

# Volunteers in Tunisia develop app for Alzheimer's patients

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About a year ago, Azer Jaafoura and a few of his colleagues at Samsung Electronics Tunisia (SETN) were thinking of helping out Alzheimer's patients. However, with a full-time job and already volunteering at a children's hospital, Azer and his colleagues were strapped for time.

"We wanted to make life easier for Alzheimer's patients as well as their caretakers, but we were initially unsure of how to go about doing this," said Azer, a marketing manager for mobile products at SETN. "While Alzheimer's may be incurable, recent studies have shown that mental stimulation in the form of regular reminders of past events could potentially slow down the progression of the disease. This is where we saw an opportunity."

With the help of the Tunisian Alzheimer's Association, SETN worked with 3SG BBDO to create a smartphone [app](#) called Backup Memory, which functions as a memory stimulator for those exhibiting early signs of Alzheimer's. The app helps patients become aware of their immediate surroundings by identifying nearby [family members](#) and friends, and also reminds patients about their relationship with each person and memories they've shared in the past through photographs and videos.

Such features of Backup Memory are made possible through Bluetooth. Backup Memory uses Bluetooth to search for other smartphones running the same app, and connects to those devices when they're within a 10-meter (33 feet) radius. Once connected, Backup Memory displays information about the nearby person. Prior to using Backup Memory, the

relevant information and multimedia content have to be manually inputted or uploaded onto the app.

While SETN worked with 3SG BBDO to design and develop the app, the Tunisian Alzheimer's Association tested the app during its development to make sure it would be useful for Alzheimer's patients.

"We've had some Alzheimer's patients try out Backup Memory, and we've seen good results," said Dr. Meriam Labidi, a geriatrician and a member of the Tunisian Alzheimer's Association. "With Alzheimer's, what is lost is lost forever. Through cognitive stimulation, [patients](#) can hold onto their memory for a little longer and slow down Alzheimer's devastating effect."

Backup Memory is available in two languages – English and French – and can be downloaded through [Google Play](#).

However, this isn't the last of Backup Memory. Azer and his colleagues are working on upgrading the app, adding additional features and brushing up the user interface. One of those features is expected to rely on a smartphone's GPS signal to provide family members with the real-time location of their loved ones.

"Backup Memory is not exactly a technological breakthrough, but it is definitely a good use of existing technology," said Azer. "We are satisfied with the progress so far, but we'd like to do more. There is so much good you can do with technology, and I'd like to think that we're just getting started."

Provided by Samsung

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