

Hey Jude gets your to-do list done

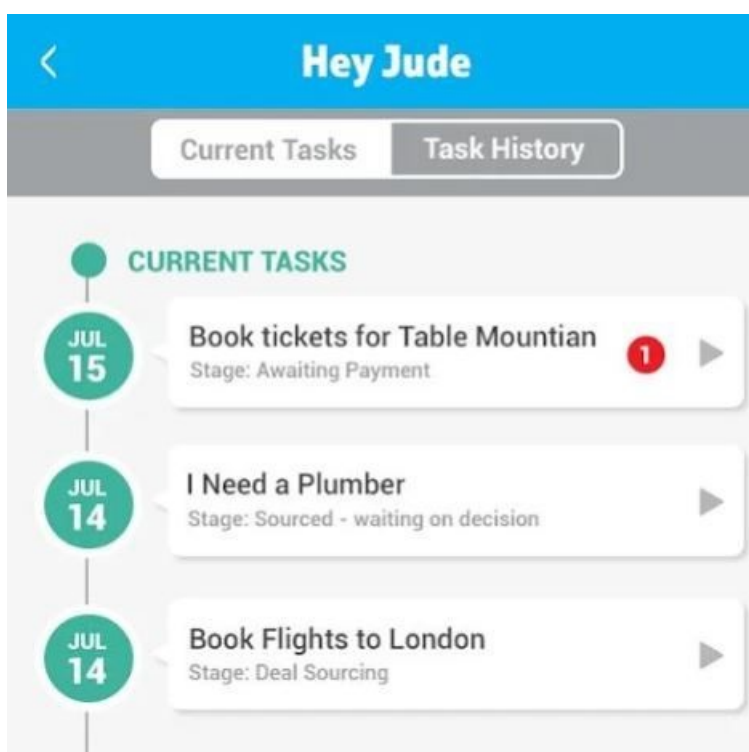
By  Eugene Yiga

6 Dec 2018

Marcus Smith, founder and head architect of Hey Jude Technology, chats to Eugene Yiga about outsourcing to-do lists with his innovative app.

■ How does it work?

Hey Jude is a subscription-based service that uses the power of technology and the finesse of human intellect to get your to-do list sorted.



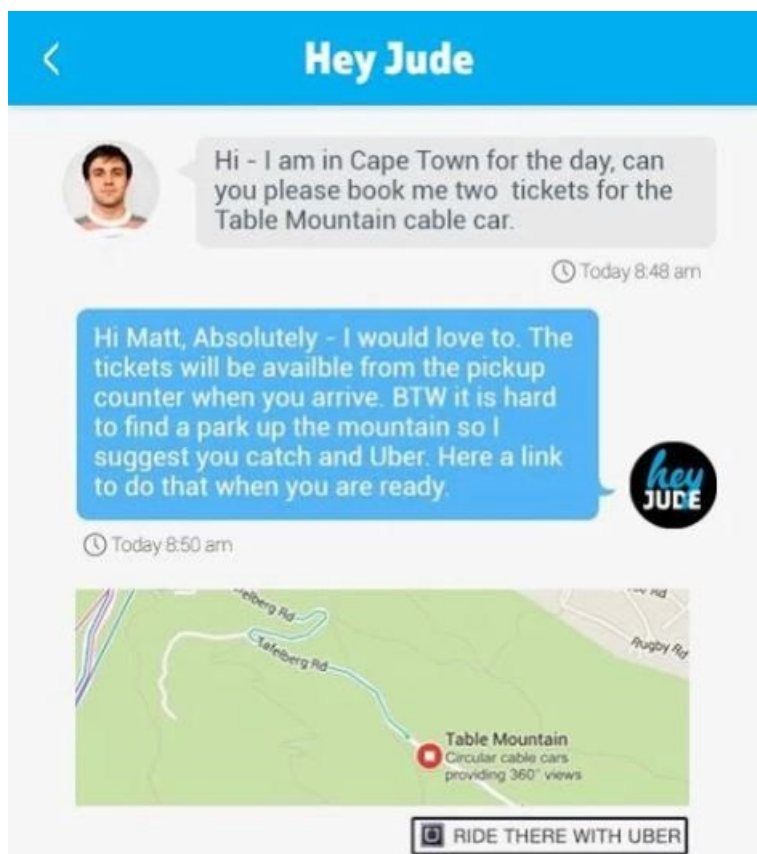
Using a familiar message-based interface channelled via AI to link you to one of our trained operators, known as ‘Judes’, you simply text or voice message any request – from food delivery and travel bookings to restaurant reservations, grocery shopping, gift searching, and paying your bills – and they will do the rest: research, vet the suppliers, negotiate the prices, and even facilitate payment.

