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Happy endings: Ashcroft puts millions into McNab's eBooks



By Simon Evans

Lord Ashcroft, the deputy chairman of the Conservative Party, has taken a stake in the mobile phone eBook venture of Andy McNab, the SAS soldier turned author.

Lord Ashcroft, left, has bought a minority holding in Spoken Entertainment Group, worth "millions of pounds". The group, which launched in May this year, will use the cash to expand into the German and US markets.

Tony Lynch, co-founder of the firm alongside Andy McNab, said: "We've only been in existence for six months, but we've been caught by surprise at the extent of the interest. It's gone mad."

Customers of GoSpoken.com can text the group to pay for text or audio versions of a range of books that are sent to their mobiles.

The group recently struck a partnership deal with Vodafone and is in talks with a number of other providers and handset makers, including BlackBerry.

"The business community is very much a target for us," added Mr Lynch. "Someone can easily get the new Warren Buffett book sent directly to their handset."