

“WE WANT TO BECOME A GLOBAL STANDARD”

Will Irvine, Partnerships Manager at what3words, who stepped in to receive the WWIT Icarus 2022 on behalf of what3words' Co-Founder and CEO Chris Sheldrick, talks about what makes the company so unique and successful around the globe.

Congratulations for receiving the WWIT 2022 on behalf of what3words, Will. Chris Sheldrick, Co Founder & CEO of what3words obviously had a fantastic idea when he founded the company. Please can you tell us a little bit about how what3words works?

Of course! To the frustration of consumers across the globe, street addressing is failing to meet the demands of today's on-the-go services. Inaccuracies in addressing result in taxis arriving on neighbouring streets, food deliveries arriving cold, navigation systems taking drivers to the wrong destination and customers wasting hours on the phone to couriers. All of which are costly to businesses, frustrating for customers and are hampering innovation.

Chris Sheldrick, our Co-Founder and CEO, previously managed large scale music events around the world, and during this time he experienced how bands and suppliers constantly got lost and delayed due to poor and confusing addressing. These issues and frustrations inspired him to create what3words - a new way to communicate precise locations that uses three dictionary words.

what3words has divided the world into a grid of 3m x 3m squares, and assigned each square a unique combination of three words, known as a what3words address. This gives people a simple way to communicate precise locations, whether it's a parking space, a precise picnic spot or the exact entrance to a football stadium. For example, [///hands.spacing.pose](#) takes you to the precise entrance to Casa Llotja de Mar, the WWIT ceremony venue here in Barcelona. The app is available in 54 languages to date, including German and Spanish, and over 5 billion people can use it in their native tongue. It is also free to download on iOS and Android, as well as the online map.

We're thrilled to be receiving this award, and want to thank everyone who was involved in the selection process. As I've outlined, what3words is on an ambitious mission to revolutionise the way the world communicates location, and create a new global standard - and we appreciate the Diplomatic World Institute's support.

what3words has obviously done something right - you are seeing exponential growth around the world. Why is the tech so popular?

The size of the problem caused by inaccurate addresses, combined with the simplicity of our tech has been central to our success, allowing what3words to grow its footprint at pace across multiple sectors. For example, 13 Industry leading automotive companies including Mercedes-Benz, Jaguar Land Rover, Lamborghini, VinFast, Subaru and Mitsubishi, have integrated the technology into their navigation systems, allowing drivers to search and navigate to precise locations with just three words.

To give more examples: Delivery companies such as DHL, DPD, Evri and GLS use what3words to make sure goods arrive exactly where they need to go, when they need to be there. This reduces the frustration and time spent talking to couriers on the phone to help direct them to your front door. And last but not least, emergency services around the world are also embracing the technology including control rooms in the UK, US, Australia, Germany, Belgium, Austria, Singapore, Canada, India, and South

Africa. In fact, over 85% of the UK's emergency services use what3words to help locate callers quickly and efficiently, saving critical time when it matters most.

What does what3words have planned for the future?

2023 will be a big year for what3words, as we continue to build a global standard, helping everyone talk about everywhere. In the last six months alone, some of the biggest names in automotive, logistics and e-commerce have integrated our technology. For example, boohoo group in the UK and Vietnam's HSV Group (Reebok Vietnam, TheFaceShop, and Beauty Box) have added checkout fields for what3words addresses, and DHL Parcel App UK has made what3words readily available to all their retailers. In the last year we have also announced partnerships with leading OEMs including Subaru, VinFast and Jaguar Land Rover who have adopted the tech for seamless navigation. And every day we see humbling and impactful emergency rescue stories where our tech is being used for good.