Company name:

More Just Media (MJM)

Company url, if any:

https://morejust.media/?utm_champaigne=hello_ycombinator

If you have a demo, what's the url? For non-software, demo can be a video.

(Please don't password protect it; just use an obscure url.)
https://morejust.media/

Describe your company in 50 characters or less.

MJM is a Google News without bias and emotions.

What is your company going to make?

We proceed from the idea that any text deserves suspicion, ranging from straight fake news (=outright lie) to one-sided tech reviews.

MJM aggregates articles and news 1) about trending topics 2) from manually listed sources. Then it finds subjectivity, generalizations and emotional manipulations in the text. To help with building a full overview, it adds links to the articles with opposite opinion.

It's not obvious why anyone would need this, but after trying to use this for a while, you'll learn how much is hidden inside seemingly nice text.

BRIEF EXAMPLES:
/It is well known/ that eating a balanced diet is of vital importance for maintaining good health and wellbeing. = implicit opinion?

In addition, "Company A" is the /absolute/ leader in dividend yield among other gold mining companies. = no proof?

Bitcoin will be 100k by Christmas, see why… = now try reading "Why Bitcoin is a bubble" by Forbes.

The best thing is that many of these tricks can be found on meta-level, even without understanding of the text. That means AI can be trained to fight most of these manipulations. And even when she misses some of them, link to the "OPPOSITE" opinion material will help to not get tricked.

We develop ways to automate the fight unjust journalism. Special trained algorithms will

- look for biases,
- overgeneralizations,
- emotional manipulations,
- bias manipulation,
- propaganda methods, etc.

When you read any text in the website interface, you will be presented with helpful tips on how to not get fooled by these tricks, like in the examples above.

Later, we'll work on more deep analysis:

- fact misinterpretation,
- fact cherry-picking,
- proof-check texts,

- find opposite arguments to the presented conclusions,

We have started with sentiment analysis. Currently our prototype finds and highlights the emotional attitude using Google sentiment analysis API for that. It also finds the opposite opinions.

We will become a leverage that anyone can use to raise his awareness and stop being fooled or manipulated. In other words, (loud slogan:) we review the internet to build a three sixty overview.

Which category best applies to your company?

Media

Is this application in response to a YC RFS?

YES -- AI

http://www.ycombinator.com/rfs/#memory

http://www.ycombinator.com/rfs/#safeguards

http://www.ycombinator.com/rfs/#creators

Where do you live now, and where would the company be based after YC?

(List as City A, Country A / City B, Country B.)

Moscow, Russia / Mountain View, USA

CONTACT

Email address of the founder who is filling out this application:

danokhlopkov@gmail.com

Phone number(s):

+7 (964) 597-83-30

FOUNDERS

Please provide the email addresses of the other cofounders in the startup. No need to add yours again. [Founders must have at least 10% equity in the company.] We will send an email to each founder to fill out additional information about themselves.

theiseasy@gmail.com
puffingcheeks@gmail.com

Please enter the url of a 1 minute unlisted (not private) YouTube video introducing the founders. (Follow the Video Guidelines.)

https://youtu.be/is5OUhMmfWk

Please tell us about an interesting project, preferably outside of class or work, that two or more of you created together. Include urls if possible.

Testnet.Exchange (https://github.com/testnet-exchange) - the cryptocurrency exchange for testnet tokens only. Bitcoin, Ethereum or other blockchain testnet tokens can be acquired for free, that is why no exchange will list them. We created an exchange exclusively for that tokens. Value of a currency is decided by the demand and supply, maybe we can bring the value for that tokens! Surprisingly, we began to seek advice from various projects that run their own crypto-exchanges.

How long have the founders known one another and how did you meet? Have any of the founders not met in person?

Daniil and Aleksey met a year ago at ‘Phystech Radio’, university community internet radio station (radiomipt.ru). I created the server infrastructure and Aleksey created mobile apps and reliable video streams. We both did a lot of management work, organizing events for students and applicants.

Nikita works with Alex at swap.online as a frontend developer for their exchange. The three of us participated in the blockchain hackathon in July, 2018 and won the prize for the best blockchain in game application – we have figured out how to create the in-game pawnshop based on smart-contracts. Later we have created testnet.exchange - the exchange for testnet cryptocurrency tokens. Just for fun.

PROGRESS

How far along are you?

PROTOTYPE: Our demo can identify and highlight the most positive and the most negative mentions of a trending topic. It is based on newsapi.org and Google Natural Language API.

NEXT STEP: Provide link to opposite opinion. Train a neural net to detect manipulative statements, generalizations and other unethical media practices. Use text-understanding NN to give fact-checking connections between sources.

How long have each of you been working on this? Have you been part-time or full-time? Please explain.

The idea appeared about a year ago, but as we all work full time, we worked mostly nights and weekends. Our first successful prototype went live in mid-September.

Which of the following best describes your progress?

Unlaunched

When will you have a prototype or beta?

Available now – see link above

Do you have revenue?

No.

How much money do you spend per month?

0.

Until our trial version of Google Cloud is over, we spend $0 a month plus $10 occasionally on Red Bull. We currently use a third party API to keep computation costs at zero, but later we would definitely develop own algorithms.

