Tech Reviews

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"The quiz feature is a fun way to challenge your colleagues to a duel or just test yourself against the computer"

The ORL App: I challenge you to duel!

BY JONATHAN LEE

'Every day is a school day' – an age-old saying that is as much a proverb as it is an instruction for allied health professionals. These days, it is hard to keep up with any sort of news- whether that's COVID coverage in the general media, sport, finance, or even friends and family. As the scientific community grows (and therefore the vast sum of medical literature!), we are similarly burdened with a vast array of information from various sources. Where do we begin, and how do we continue on learning in this era? This article looks at one such app that aims to help.

The ORL App

The ORL App was created in Germany by Professor Jan-Christoffer Lüers. It was released in February 2021 after the success of his German version of the ORL App, which gained popularity in cooperation with the German Society of Oto-Rhino-Laryngology, Head and Neck Surgery. The aims of the app

are to network ENT specialists and allied health professionals, and improve training. It is currently free to download on all app stores and is also desktop compatible through a web browser. Compared to learning apps previously described in our articles like LearnENT [1] which works primarily as an MCQ database, the ORL App seems to add a few other features that make it unique as an ENT app.

ENT News and Networking
News
Articles are released by the ORL App team in the 'News' section that summarise new up-to-date information in the world of ENT. New articles and updates are released almost daily. Additionally, hidden away in the settings, you can find a calendar of upcoming ENT conferences and events.
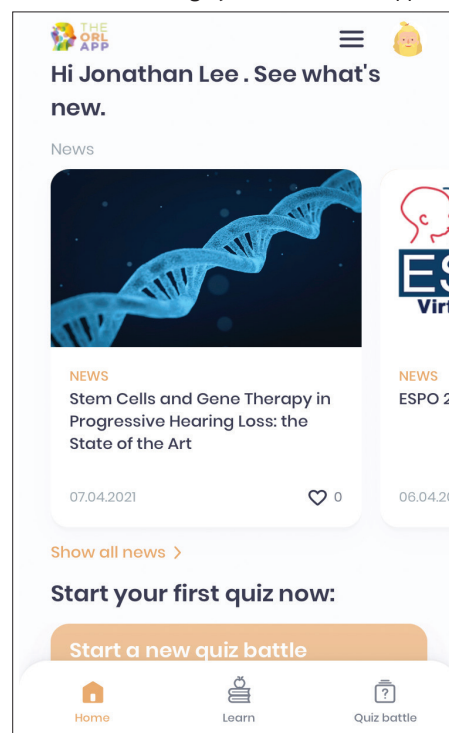
Networking
Although mentioned as an aim of the app, networking does not seem to be a current feature of this app – the only contact I could make was by 'battling' others (more on this later). However, considering the German version of the app seems to have this function, it is assumed that this will be introduced in time.
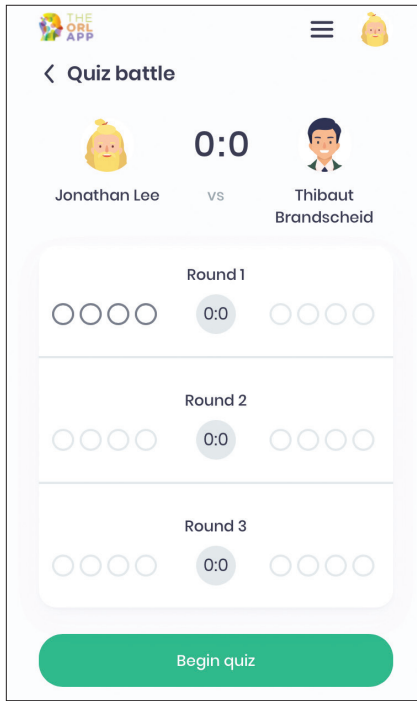
Learning
Quiz Battles
The quiz feature is a fun way to challenge your colleagues to a duel or just test yourself against the computer (bots). This can be done individually or in teams, where your cumulative score as a team results in a winner. It is somewhat reminiscent of an ENT specific 'QuizUp' if you had the pleasure of playing this a few years ago. You have one minute to answer each multiple-choice question from a range of different topics including ear and skull base, head and neck, and audiology (amongst a few others), and immediate feedback is given with the correct answer and a short explanation. New questions (currently around 2000) are added on a weekly basis and users can suggest and submit their own questions. The calibres of questions are post-graduate, and are a mix

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of image and word questions. Thankfully, there's also a 50:50 lifeline for those difficult questions – Chris Tarrant would be pleased.

Power Learning

Questions are asked in a similar format to generic MCQ apps. The Leitner algorithm is used to determine time intervals to help consolidate learning by repeating questions. The question bank is currently small, with 85 questions in total across all five topics, however there is an option for users to submit their own MCQs. There is also a section hidden at the bottom of the app called 'hardest questions of the week'. Unfortunately no references are provided for most answers given.

Newest Files

This section contains full text documents that are readable within the app on various topics, from immune checkpoint inhibitors to the management and presentation of acute otitis media. Only a few files exist

currently and, similar to the power learning section, no references are given.

Webinars and Learning Rooms

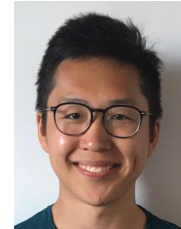This section is awaiting material.

Closing remarks

This app shows great promise as being a one-stop shop for up-to-date information, networking, and learning on the go.
The app is extremely easy to use, and is complemented by nice graphics. Further information on this app can be found here: http://orl-app.com/

Reference

1. Pothier D, Falls C. LearnENT app – bringing otolaryngology to your mobile. *ENT & Audiology News* 2015;**23(6)**.

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