuity and the possibilities for the future."

"We really believe the greatest changes in our industry are yet to come," said Joanna Stone Herman, CEO of Librify. "And this Publishing Hackathon points to that future."

The winning team expressed excitement and commitment to fully developing and launching their solution, and you can follow their progress at www.evoke.io "Evoke is something we are all really eager to continue to develop," said team member Jill Axline. "Now we have our initial seed money and we're going to see where it can go."

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More information can be found at www.publishinghackathon.com, which will be updated shortly with the names of the winners and pictures from the finals.

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ABOUT LIBRIFY
Founded in late 2012 by publishing industry veterans and based in New York City, Librify is creating the world's first book-of-the-month club for ebooks, bringing a dramatically improved shared, social reading experience and discounted pricing model to book clubs and readers across all platforms and devices. Librify is working with major publishers, independents and individual authors and will launch its first commercial product in Fall, 2013. Librify was the co-organizer with the Perseus Book Group of the first ever Publishing Hackathon in May, 2013 at AlleyNYC and BEA, bringing together the technology, venture capital and publishing communities. For more information, visit www.Librify.com.

ABOUT BOOKEXPO AMERICA:
BookExpo America (BEA) is North America's largest gathering of book trade professionals attracting an international audience. It is organized with the support of association partners including the Association of American Publishers (AAP) and the American Booksellers Association (ABA). BEA is recognized for the media attention it brings to upcoming books as well as for the notable authors it attracts to the convention itself.   Reed Exhibitions is the world's leading events organizer. In 2007 Reed brought together over six million industry professionals from around the world generating billions of dollars in business. Today Reed events are held in 38 countries throughout the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and Asia Pacific, and organized by 39 fully staffed offices. Reed's portfolio of over 500 events serves 47 industry sectors.