If your day’s to-do list is comparing supplier quotations, calling in a plumber, or booking a trip to Beijing, the Judes will do it all for you.

■ What about payments?

Hey Jude also keeps payments smart and simple through one secure, encrypted commerce platform. All you need to do is load your card, supply transaction instructions, and the Jude will settle your expenses.

Some transactions of course have nominal fees associated but you can use the in-app payment to settle anything that you require paid, be it a courier service, your chemist account, delivering a pizza, utility bills, and for your hotel in New York or Nelspruit. It is commerce at a touch or press and pay.



■ How many people do you employ?

We have a lean team consisting of Development, Operations and Training, Customer Service, Marketing, and HR. The key focus areas are Development to ensure a superior product and user experience as well as customer service. These are the agents or "Judes" that actually fulfil requests. Currently the Hey Jude service is supported by approximately 550 people.

■ Who is your typical user?<

Anybody that is time hungry and in need of an extra pair of hands, so to speak. But subscribers are all unique and they love the app for their own individual reasons. For some, it's the fact that the app is convenient, fast and user-friendly (either via text or voice). For others, it's the fact that we are available 24/7.

▣ ***What key milestones have you had along the way?***

Tech evolves too quickly to set personal milestones. Each day is a new challenge and the line in the sand constantly moves.

We wanted to focus on the Western world where we only consider English and people that operate from left to right. Since our launch, we have had interest from the Asian countries (in particular China, Japan, and Singapore) and the Middle East in Arabic, which makes it difficult to have short-term goals.

▣ ***How have you changed and grown since you started?***

As a group, PLP has served telephonically for the past 25 years and have been a market leader at that.

Hey Jude has transitioned our services to the digital space. That's what customers want and the continual advances in artificial intelligence are driving the efficiencies of getting done what customers want.

The growth in artificial intelligence will continue to support the human interaction in a way that delivers a seamless solution to the customer, as opposed to exposing the customer to tech only.

A good example of this is our most recent integration with Amazon Alexa, where more complex tasks requiring human intervention are seamlessly handled by Hey Jude delivering a one-stop solution for the customer using Alexa.

▣ ***What sets you apart from the competition?***

Personalised, human interaction in solving of customers problems is Hey Jude's biggest differentiator. It can do what technology alone can't and maintains the human interaction when required without requiring the customer to speak to anyone. This is unique to Hey Jude and has created enormous appeal.

▣ ***What are your impressions of the current state of the tech industry?***

There was an interesting article which stated that the digital revolution will soon be replaced by a new era of innovation in which different technologies (such as genomics, materials science, and robotics) rise to the fore. We could not have said it better.

Africa is set to benefit tremendously from this revolution. We are ideally situated, we are rich in talent and ability, and we can develop or fulfil at a fraction of the cost of the developed countries.



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▣ ***What are the exciting trends in artificial intelligence right now?***

The rise of artificial intelligence is inevitable but to be honest there is a lack of clarity over how and why and when. Everyone has a different opinion but what we do know is that it is changing the way in which we as humans work and interface with technology.

▣ ***What challenges and opportunities are these trends presenting?***

Tech is evolving across the world at a rapid pace. One would be foolish to try and predict where it will all end. Even though we stay on top of what happens in the industry, we try and focus on our own brand.

We have wonderful integrations and if a new opportunity in this regard presents itself will consider it. Artificial intelligence is certainly the one key component to focus on. In the Hey Jude world, we refer to our AI as "Assisted Intelligence" as it reflects the combination of smart technology alongside awesome Judes.

▣ ***What plans do you have for growth?***

Through serving large corporate bases and brands particularly in the telecommunications and financial services, we see Hey Jude expanding to millions of customers across the globe. We don't white label our solutions and every engagement

we have is co-branded so whether it's a financial service or telecommunications application, you may be surprised to see where Hey Jude is about to pop up.

Download the app at heyjudeapp.com and use the promo code WDYSPO to get the Judes working for you with three free tasks. Then, once you have fallen in love with the app, a subscription of R199/month will get the Judes working for you 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, with unlimited personal tasks.

ABOUT EUGENE YIGA

Eugene graduated from the University of Cape Town with distinctions in financial accounting and classical piano. He then spent over two-and-a-half years working in branding and communications at two of South Africa's top market research companies. Eugene also spent over three-and-a-half years at an eLearning start-up, all while building his business as an award-winning writer. Visit www.eugeneyiga.com, follow @eugeneyiga on Twitter, or email hello@eugeneyiga.com to say, um, hello.

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