

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.



New Orleans, Louisiana

Thursday, January 23, 2020

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 eighth stop on Developed | The App Economy Tour took us to New Orleans. Famously home to a thriving community of food, music, art, and history enthusiasts, New Orleans set its sights on tech in the aftermath of Katrina. As the city began to rebuild, the local government saw an opportunity to improve their infrastructure and make the city a friendly, resource-rich place for small companies to thrive. Since then, New Orleans has seen an influx of innovation, entrepreneurs, and startups, and the development of public and private resources and a diverse community dedicated to helping small businesses in the city succeed. The event on January 23rd included a discussion featuring panelists representing the various components of New Orleans's tech community who shared their thoughts on how companies can utilize the resources and community in New Orleans.



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Michael Ince, director of intergovernmental affairs for the Office of the Louisiana Lt. Governor, kicked off the event. During his opening remarks, Michael discussed the work he has done in the Lt. Governor's office to support innovation across the state, and shared some of the app-driven programs that the Lt. Governor's office has launched that support and highlight everything from tourism to small business directories to calendars of events throughout the state and how the attendees could get involved.

Following Michael, Keith D. Lampkin, chief of staff for New Orleans City Councilmember At-Large Jason Rogers Williams, discussed the programs and initiatives the city council has undertaken to support small business and innovation in the city of New Orleans and shared some of the resources his office has created for entrepreneurs throughout the city.

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Aaron Walker is the founder and CEO of Camelback Ventures, an accelerator that works to identify, develop, and promote early stage entrepreneurs from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds that are looking to launch companies that focus on social impact. During the panel, Aaron gave attendees practical advice on ways they should be approaching VCs or other potential funders and shared his thoughts on what startups should expect from the wide variety of funding partners. He also provided insights into what funders are looking for in companies and the kinds of programs startups should look for if they are seeking more than just capital.



Giana Darville is studying public relations and political science at Oakwood University. After joining Apple's Corporate Communications department as an intern over the summer, Giana continues to serve as a Thurgood Marshall College Fund Apple HBCU Scholar. She is working to increase pipelines for multicultural professionals in tech by providing resources and services to students and professionals of diverse backgrounds. During the panel, Giana gave attendees advice on how to improve their networking skills and how to best utilize their connections. She also shared her thoughts on how companies can help to improve the overall diversity in tech.



Louis David is vice president of industry attraction & retention for the New Orleans Business Alliance (NOLABA), a public/private organization that is the lead economic development organization for the City of New Orleans and Orleans Parish. During the panel, Louis shared his experiences recruiting and retaining companies and talent in the technology, manufacturing, bio, and emerging industries. He also pointed to some resources in New Orleans that companies should be leaning on as they look to grow their ideas, market, workforce, and strategy.



Maxwell Walters is an alumnus of Boston College and Venture for America. He is currently responsible for business development at Revelry, a custom development firm, with a focus on helping partners understand the Revelry approach to building digital products. During the panel, Maxwell explored a variety of business models, breaking down the major problems and objectives within organizations. He also urged developers to think strategically about how software can be a solution, while finding ways to help through connections.

Developed | Panel

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.

The discussion covered a wide range of topics, including regulatory compliance and the importance of good privacy practices, workforce development and access to diverse talent, and the resources available to developers and startups in New Orleans. Panelists also provided insight and advice for companies seeking funding, ways to use their uniqueness and their location as a marketing edge, and ways to think about overall business growth strategies.



When discussing resources available to companies in the city, Louis pointed out that the diverse community and history of New Orleans gives companies a unique perspective they should tap into when building a business. “The New Orleans tech community doesn’t need to be the next Silicon Valley. We should use our unique experiences to create products and services to compete with Silicon Valley.”

Maxwell implored entrepreneurs in the room to think through what they really need in order to make their idea a successful business and suggested they reach out to others in the community for a “gut check.” “If you have a good idea, pump the brakes before you do it. When I talk to businesses or entrepreneurs who want to create an app, I ask them what their objectives are, who their audience is, and how much time and resources do they have to get from point A to point B.”

“Find six people with the same desires and drive. They know six other people, and those people know six other people,” said Gianna Darville when discussing the importance and role of community in the overall success of a startup.

“We recently invested in a company creating an app for parents and kids who may not have the same native language to communicate. Apps can empower people who need it the most.”

Aaron Walker

Developed | Your Backyard

When considering difficult policy issues, the first question you likely ask is, “how will this impact my constituents?” At Developed | New Orleans, we asked those questions directly to your constituents. During Developed events, Members of Congress and their staffs get 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 the 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 New Orleans event, or how you can get more information on policy issues critical to small businesses in New Orleans.

“We want to make New Orleans one of the tech hubs in the United States.”
Keith D. Lampkin



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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