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The App Economy Tour

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.
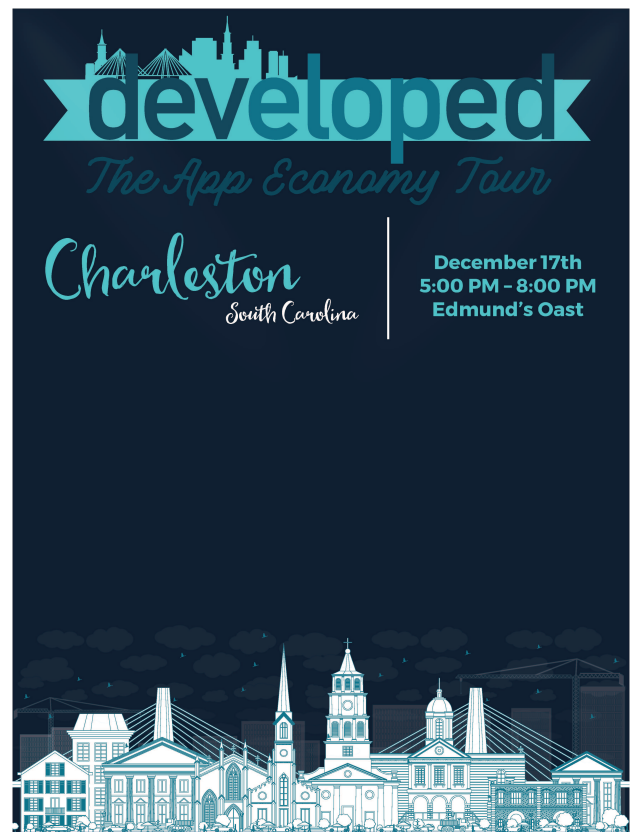
Charleston, South Carolina
Tuesday, December 17, 2019

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 last Developed | The App Economy Tour event of 2019 brought us to Charleston, South Carolina. Companies in Charleston are often known for their government contracting work and dedication to cybersecurity, but over the last few years the city has become a hub for small companies that span industries while focusing on building a tech community in the south. During the event, our panelists discussed how to bridge the digital talent gap by empowering students and the changing workforce in the community and highlighted Charleston programs and entrepreneurial groups that attendees could turn to for business support.

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Charleston
South Carolina

**December 17th
5:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Edmund's Oast**

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1401 K Street NW Suite 501
Washington, DC 20005
202-331-2130
www.actonline.org

Developed | Speakers

To kickoff the event, Tracy McKee, Charleston's chief innovation officer, gave opening remarks. As the first-ever chief innovation officer in Charleston, Tracy focuses on several pressing problems that come up at the intersection of data, government, and technology, including the impact technical reviews have on city staff. She's also working on a project to deal with potential flooding via predictive analytics tools, community mapping, and historical data. During her remarks, Tracy discussed the work her team does to harness data-driven tools to make Charleston a better place to live and the opportunities for small businesses to get involved in the development of these tools and the use of city and government collected data.

Developed | Panelists

Katrina Rosemund is an Apple HBCU Scholar and a current master's student at Howard University studying computer science with a concentration in cybersecurity. Katrina has also interned with multiple leading companies and government agencies, most recently with Apple where she worked on the iPhone hardware team. Katrina discussed her experiences in the Apple Scholar Program and provided insight on how to get students, especially minority students, excited and involved in coding programs and related internships, mentor opportunities, and professional programs.

Kaity Miller is the director of continuing education at Level Up Coding Institute, Charleston's newest coding bootcamp. Formerly with The Iron Yard, she was recruited to join the team at ECPI University to create a program to help fill the gap in the local technology workforce. She is also the organizer and one of the emcees for Charleston's chapter of 1 Million Cups. Kaity shared insights on resources for small businesses in Charleston and discussed how developers could get involved in her work to bridge the talent gap in Charleston.

Glenn Starkman is the co-founder of Soteria, a cybersecurity firm headed by experienced former members of the NSA and industry experts. During the panel, Glenn discussed the importance of privacy and security for companies of all sizes and recommended that all founders think about security from the beginning. Glenn also highlighted the need for security solutions that are scalable while not overly burdensome and the need for robust end-to-end encryption. Notably, Glenn cautioned against any mandated backdoors, as they weaken overall security and privacy measures.

Peter Lamotte is a marketing, advertising, and communications executive with corporate leadership experience and a focus on innovation and business strategy. After four years with a Washington, DC, startup, Peter is now with Chernoff Newman in Charleston. During the panel, Peter discussed scalable marketing solutions that work well for small businesses just starting out. He also highlighted a few areas where policy, compliance, and marketing intersect and can help small businesses set themselves apart.

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Wiley Becker leads the due diligence function at Alerion Ventures and previously was principal for Square 1 Ventures. Before coming to Charleston, Wiley founded a fund in New Orleans. Wiley discussed the areas where VCs spend the most time and ask the most questions. He also provided insight into some key sectors for VCs including big data and machine learning. Wiley also shared a few programs based in Charleston that small businesses could get involved in as they are looking for funding or mentorship.

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 privacy, encryption, and workforce development. The panelists also discussed their experiences with funding and marketing, shared advice on how to tap into the resources available to developers and small businesses in Charleston, and ways small businesses can and do benefit from their relationships with platforms.

Kaity urged attendees to look locally for support. "There is a huge gap in local workforce in tech. There are 500,000 unfilled computing jobs in the United States. Level Up is trying to fill those gaps with our 16-week program. Find community. If you don't have people to bounce your ideas off of, chances are you will have a harder time taking your ideas all the way to a complete business."

When discussing the importance of end-to-end encryption and security, Glenn encouraged attendees to think seriously about their practices. "Founders should be focused on security. You don't have to spend a lot to have a secure product. Once you provide a backdoor, and that backdoor is found by other people, it's over."

When it comes to funding, Wiley explains that understanding what the consumer needs is a key factor. "We talk to early customers of products and see how they're using the product – what they like and what they don't – so we can make the best investment."

"It's all about trust. With all the risk that is out there, make your clients feel safe. From our standpoint, we need to convey that level of trust, and platforms help with that." Peter Lamotte

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Developed | Your Backyard

When considering difficult policy issues, the first question you likely ask is, "how will this affect my constituents?" At Developed | Charleston, we asked those questions directly to your constituents. During Developed events, Members and their staff 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 Charleston event, or how you can get more information on policy issues critical to small businesses in Charleston.

"Even if you become a software engineer, you need to know security. Go in, learn security, build a better app, and create a better ecosystem." Katrina Rosemond

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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