

Project Overview



Apps for Democracy

“Community Edition”



Interactive Strategy - Experiential Marketing - Content Creation

Back Story

"Apps for Democracy produced more savings for the D.C. government than any other initiative." – Vivek Kundra, former CTO of Washington, DC and current Federal CIO.

On September 11, 2008, Vivek Kundra asked iStrategyLabs how we could make DC.gov's revolutionary Data Catalog (<http://data.octo.dc.gov>) useful for the citizens, visitors, businesses and government agencies of Washington, DC. The Data Catalog contains all manner of open public data featuring real-time crime feeds, school test scores, and poverty indicators, and is the most comprehensive of its kind in the world.

We knew that the old way of spending millions of taxpayer dollars with big, slow contractors was a broken model in need of fixing. Our answer was to hold an innovation contest where we put the data in the hands of our talented citizens, and gave them cash prizes and recognition for their efforts in developing technology for their neighbors and city government.

We therefore created Apps for Democracy (APPS08 for short) – **a contest that cost Washington, DC \$50,000 and returned 47 iPhone, Facebook and web applications with an estimated value in excess of \$2,300,000 to the city.** This figure was provided by DC's Office of Chief Technology Officer as a sum of the individual costs to develop the apps, plus the internal human resources that it would have cost the city to procure and manage the project. **That's a 4000% ROI.** APPS08 reduced the time it would take to create new technology for the DC government from an estimated two-year period to 30 days. We brought the entire contest framework to life and launched it to the world in six days.

APPS08 has gone on to inspire the Apps for America contest by The Sunlight Foundation, INCA 09 in Belgium, and planned initiatives in Toronto, Philadelphia, New York and Finland. APPS08 is also under consideration for a United Nations Public Service Award.

We encourage you to visit <http://www.appsfordemocracy.org> to see for yourself how citizen talent combined with transparent government data can produce innovation unlike any other method. In the application directory you'll find apps that make citizens lives in DC better by making data on crime, carpooling, procurements, parking, biking, partying and a bunch of other things usable, useful and appealing. Many of the apps are open source so you can download the code and install your own versions if you like!



What's Next

By all measures, APPS08 was a success. However, early on we knew there was no time to pat ourselves on the back because this was just the beginning. Through the course of the contest and after, we solicited insights into how citizen-driven innovation could work even better. Over the past few months, after innumerable conference presentations and focus groups with the brightest minds in technology, we've defined a "Cradle-to-Grave Framework for Citizen-Driven Innovation." We're about to put it to the test with APPS09. Here's how it works:

RED = Not included in APPS08 (1, 7, and 8)

1. Problem & Idea Sourcing

- a. Source insights from the community so pressing needs and best ideas can be identified. Focus on inclusion and diversity.
- b. Crystallize input for consumption by technology developer community.

2. Open Data

- a. Identify what open data is available that can be combined with #1.
- b. If open data is not available, get the data published openly if possible.

3. Sponsorship by Government, Brand or Non-Profit Organizations

- a. For prizes, marketing, site build, staffing, etc.

4. Contest Framework

- a. Rules, prizes, deadlines, submission process, judging, digital and physical collaboration methods including code jams, and social events.

5. Launch and Run

- a. Social media marketing, buzz monitoring, community management, physical event creation. Staffed and run by tech community ambassadors.

6. Award

- a. Judging, awards ceremony, payouts, press conference etc.

7. Support of winning apps

- a. Main sponsor provides ongoing app support/augmentation funds
- b. If no app is worthy, no ongoing support occurs
- c. If sponsor doesn't want to support, other entities will have the option to

8. Commercialization

- a. Introduction of promising apps and developers to angles and VCs
- b. Mentorship by iStrategyLabs

That all being said, we're ready to put this cradle-to-grave method to the test with the next iteration of Apps for Democracy (hereafter APPS09).



APPS09 Execution

DC.gov wants to hear citizens' ideas about problems that could be solved through technology, as well as their ideas about the perfect system to receive feedback and service requests.

Our mission is to make living in and visiting Washington, DC a better experience for all through the use of citizen-driven technology innovation.

Additionally, we seek to provide model frameworks, methodologies and examples for other governments so they, too, can better serve their citizens. The technologies developed for DC.gov will be open source and creative commons licensed so citizens of federal, state, local and international governments can build from the foundation we have provided.

