

Mozilla Foundation ED Mark Surman Says Open Source 1st Open for All And Easy to Learn

A community activist and technology executive of 20+ years, **Mark Surman** currently serves as the Executive Director of the Mozilla Foundation, makers of Firefox and one of the largest social enterprises in the world. At Mozilla, he is focused on using the open technology and ethos of the web to transform fields such as education, journalism and filmmaking. Mark has overseen the development of Popcorn.js, which Wired has called the future of online video; the Open Badges initiative, launched by the US Secretary of Education; and the Knight Mozilla News Technology partnership, which seeks to reinvent the future of digital journalism. He also leading the campaign for Firefox OS. Recently, Mozilla in association with Grameenphone has lunched Firefox OS based Smartphone in Bangladesh.

Few days back, Mark has visited Bangladesh and **Jabed Morshed (JM)** has the opportunity to have a interview with him about Mozilla, Open Source, Firefox OS and many more. Here is the highlight of the interview.

JM: Welcome to Bangladesh, Mark. Tell me about your impression about Bangladesh and Bangladeshi ICT sector.

Mark: Thank you. First of all I am to tell you, this is my second visit to Bangladesh. I came here back in 2008 and many things have changed since then. ICT movement was just getting momentum then but now even many of the government services have been delivered through online. Mobile and Internet usages have grown very fast which is a very positive sign of the ICT growth. Last but not the least is the aspiration among the people and the government for the digital society.

JM: How do you see the open source campaign in Bangladesh?

Mark: Bangladesh is doing very good to spread the idea of open source and open philosophy. The Mozilla community here is working very hard and arranging many workshop and seminars.

JM: How Bangladeshi students can be benefited from Open source?

Mark: The good thing about Open source is that it is open for all and easy to learn. Anyone can contribute in it. We made our technology very modular and flexible so that anyone can easily understand and contribute.

JM: What is your comment on localization?

Mark: Every nation is very rich in local contents. It needs to be digitalized and shared. Thus there is a need for local content eco-system. If we can establish this eco-system, then it will be easier for both the technology people and the users to get the content in localized form.

JM: What do you mean by content eco-system? Would you please explain it for our readers?

Mark: In this eco-system, there will be 3 components,

Enable Technology to Easily Create Local Content, Create Local Content, Successful Business Model For Local Content.

JM: Web Maker is getting very popular these days. Tell us about your vision about this project.

Mark: It's a call to action to teach someone something about the web, and summer 2013 is when we really kicked it off with our Maker Party. Some 1,700 events happened around the summer in just in the course of three months. We're also starting to work with schools and looking at formal curriculum. One of the Mozilla Festival's aims is to extend this education principle. Mozfest isn't just about web development tools. There are some people there developing curriculum on how to do web development. There are some people looking at privacy; there are some people looking at how to bring more of the web into games. All these people have a hacker ethic and are looking at how we build the value of the web into all aspects of our society. In Bangladesh, the Mozilla



community is also arranging many web makers party every year.

JM: Mozilla is bringing Firefox OS for Smartphone. What is your vision about it?

Mark: Once upon a time, people were dependent on one web browser. We have changed that culture and now there are many web browsers. User can choose based on their preference and comortness. Like the web browser domain in the past, current Smartphone is also dominated by only few global players. To promote the idea of Open source and Open Internet we are bringing Firefox OS in the market.

JM: What is the response of Firefox OS in the global market?

Mark: We are getting enormous positive response around the globe. Recently we have lunched Firefox OS based Smartphone in India and 60 thousand pieces have been sold in 3 days.

JM: What are the special features of this Operating system?

Mark: First of all, it will be much cheaper than any other leading smartphone. It will also give the user the experience of Open Internet. User can be benefited in many ways from open internet. It will be fast, secure and easy for localization.

JM: Will we see Bangla Keyboard in Firefox OS?

Mark: I have said earlier that our local community members are working hard. One of their main contributions is localization. You will be happy to know that the

bangla keyboard has been developed by the Bangladeshi young open source volunteers.

JM: Please share some of your future plan about Mozilla.

Mark: When Mozilla started its journey it was a small community. Everybody knew everybody. But the community has grown very large over the period of time. We, in Mozilla want the Open Internet and Internet for all. We are working on it and we are also trying to integrate open source and open Internet in everyone's digital life style.

JM: Thank you for your time and I am welcoming you again in Bangladesh.

Mark: You are most welcome 