Microsoft Windows Embedded Announces Winner of SPARKS Will Fly Contest

At the Embedded Systems Conference (ESC) Silicon Valley 2009, Microsoft Corp. announced Doug Conn as the winner of the Microsoft Windows Embedded SPARKs Will Fly developer contest, a global competition designed to foster creativity and innovation among the embedded hobbyist and academic communities. The theme of the contest, “home of the future,” encouraged more than 140 contestants globally to demonstrate fresh thinking around the smart, connected, service-oriented devices of the future.

“The SPARKs Will Fly contest is a platform for hobbyist and academic developers to showcase their abilities and bring fresh thinking to the table,” said Ilya Bukshteyn, senior director of Windows Embedded Marketing at Microsoft. “We are proud to acknowledge the efforts of Doug Conn and all the participants who demonstrated tremendous enthusiasm and creativity in striving to create the next generation of smart, connected, service-oriented devices.”

As the winner, Conn was awarded $15,000 and will receive an all-inclusive trip to participate in the Microsoft

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Tech•Ed North America 2009 developers conference in Los Angeles, May 11–15, for his entry, The Smart Pill, which combines disparate technologies into a machine that recognizes a patient's medications, understands the pharmaceutical information and helps the user take the correct medication at the right time. Microsoft also awarded second place winner, Jason Hershkowitz, with an all-inclusive trip to participate in the 2009 Microsoft Tech•Ed Developers Conference for his entry, The Home Brain. Conn and Hershkowitz presented their devices during the Microsoft industry address given by Windows Embedded General Manger, Kevin Dallas, on Tuesday, March 31. Following the address, ESC attendees were invited to select the winner by voting for the device of their choice at the Microsoft booth. The third finalist withdrew his participation in the contest.

The largest Windows Embedded contest outside the Imagine Cup Competition, SPARKs Will Fly is based on the successful SPARK Your Imagination hobbyist-focused program launched in April 2008, which brings the benefits of embedded development on Windows Embedded CE 6.0 R2 and Visual Studio 2005 Professional Edition to hobbyist developers and the academic community. The contest is designed to reward those with a passion for building devices and to create a forum for enthusiasts to showcase their development skills. More information is available at http://www.windowsembedded.com/spark [1] and http://www.sparkcontest.com [2].

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