How much money does your company have in the bank now?

0.
All costs come from the personal savings of the cofounders. We can afford spending $3k on that project out of our own pocket.

How long is your runway?

(e.g. 5 months)
0 (no money yet).

If you've applied previously with the same idea, how much progress have you made since the last time you applied? Anything change?

Did not apply before.

If you have already participated or committed to participate in an incubator, "accelerator" or "pre-accelerator" program, please tell us about it.

No.

IDEA

Why did you pick this idea to work on? Do you have domain expertise in this area? How do you know people need what you're making?

We are all very intolerant to the lies and manipulation in the media. In Russia, most of the media, both state and opposition, are biased and unethical to the extreme. We believe that there exists a demand for versatile information.

What's new about what you're making? What substitutes do people resort to because it doesn't exist yet (or they don't know about it)?

Usually, Facebook and Apple Music gives you things that are in agreement to what you already like. We go different way.

There are online blogs and paper books on the topic of being more rational: lesswrong.com, Taleb, Kahneman, Attkisson write on biases and their elimination. People in search of rational thinking now resort to these materials. Mostly, our project is the composition of these studies and ideas, only automatized.

We start from the idea that people don’t like being manipulated or fooled. We will help to find the opposite opinion on some topic or just more facts and audit your favourite media to prevent being fooled or biased.

Who are your competitors, and who might become competitors? Who do you fear most?

Hootsuite, Brandwatch, Semantria track the brand mentions and sentiments on the web. Google News can kill us on the spot if they ever decide to present news with positive-negative analysis, but it’s not profitable for them to make people think: they are selling ads, after all!

What do you understand about your business that other companies in it just don't get?

Most media companies make money on ads or are funded by government. They can alienate their reader or stakeholder if they deviate from a partisan line. Facebook will get less traffic if it shows cat pictures to dog owners. So the challenge we take is create a medium that will trade in unbiased information while others cannot afford it.

How do or will you make money? How much could you make?

(We realize you can't know precisely, but give your best estimate.)

Money comes from media agents willing to prove their integrity. Big media companies will pay to check their texts and to be added to our “audited sources list”. They pay for service, but can’t control the result.

That will become valuable only when we become large. Peer pressure will make media to get checked, or else they will look as if they have something to hide. (Somewhat similar to Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval).

Before we get to the this point in growth, we can sell paid API service or charge readers some little payment for features that are not crucial for main functionality.

How will you get users? If your idea is the type that faces a chicken-and-egg problem in the sense that it won't be attractive to users till it has a lot of users (e.g. a marketplace, a dating site, an ad network), how will you overcome that?

We ourselves are flawed humans, so will benefit very much from such tool.

There is strong “rationalists” community who are willing to be less wrong in their daily life. There are rationalist meetups in big cities around the world that we’ll attend. They will also help us upgrade our methods.

We’ll do blog posts of interesting findings from recent publishings. We will review the most scandalous reports or claims and give our feedback on popular topics, sometimes predicting outcomes beforehand.

Have you incorporated, or formed any legal entity (like an LLC) yet?

No

If you have not formed the company yet, describe the planned equity ownership breakdown among the founders, employees and any other proposed stockholders.

(This question is as much for you as us.)

33% for each cofounder.

Please provide any other relevant information about the structure or formation of the company.

Not incorporated yet

LEGAL

Are any of the founders covered by noncompetes or intellectual property agreements that overlap with your project? If so, please explain.

No

Who writes code, or does other technical work on your product? Was any of it done by a non-founder? Please explain.

Everything was done by founders. No.

Is there anything else we should know about your company?

(Pending lawsuits, co-founders who have left, etc.)

None.

OTHERS

If you had any other ideas you considered applying with, please list them. One may be something we've been waiting for. Often when we fund people it's to do something they list here and not in the main application.

- Testnet Exchange - the exchange for testnet blockchain tokens.
- Smart-contract based in-game pawnshop for tokenized items.
- Distributed and transparent storage for personal data used for google ads.
- Paypad based on Lightning Network (iPad + POS) to pay bitcoins without transaction commission.
- LND.js - browser implementation of Lightning Network.

Please tell us something surprising or amusing that one of you has discovered.

(The answer need not be related to your project.)

After we started to work on this project, we became sceptical about every bit of information we get to the extreme. We never realized HOW MUCH bias is hidden in the text that appears innocent and even.

Some example:

Steve Jobs in 2007 said: “So what are we gonna do? Oh, a stylus, right? We’re gonna use a stylus. No. No. Who wants a stylus?”. In other words, he implied: “ stylus is wrong”. Yes, stylus is worse than finger, but here we have clear manipulation: he decides for us and ties us into his opinion. This is an example of being fooled in positive way, but still manipulation.

Other recent examples that we have found in twitter feed: https://t.co/8u4GBVYg7J, https://t.co/8u4GBVYg7J

CURIOUS

What convinced you to apply to Y Combinator?

We think that you want the same that we do: less lie and bias, more justice and logic.

How did you hear about Y Combinator?

Paul Graham’s blog, Phystech professor,and before that, Aleksey who could not stop talking about it.