APPS09 will take part in two distinct phases:

Phase I (May 2009):

iStrategyLabs will seek to engage the populace of Washington, DC to ask for their input into what they'd like to see in the form of a DC Community Platform. We'll use appsfordemocracy.org blog posts, email surveys, video testimonials, voice call-in captures, twitter update submissions, in-person town halls, physical meetings with community groups, and more.

An input and voting platform is here (<http://insights.appsfordemocracy.org>), or you can call/txt 202-683-9980.

We'll create teams of tech community ambassadors and give them the tools to capture insights from their neighbors. These teams will compete to capture the deepest and broadest insights possible. The best team will be rewarded with a \$1000 "Social Citizen Award" and public recognition incentives for their participation. Our goal is to receive insight from at least 5000 citizens of Washington, DC in a 30-day period.

Lastly, we plan to hold a "[Social Citizen Sunday](#)" citywide event on May 17th, during which people will be encouraged to capture insights from their neighbors about the ideas they have related to making DC a better place through technology.



The result of Phase I will be a comprehensive multimedia guide covering the “Citizen Driven Technology Requirements” that will inform our work in Phase II.

Phase II (June 2009):

Armed with comprehensive information about the needs of DC citizens that can be addressed with technology, we’ll engage talented citizens to build solutions to meet their needs. This phase will be an innovation contest similar to APPS08, but will have a different desired outcome.

The desired outcome of APPS09 Phase II is three-fold:

1. Receive a multitude of working web application prototypes that conform to the following requirements:
 - a. Built on open source technology and released under creative commons public domain license
 - b. Accessible and usable by all citizens
 - c. Utilizes the city’s 311 API for feedback submission (available mid-May)
 - d. Visualizes data contained in <http://data.octo.dc.gov> and/or ties in applications additionally developed during APPS08, which can be found here: <http://www.appsfordemocracy.org/application-directory/>
 - e. Determine via judging and community voting the best solution that will be promoted city-wide as the city’s official feedback platform
2. If the winning entrant is of sufficient quality, iStrategyLabs will provide a “Tech Community Grant” for 9 months to the winner for further iteration and support of the application
3. If the winning entrant’s solution is of sufficient quality, and holds promise for use outside of Washington, DC, iStrategyLabs will provide the winner with angle investor meetings, mentorship and marketing support



Prize Structure

Awards	Count	Prize
Social Citizen Award	1	\$1,000
Round 1 First Place	1	\$3,000
Round 1 Second Place	1	\$2,000
Round 2 First Place	1	\$3,000
Round 2 Second Place	1	\$2,000
Final Round	1	\$10,000
Community Grant Option*	1	\$14,000
Total	6	\$35,000

Phase II of APPS09 is the technology development contest that will be broken out a little differently into multiple award stages to ensure that we have a very viable platform in the end. It is also tied to a BarCamp un-conference that will feature all of the community-sourced research for attendees to digest, with a code jam lasting two days. Round 1 of the awards structure will conclude at the end of BarCamp, where all prototypes are demo'd live to attendees, and awards are presented shortly thereafter.

Round 2 will be two weeks subsequent to Round 1, and could have a different winner depending on teams' progress. The final prize winner will be determined by OCTO at the end of Phase II and will feature an awards ceremony to celebrate the winner and all participants.

If one team wins all rounds, they could win \$16,000. An additional \$14,000 in grants for the next 9 months is also possible if OCTO chooses to exercise this option. That's a total of \$30,000 possible for one team.



Timeline

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Today ◀ ▶ Monday, May 4 ▼ 🖨️ Print 📅 Week 📅 Month 📅 Agenda ▼

Monday, May 4
9:00am APPS09 Press Conference
Sunday, May 17
9:00am Social Citizen Sunday
Saturday, June 6
2 Day Code Jam (\$5000 in Prizes)
Sunday, June 7
2 Day Code Jam (\$5000 in Prizes)
Sunday, June 21
9:00pm Round 2 App Submissions Due (\$5000 in Prizes)
Monday, June 22
6:00pm Round 2 Apps Review and Awards Granted
Wednesday, July 1
11:30pm Final App Submissions Due

Events shown in time zone: Eastern Time + Google Calendar

Contact:
Peter Corbett
CEO, iStrategyLabs
Cell: 917-748-3595
peter@istrategylabs.com



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