

Press release

3rings seeks Kickstarter funding for smart plug that helps the elderly

Caring tech start-up 3rings is seeking Kickstarter funding to ramp up production of an intelligent plug that supports older people in living independently.

The 3rings smart plug enables conventional household appliances to become part of the 'Internet of Things' (IoT) and provides reassuring updates about routine use by elderly relatives.

Customisable alerts issued via a cloud-based platform reassure families that independent elderly loved ones are OK, based on use of electrical items including toasters, televisions and kettles.

Product design and testing is now complete, and the company is seeking £20,000 of public funding via Kickstarter to facilitate increased production to make the 3rings plug affordable for more families.

The entrepreneurs behind the 3rings plug believe the 'Internet of Things' has a significant role to play in assisting society to care for the ageing population.

3rings co-founder Steve Purdham was inspired to develop the 3rings plug while seeking technology to support his mum Iris, 84. He said: "50 billion objects will be connected to the Internet by 2020 and this evolution has the power to help people stay independent for longer and ease the worry-factor for families.

There are now more over 60s than there are under 18s in the UK, with the number of over 65s hitting 11 million for the first time in history¹. Steve added: "Like my own mum, many of us will choose to live in our own homes well into our 80s and beyond. With longer life expectancy, more families are trying to balance work commitments and bringing up their children, with making sure their own ageing parents or grandparents are OK.

"We want to stay ahead of the IoT curve and showcase how technology can care. Kickstarter is a great way for the public to join us on the 3rings journey and take this unique project to the next stage."

Rather than replacing real contact with loved ones – the caring plug is designed to give peace of mind and is an added ‘safety net’ for families. It has inbuilt mobile technology, so elderly relatives don’t need their own Internet connection. The plug can instantly reassure the entire family that mum or dad is up and making their usual morning cup of tea – or alert them that there could be a problem.

Based on individual family rules, messages and alerts are sent via a smartphone app, email, text or automated calls. Steve said: “The 3rings cloud portal gathers data and translates it into meaningful information for families. In the future we intend this to collect sensor data from other devices too, such as third-party smoke detectors and thermostats.”

Steve Purdham co-founded 3rings with fellow tech entrepreneur Gareth Reakes. The duo previously worked together on online jukebox business We7.

The 3rings Kickstarter project will run for 33 days here:

<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/3rings/3rings-the-plug-that-helps-care-for-mum-and-dad>

or go to [kickstarter.com](https://www.kickstarter.com) and search 3rings

www.3rings.co.uk

Ends/

For media enquiries and interviews contact:

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Notes to Editors

3rings is seeking £20,000 in Kickstarter funding and is offering a range of rewards for those who pledge support. Rewards include an "Early Bird Supporter 1" package for pledges of £15 or more: including the 3rings plug at a special Kickstarter 'early bird' rate. (Note: pricing is expected to be £79 for the plug and £12 a month, but for a £15 pledge 10 backers will get a plug and the first month's subscription included (saving £76). UK Only. **Note:** Funding on Kickstarter is all-or-nothing - if the project does not reach its funding goal the rewards are not distributed and no backers are charged.

¹ Age UK, Later Life in the UK report, May 2015 http://www.ageuk.org.uk/Documents/EN-GB/Factsheets/Later_Life_UK_factsheet.pdf?dtrk=true

About 3rings

3rings is a UK-based company that develops technology to help families make sure ageing relatives they are OK. Rather than replacing real contact with loved ones – it is designed as an added 'safety net' and gives peace of mind.

The business was inspired by the traditional three rings code used by families in the times before mobile phones. During its beta phase the 3rings cloud platform and smartphone app linked with an elderly loved one's landline phone. This concept has now (2015) been replaced with the introduction of its caring smart plug.

Connecting ageing relatives with Internet enabled family members using everyday appliances, the 3rings smart plug can instantly let the entire family know that mum, dad or grandparents, are up and making their usual morning cup of tea or have switched on the TV. See how it works here: <https://www.3rings.co.uk>

Steve Purdham, 3rings' chairman and co-founder – Steve has built a number of businesses, including:

- **SurfControl plc** – Internet security start-up, which went on to employ more than 700 people in 14 countries. Sold for in excess of \$400m to US competitor Websense.
- **Indentum Ltd** – Email encryption spin out from the University of Bristol, which Steve rescued & sold to Trend Micro.
- **We7 Ltd** – co-founder investor of online music sharing service with Gareth Reakes, alongside former Genesis frontman *Peter Gabriel*. 3 million users a month at its peak. Acquired for £10m+ by Tesco in 2012 and rebranded Blinkbox.

Steve has won many prestigious business awards and was recently awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Business Administration from the University of Teesside, of which he is a former computing student.

Gareth Reakes, 3rings' CEO and co-founder – Gareth is the technical genius behind the 3rings technology and has also previously built companies in the tech space.

- **We7 Ltd** – co-founder and chief technical officer of the online music sharing service, which was sold to Tesco in 2012 and rebranded Blinkbox.
- Gareth was since appointed Technology Director at Tesco PLC.

Gareth studied computing science at Oxford Brooks University and has been a member of the advisory panel for the software engineering at Oxford University.