THE GENESIS
Just before the birth of their daughter, Matt and Melissa Hammersley’s friends organized a literary-themed baby shower to celebrate their new addition. As gifts, they were given children’s book after children’s book and a friend read some aloud to the gathered guests. When she started to read *On the Night You Were Born* by Nancy Tillman, the simple beauty of the book came to life! Using only her voice, she added sound effects for the wind blowing over oceans and trumpets announcing the baby’s arrival. The whole room fell in love with the book, and Matt and Melissa knew if everyone could read in that way, every child would fall in love with reading.

Good stories have always had the ability to captivate the youngest imaginations, but today, books often lose out to flashier forms of entertainment. Novel Effect’s groundbreaking app makes it easier for parents, teachers, librarians, and caregivers to engage a child with a book and together create a memorable moment.

In the three years since that baby shower, Novel Effect has won several media and parenting awards. The initial concept of bringing kids and parents together over books has grown into a platform that allows voice recognition technology to complement rather than distract from personal interactions. This patent-pending platform has expanded Novel Effect’s ability to work on a variety of mediums including animation, film, toys, games, and IoT. And the Hammersley family has expanded to include Eleanor, now three and Max, four months.

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MATT HAMMERSLEY
Matt Hammersley is co-founder and CEO of Novel Effect. A lifelong entrepreneur, Matt began his first startup as a child selling tomatoes at a roadside stand. He went on to spend more than a decade as an engineer and patent attorney in South Carolina, Delaware and Texas before co-founding Novel Effect with his wife. He loves traveling, golf and Clemson football. He’s passionate about telling great stories and his two children who serve as his nightly audience at their home in Seattle.

MELISSA HAMMERSLEY
Melissa Hammersley is co-founder and Chief Design Officer of Novel Effect. A self-described military brat, Melissa spent her formative years moving from place to place across the United States. She’s a SCAD educated graphic designer and former owner of a patent illustration business who oversees all aspects of design for Novel Effect. She loves fancy pens and has an growing collection of sketchbooks waiting to be filled. She lives in Seattle with her husband and co-founder and their four children, only two of which have fur.

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