



Simon Announces 'Simon Launch' Retail Startup Competition In Collaboration With Plug And Play Tech Center

September 18, 2014

Competition initiates global search for early stage investment opportunities in retail and related technologies by Simon Venture Group

INDIANAPOLIS & SAN FRANCISCO, Sept. 18, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- Simon, a global leader in retail real estate, today announced 'Simon Launch', a retail startup competition aimed at discovering, investing in, and accelerating the top startups in the retail industry. Simon will be co-investing in the competition's winners through its recently formed venture capital arm, Simon Venture Group, in collaboration with Plug and Play. Simon will also become an Anchor Member of Plug and Play's Retail Accelerator program.

Simon Launch organizers will select 10 startup finalists to pitch a panel of judges and will then select up to three winners. Winners of the Simon Launch competition will earn a \$25,000 co-investment from Simon Venture Group and Plug and Play, free office space for one year at any Simon property across the country, including a location in Silicon Valley, acceptance into Plug and Play's Retail Accelerator Program, consideration for future follow-on investment by Simon Venture Group, strategic and marketing support, and mentorship from industry leaders.

"New technologies and the growth of omni-channel retailing are creating exciting opportunities for innovation," said J. Skyler Fernandes, Managing Director of Simon Venture Group. "It is important for us to identify and work with companies that will help drive the evolution of the retail industry."

"We are pleased to be co-investing with Simon Venture Group and plan to leverage their deep industry knowledge and expertise to advise our investment strategy in the retail space," said Saeed Amidi, Plug and Play Founder and CEO. "All of the players in the industry - brands, retailers, and retail-solution providers - are beginning to feel the pressure from consumers and competitors to innovate. We are excited to collaborate with forward-thinking companies like Simon to help accelerate innovation in the retail industry."

Eligible companies interested in applying for the Simon Launch retail startup competition can qualify from a number of verticals, including in-store retail tech, ecommerce, data analytics, inventory management and logistics, energy, security, real estate tech and more. For a full list, and to submit an application, go to [Simon Venture Group's Angellist page](#). Applications will be accepted until January 15, 2015.

The Simon Launch competition is being managed by Simon Venture Group, which Simon formed in 2014 to actively invest between \$250,000 and \$5,000,000 in companies from the seed stage to the growth stage. Some of the portfolio companies include: [Augmate](#), an enterprise SaaS solution for digital eyewear; [Shopkick](#), a geotargeted offers and rewards platform; [Deliv](#), a same day delivery platform, and [Fuhu](#), a leading electronic tablet company for kids and one of the fastest growing companies in the U.S. according to Inc.

"Simon Launch is part of a broader company effort to identify and leverage technology that is interesting and relevant and enhances the shopping experience," said Mikael Thygesen, Chief Marketing Officer for Simon. "This competition will help us discover and connect with young, innovative companies that are pushing the boundaries of retail and creating new value for consumers and retailers."

About Simon

Simon is a global leader in retail real estate ownership, management and development and a S&P100 company (Simon Property Group, NYSE:SPG). Our industry-leading retail properties and investments across North America, Europe and Asia provide shopping experiences for millions of consumers every day and generate billions in annual retail sales. For more information, visit [simon.com](#). For details on Simon Venture Group and the Simon Launch competition, visit [simonventuregroup.com](#).

About Plug and Play

Plug and Play Tech Center is a global investor and technology accelerator that specializes in growing tech startups. Headquartered in Sunnyvale California, Plug and Play's network includes over 300 tech startups, 180 investors and a community of leading Universities and Corporate partners. Plug and Play's early investments include PayPal, DropBox, Lending Club, Zoosk, Danger etc. For more information on Plug and Play's Brand and Retail Accelerator please visit [plugandplayaccelerator.com/retail](#).

SOURCE Simon

Maria Weber, Simon, 317.263.7191, Maria.Weber@simon.com