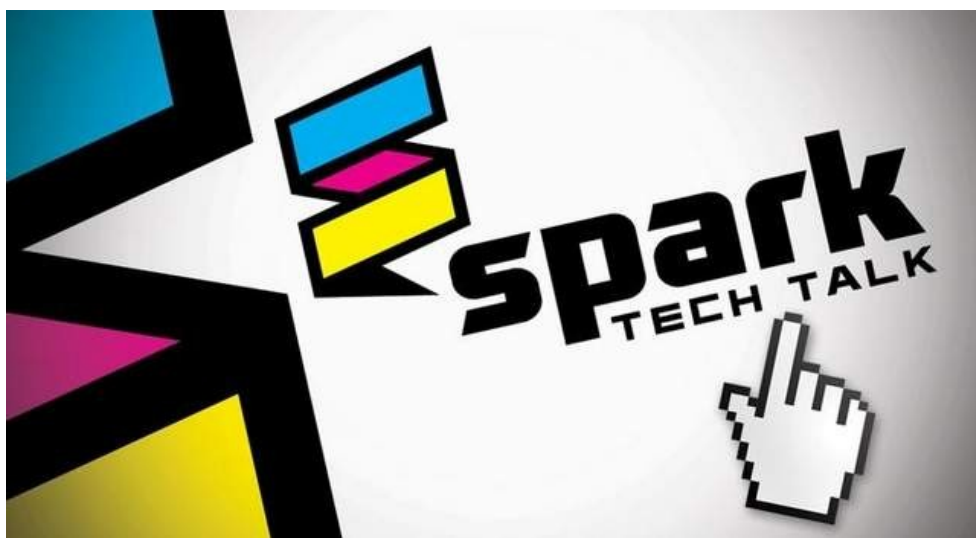


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Spark Tech Talk, a new online series of podcasts produced in Asheville, launched last week with an interview with Steve Wozniak

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Written by
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 Asheville

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A group of local entrepreneurs has launched a new podcasts series spotlighting high-profile innovators, and their first interview is a doozy: a chat with Apple Inc. co-founder Steve Wozniak.

Spark Tech Talk (sparktech talk.com) is the brainchild of Ty Hallock of Web design firm Top Floor Studio, who teamed up with Jessica Stouder, A.L. Neill of Ox + Co. and Gary Charles of G Social Media.

The site launched on Tuesday in conjunction with the IgniteAVL event that featured short talks by a variety of folks with interesting ideas.

The Spark Tech Talk group is thinking big. Hallock said his crew wants to attract a global audience by interviewing leaders in all kinds of fields, from technology and entertainment to business, science and social media.

DOWNLOAD, TUNE IN

Want to follow the Spark Tech Talk podcasts? Go to sparktechtalk.com, download the talks from iTunes and keep up with them on Twitter @SparkTechTalk and on Facebook at facebook.com/sparktechtalk.

“We want high-impact people, the pioneers,” Hallock said.

The conversations with creative thinkers will lead to new connections and stimulate new ideas, said Hallock, who noted that he’s

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drawing on the connections Asheville innovators have already established to feed the podcast series.

And Hallock has used Asheville friends as podcast moderators, who each lend their own personality to the interviews.

But it was the work of a greenhorn intern, Jared Williams, that led to the Wozniak interview.

“We were looking at local people to talk to and I was like, ‘Why don’t we shoot for the big dogs,’” said Williams, a junior at Western Carolina University.

Williams started reaching out to Wozniak through email, Facebook and Twitter, and he responded when he learned that Williams was working with a startup focused on ideas and dynamic discussion.

The interview included an in-depth discussion of Internet privacy and Wozniak’s thoughts on the controversial Stop Online Privacy Act, federal legislation that’s in the works.

“In the end, we got some really great answers, some answers we didn’t expect,” Williams said.

The Spark Tech Talk team has a couple of other ideas in the works for its podcast series. One is that the company will team up with anyone doing an event or conference to record talks with those presenters. The company is also looking at how its podcasts can be used in college classrooms.

“Imagine a curriculum based around students being involved in creating podcasts and working with this new media,” Hallock said.

Meantime, Spark Tech Talk will keep thinking big, said Hallock and company intern Williams.

“It would be awesome to get Mark Zuckerberg,” Williams said wistfully of the Facebook co-creator.

This is the opinion of Jason Sandford. Contact him at 232-5851 or jsandford@citizen-times.com. Find Ashvegas updates online at CITIZEN-TIMES.com/ashvegas and the full blog at www.ashvegas.com.

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