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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.

Seattle, Washington
Friday, October 25, 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 fifth stop on Developed | The App Economy Tour took us to Seattle, Washington. When it comes to tech, Seattle is well established as a home for innovation, but over the last 10 years the city became a hub for small businesses with a vibrant community that is already making astonishing contributions that span industries. The event on October 25th focused on companies that chose Seattle as the place to grow their business and included a discussion featuring panelists representing the various components of the app ecosystem.

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OCT. 25
9:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.
13 Coins
SEATTLE
WASHINGTON

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Developed | Speakers

To kickoff the event, Congresswoman Suzan DelBene gave opening remarks. Congresswoman DelBene is a graduate of Reed College, where she earned a bachelor's in Biology, followed by an MBA from the University of Washington. Before her time as an elected official, Congresswoman DelBene spent more than two decades in technology, both as an entrepreneur and business leader. Congresswoman DelBene serves on the House Ways and Means Committee and is the co-chair of the Women's High Tech Caucus and the Internet of Things Caucus, among others. During her remarks, the Congresswoman shared details of her proposed privacy bill, the Information Transparency & Personal Data Control Act, which would set a national standard and enact several privacy reforms, including a privacy audit requirement. Congresswoman DelBene also discussed the need to amend outdated laws like the Email Communication Privacy Act to keep up with and meet modern technology and expectations.

Developed | Panelists

Jens Francis is a serial entrepreneur and investor with 25 years of experience in Silicon Valley and Seattle. Jens spent six years as the co-founder and chief investment officer of Washington-based AngelMD where he oversaw both the venture fund and syndicate investment business. Currently, Jens serves as the managing partner of the Faultline Group, where he is building two new funds. During the panel, Jens shared his thoughts on what companies should expect from their VCs, how to choose the best financier for their business, and how to use regulatory compliance as a tool when pitching to a VC.

Jennifer Sunshine Steffens is the CEO of IOActive, a cybersecurity firm that works with companies across the globe. Since joining IOActive in 2008, Jennifer has been lauded by *Forbes* magazine, the *Wall Street Journal*, and *Information Security Magazine*, won a Top Management award in 2017 from *SC Magazine*, and last year, she was IT Security CEO of the Year in *CV Magazine*. During the panel, Jennifer shared her thoughts on the value of security by design and strong privacy standards, business resources available to developers in the community, and how to get more involved in Seattle tech.

Mike Sax is the founder of Wellbeyond, an app company that aims to help you live simpler and feel better. With more than two decades working in tech as a business owner, developer, and tech policy advocate, Mike's focus during the panel spanned his experiences as a small company owner and the role platforms have played in his business growth and development. He also shared insights into policy areas developers should be paying attention to and how they can get involved in the advocacy process.

Nick Horowitz is a senior director in the Waxman Strategies technology practice and brings more than 12 years of public relations experience working with a broad portfolio of technology brands. During the panel, Nick shared tips and tricks startups can use to develop and execute innovative brand messaging strategies. He also discussed how to use features built into platforms and regulatory compliance measures as ways to help your company stand out.

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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 machine learning. The panelists also discussed their experiences with funding, shared advice on how to tap into the resources available to developers and small businesses in Seattle, and ways small businesses can and do benefit from their relationship with platforms.

When discussing why small companies should consider making Seattle their home, Jennifer said, "there are so many resources in Seattle to help small businesses. It's an exciting time to found a company here, and it's really a strong and vibrant community."
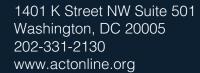
When giving advice to companies seeking funding, Jens said, "the best thing to do with a VC is to know what's happening on the other side of the table. Hold them accountable for what they say they're going to do."

Platforms have allowed for the rapid growth of the app economy. As Nick explained, "the biggest benefit that we have with platforms is that platforms take away friction. You ask, 'where did you get that software?' And the response is 'oh, on the App Store.'"

"People trust the platform. Platforms create consumer trust for a small business that doesn't have name recognition." - Mike Sax

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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 | Seattle, 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 Seattle event, or how you can get more information on policy issues critical to small businesses in Seattle.

"Be thoughtful about privacy on your own. Ask yourself 'what am I doing with customer data?' and ask 'why?'"
- Congresswoman Suzan DelBene

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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