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APRIL 7, 2014

# CASCADIA SHINES AS VANCOUVER'S "STARTUP-PALOOZA"



It was like “startup-palooza,” as Vancouver’s five key accelerators and incubators got together to throw a massive party.

**Wavefront’s**(<http://www.wavefrontac.com/>) Brad Lowe said that from the start, “we wanted an opportunity for the Vancouver startup community to work together and create great opportunities for tech SMEs. We also wanted to highlight the quality of companies that are developing in our accelerators. Based on the turnout of entrepreneurs and investors that we saw at the event, I think that we can safely say that we achieved both!”

Lowe’s team worked alongside the leaders of [GrowLab](http://growlab.ca/)(<http://growlab.ca/>), [Invoke Labs](http://invokelabs.com/)(<http://invokelabs.com/>), [Launch Academy](http://www.launchacademy.ca/)(<http://www.launchacademy.ca/>), and [Spring](http://spring.is/)(<http://spring.is/>), to deliver a day of learning, networking, connecting, pitching, and maybe even future funding. The morning was all about the learning with over 300 attendees choosing from 16 different presentations, including product design and

development, founder stories, funding tips, and corporate governance.



<http://www.betakit.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/FOK3327.jpg>

The day was really a chance for 25 investment ready startups vetted by each of the five organizations to demo and pitch before an invited group of local plus out of town Angels and VC's. For GrowLab's Anastasia Hambali, "the startup ecosystems outside of the Silicon Valley are still considered as a secondary market. We want to highlight the investment-ready startups in the Cascadia region, and to provide further support for entrepreneurs in the area."

Hambali added that "at the heart of Cascadia is connecting startup entrepreneurs with investors, partners and mentors. As organizers we want to further support our tech ecosystem by providing an avenue to make that happen. The U.S. VCs and Angels that attended previous Cascadia events told us that Cascadia exposed them to what's going on in the Canadian startup ecosystems. They also welcomed the changes in tax laws (Section 116) that now allows them to invest in Canada."

For Launch Academy's Ray Walia, it's an event, "where a large number of our members it is the first time they are pitching and showcasing in front of investors and a large crowd. It's important for us to fill the room with value add VIPs, people that can offer sincere advice and guidance to the young companies that are not only showcasing and pitching but also for the entrepreneurs in the attendance that are there to network."

Ultimately five companies were chosen for the final pitch competition:

- [BitLit](http://www.bitlit.com/) – allows publishers to distribute eBooks to readers who own hardcopies. Readers get the eBook by using BitLit to prove they own a paper edition.
- [PrintToPeer](http://www.printtopeer.com/) – makes 3D printers easier to use with a simple web-based remote control and monitoring app that is compatible with most 3D printers.

- [myBestHelper](https://www.mybesthelper.com/) – is the only online, mobile friendly platform in Canada solving a core problem for families — finding and managing helpers for child, home and elder care.
- [MetaOptima](http://www.metaoptima.com/) – their first product, MoleScope, is designed for the prevention and early detection of skin cancer.
- [Crowd Content](https://www.crowdcontent.com/) – is a content creation platform using gamification to make it easy, quick, and affordable for marketers, agencies, and brands to work with talented writers.

BitLit impressed the judges and earned an opportunity to attend the upcoming [Cloud Factory](http://thecloudfactory.io/) event in Banff, and [Metabridge](http://www.metabridge.ca/) in June.



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For Spring CEO Keith Ippel, “having been in the Vancouver Tech scene for 15 years, it’s incredible to see the community hitting critical mass of great entrepreneurs and support at this time. It’s critical for Vancouver accelerators and investors to work together to improve our offerings and support for entrepreneurs,” he said. “This day was a great start and moves us in the right direction. In the future, attracting more investors and companies will be key to adding more value for everyone, and increasing attendance by people from outside of Vancouver will just make this industry bigger and better.

For any community to grow and be sustainable it needs to be part of an overall resource rich ecosystem. Cascadia brought together a lot of the key elements. As Invoke Labs CEO David Tedman added “every city likes to lay claim to a vibrant technology ecosystem, this was a demonstration of the strength of ours here in Vancouver. The quality of attendees and level of energy they brought was phenomenal.”



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**[John Gray \(http://betakit.com/author/john-gray/\)](http://betakit.com/author/john-gray/)**


John is BetaKit's first West Coast Editor. He's BC born and raised with a Vancouver postal code for the last 35 years. John's been involved with the start-up community since early 2009. He's co-founder of Omniscient Technologies a visual analytics company whose assets were acquired in October 2011. John and his co-founder reacquired their IP in October 2014 and will be launching a new version Mentionmapp.com this year. As a writer, John cares about keeping the humanity in our stories and conversations about technology. He has a B.Ap.Sc. in Communications and a B.A. in English, both from Simon Fraser University.

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**myBestHelper** · 2 years ago

It was indeed a great event from beginning to end and a great opportunity to fulfill the vision "Accelerating together". The stratup scene is indeed maturing, and I can see it even after two years of being involved.

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