



Profile

Neil Jones, founder and CEO of British start-up Interread

From Enid Blyton to an ebook business, the Interread creator tells his story

Neil Jones has always loved books. As a youngster he would plough through the Tales of Brer Rabbit and the Hardy Boys mysteries (he loved a good thriller, even at the age of nine) but had no idea where his love of stories would take him. He had actually intended to become a professional cricketer 'in the Geoffrey Boycott style', spending five years at the Glamorgan nets in Neath, but after deciding that he was better off playing for fun he focused on his academic work and trained to become a banker.

He spent time as a NatWest graduate trainee in York and Leeds, but his ambition took him to the head office in London where he could progress more quickly up the corporate ladder. After just five and a half years in the industry he was named Head of Financial Services Consulting at Sema Group, a great achievement that was a reflection of his business acumen, determination and drive.

He went on to prove himself a smart and calculated risk taker. In 2002, he took out a mortgage on his home in order to found the companies N2Check and Checksure. Through these companies he created innovative approaches to supplying credit reporting information, challenging long-established and well-known brands. In 2007, Neil sold his N2 Check businesses to Dun & Bradstreet in a widely reported and successful deal.

But his love of literature never left him, and it was only when he began to write his own novel in June 2008 that he began to discover more about the publishing industry. After learning that literary agents could receive 15,000 submissions a year and would only take on a handful of authors, he began to wonder how much unpublished quality writing was waiting to be discovered and, coupling his experience as an independent author with all the knowledge of the unfulfilled potential of electronics books and the gadgets on which to read them, he recognised an opportunity to create an 'iPod moment' for ereaders. Interread was born, and soon he had assembled a team to develop COOLERBOOKS.com, and in turn the COOL-ER ereader. It took



just four months for the COOL-ER to go from being a bright idea to a physical product – an incredible achievement for the team.

A literature lover first and a gadget fan second, Jones created an e-reader and companion bookstore built around the needs of readers—not technologists—and is now pursuing this vision to the fullest.

For Neil, the most rewarding part about establishing Interead has been seeing his ideas come to life – and exceeding the expectations he and his team could have imagined. He’s also proud to have recruited a group of extremely talented individuals, who all excel individually within a team environment. Within three years, Neil wants Interead to be the largest ebook sector company worldwide, and he believes that COOL-ER and CoolerBOOKS.com have all they need to make this ambition a reality.

When it comes to books, Neil is a fiction fanatic – and he still enjoys a good thriller. He loved First Family by David Baldacci, and can’t wait for Ayn Rand’s The Fountainhead to arrive in ebook format. The last book he read on his COOL-ER (his is the Ruby model, in case you’re wondering) was Lee Child’s Gone Tomorrow, but when he manages to get a moment away from the page he’s also a big fan of rugby, cricket, soccer, American football and baseball. Neil splits his time between the USA and Europe.

Visit www.COOLERBOOKS.com or www.interead.com for more information.

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Editor’s Notes

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About Interead

Based in Reading, England and Miami, Interead and COOL-ER are the creation of seasoned entrepreneur Neil Jones. COOL-ER is the lightest and most affordable ereader available, is both MAC and PC compatible, and accommodates popular formats including EPUB, PDF, MP3, FB2, RTF, TXT, HTML, PRC (non DRM), JPG, GIF, BMP. COOLERBOOKS.com holds the largest selection of ebook formats in the world.