


How a Sentiment Analysis Startup Profits By Checking Emotion in E-mail

 This post is made possible by [Microsoft BizSpark](#) as a new part of the *Spark of Genius* series that focuses on a new and innovative startup each day. Every Thursday, the program focuses on startups within the BizSpark program and what they're doing to grow.

Whether intended or not, our text-based communication often carries emotional undertones that can often undermine (or give away) our true intentions. Nowhere is this more apparent than in e-mail, which most of us use as our primary means of digital communication and can, on occasion, get us in trouble if we choose the wrong words.



Having experienced this first-hand one too many times, Matt Eldridge sought out a solution to the problem. We have spell check to save us from making an egregious spelling faux pas and grammar check to keep our subjects and verbs in agreement, so there must be a tool for tone check, he reasoned. In fact, there was not, so Eldridge left his day job, found a technical co-founder in [Josh Merchant](#) and together the two started sentiment analysis startup [Lymbix](#).

In July of 2010, after one and a half years of heavy research and development, Lymbix released an early stage version of [ToneCheck](#), an Outlook plugin that uses detailed sentiment analysis to check the emotional tone of content in e-mail. The tool proved to be an instant hit with e-mail senders, 20,000 of whom downloaded the plugin in the first month after release.

Lymbix is now working on a faster, lighter and smarter version of ToneCheck scheduled for release in late February. It's just one of many things the young but sufficiently funded company — Lymbix has raised more than \$2 million in angel funding and pulls in revenue from licensing deals — has in store for the year. “This year is our coming out party,” says Eldridge.
