

# developed

## *The App Economy Tour*

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Developed | The App Economy Tour is a series of events that brings entrepreneurs, business leaders, industry experts, and local, state, and federal officials together for an eye-opening discussion on next-generation apps, game-changing mobile solutions, and innovations driving the app ecosystem. These events are an opportunity for developers and entrepreneurs, at any stage of the development or business cycle, to get more insight into how to build a brand, what rules and regulations they must be mindful of, how to get into app stores quickly and efficiently, and how to figure out what comes next in terms of funding streams and business opportunities.



## Boulder, Colorado

### Tuesday, October 8, 2019

The app economy is a \$1.7 trillion ecosystem led by U.S. companies. The app marketplace is growing in areas outside of traditional tech hubs. In the United States, more than 83 percent of app companies are located outside of Silicon Valley, and 13 percent operate in rural or suburban areas.

Our third stop on Developed | The App Economy Tour took us to Boulder, Colorado. While Colorado may not be a tech hub “on the coast,” the tech sector throughout the state has a profound influence on innovation across the country. The event on October 8th focused on companies that chose Colorado as the place to grow their business and included a discussion featuring panelists representing the various components of the app ecosystem.



## Developed | Speakers

The panelists shared their experiences as developers or working with developers and answered questions on how increasing attention from policymakers may shape the next 10 years of the app revolution.

## Developed | Panelists



Trish Thomas is the CEO of TEEM, a full-service marketing, branding, and digital agency based in Boulder. During the panel, Trish shared her expertise on marketing and growth strategies for small businesses, and her perspectives and advice on creating and managing brands in the digital economy.



Jon Carroll is the chief technology officer of Sphero, an educational company focusing on building little robots, education products, and developing kids' skills and interests in STEAM. During the panel, Jon shared his experiences with growing a business in Boulder, Sphero's efforts to secure funding rounds and work with accelerators, and how companies can get more involved in the Boulder tech community.



Andrea Orrego is the CEO and founder of Atelier, a home design app based in Snowmass Village. Atelier's mission is to expand the reach of design and make it available to every community in the world. During the panel, Andrea shared her experiences with launching a new app, and discussed the resources available to small businesses in Boulder.



Andy Merritt is the state director for Senator Cory Gardner, who was first elected to the U.S. Senate in 2014 and is closing in on the end of his first term. Andy was previously chief defense industry officer for the Chamber & Economic Development Corporation for Colorado Springs. During the panel, Andy talked about Senator Gardner's efforts to support small businesses and also shared his experiences in economic development in Colorado.

## Developed | Panel

The discussion covered a wide range of topics, including workforce development and access to talent, resources available to developers and small businesses looking to build or grow their company while staying in Boulder, and some key policy areas for small tech companies including privacy, encryption, and broadband infrastructure.



“Way back when the App Store first came out, my friends said ‘oh, don’t go develop apps, it’s just a fad.’ Well, look at us now.” Jon Carroll explaining his history and the history of Sphero from a single app to a company with a suite of apps, and their connected devices, all available on the App Store.



When discussing the effects of sweeping new privacy laws, Trish explained that in many cases, these developments can give companies a leg up from a business perspective. “As complex as GDPR is on the marketing front, it’s great from a global standpoint. We can get to a point where data can help us, not hurt us.”



Workforce issues are hugely important for companies in Boulder. As Andrea pointed out, finding talent is often a major challenge, and she had to go to Craigslist to find and hire her first developer. That said, there are resources in the community that can help. As Andy explained, if you tap into the networks available through accelerators and incubators, “there is talent you can recruit and companies you can partner with to solve problems and find opportunities.”

“Developers don’t know how to comply with all of these different regulations. Platforms are trying to put some compliance guardrails in there to help.” - Trish Thomas

## Developed | Your Backyard

When considering difficult policy issues, the first question you likely ask is, “how will this affect my constituents?” At Developed | Boulder, we asked those questions directly to your constituents. During Developed events, Members and their staffs have the opportunity to speak directly with small business constituents about the app ecosystem, their relationships with software platforms, and how regulations affect their ability to grow and create jobs. We are happy to facilitate ongoing dialogue between your office and any of our panelists. Let us know if you would like more information on Developed | The App Economy Tour, the panelists from our Boulder event, or how you can get more information on policy issues critical to small businesses in Boulder.

“Community is everything. Find a Meetup in your area. If you are looking to hire or looking for a job, look local first.”  
- Jon Carroll



If you have any questions or would like more information, please reach out to the App Association's senior director for public policy, Graham Dufault.

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