Jawa Pos (Java Post)

Online Mutual Assistance by AtmaGo

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Note: This article appeared on page 1 of the Metropolitan Section of the March 22, 2017 Java Post — the second-largest daily newspaper by circulation in Indonesia. Translated and lightly edited by Atma Connect.

Indonesians are well-known for having two prominent moral values: friendliness and *gotong royong* (translated as helping each other or working together). The term *gotong royong* was even adopted as the name of the ministerial cabinet under the fifth President of Indonesia, Megawati Soekarnoputri. Nowadays in the digital era, these two values are rekindled in an online system called AtmaGo.

"Neighbors helping neighbors"—those words are written in the description of AtmaGo's Android app on Play Store, AtmaGo and the free and nonprofit app is created with the spirit of *gotong royong* in mind.

CARE FOR EACH OTHER: Field Director and Community Manager of AtmaGo Indonesia, Alfan Rodhi Kasdar (left) and David Khoirul showing AtmaGo app.

Around 2015, AtmaGo was only an SMS (text messaging) based service called Water SMS… Users sparked the idea to develop AtmaGo into a platform to report general problems that people face with public services. AtmaGo was designed, according to Indonesian Field Director Alfan Rodhi, based on people's feedback using *human-centered design approach*.

A new Android version of the app was released in November 2016. Prior to that, the app was only available as a web-based app. AtmaGo is currently available for users who live in Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi followed by users from Semarang, Lamongan, and

Malang. "Our goal is not on the number of users or the breadth of location coverage, but rather on quality, based on the intensity of users using our app," Alfan added.

According to him, there are four aspects that differentiate AtmaGo from other apps or social medias. First aspect is location. The information shared or received on AtmaGo can be filtered down to a subdistrict level. This means everyone can follow each subdistrict that they want, and they will receive information updates only from the subdistricts that they follow...

"Once there was a user in a particular subdistrict whose house was flooded, other users offer their help by providing a place to stay and help cleaning up after the flood," explained Alfan who was an Arabic major at LIPIA Jakarta. This is what differentiates AtmaGo from other apps or social medias. AtmaGo users in some location hold regular meetings every month.

Secondly, the most fundamental difference that makes AtmaGo different is that it promotes selflessness. This means that AtmaGo was created to be useful for others. It is not a platform to show off a new dress, a new accessory, nor a fancy vacation. On the contrary, users can share information and provide guided help. This by itself discourages egotistical/narcissistic behavior.

Thirdly, explains Alfan, AtmaGo uses very little bandwidth compared to Instagram or Facebook. So, people in low income community can use the app without being burdened by the price of mobile data.

Fourthly. AtmaGo is a nonprofit app. The app does not receive revenue from ads. Funding for development and maintenance was from the many competitions they have won. "We want to provide services for all. So, we try to get funding from NGOs or competitions," said David Khoirul, AtmaGo Community Manager.

There are many international donor agencies that has helped with funding AtmaGo, namely Cisco Foundation, The Global Resilience Partnership, IDEO.org, UK Aid, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation. AtmaGo has also won many tech competitions internationally. One of them is the Global Amplify Urban Resilience Challenge 2016 where all of the participants were gathered in Kenya. From the competition in Kenya, Alfan and David learnt about the power of tech and the resourcefulness of youths to affect social change for the better.

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