Alameda County Apps Challenge 2012

Hackathon #1

Getting Started, Lessons Learned and Everything in Between

Contents

Appendices

Foreword

In December 2012, the Castro Valley Library was the setting for the Alameda County Apps Challenge 2012, a public "hackathon''. Members of the community were invited to combine technology and transparent government to develop apps or concepts that would benefit Alameda County residents, businesses and/or visitors by using at least one dataset from our online data portal (http://data.acgov.org).

Having heard about hackathon successes at corporate events, I brought the concept back to the County and presented the Information Technology Department with a challenge of its own – hosting the first event of its kind sponsored by Alameda County. The Apps Challenge was extremely successful, with more than 120 participants and submissions by 24 teams. In five hours of hacking, several mobile apps were created that clearly benefited the citizens of Alameda County including Bookit!, ACPOI and ACPARKS.

The apps challenge not only highlighted the wealth of creative minds and technological prowess that exists in our community, it also showcased the County's commitment to transparency and community engagement. Throughout planning and Event Day, the County took pains to send the public a message that County Data is public data. The Apps Challenge and similar County-sponsored events in the future will offer opportunities for the public to take ownership of this data and work with it in ways that will expand public knowledge of local government.

The following document outlines the effort that went into planning the Apps Challenge and is intended to examine closely the key lessons learned in planning and hosting the event. More information about the Apps Challenge is available at http://code.acgov.org.

Susan S. Muranishi
County Administrator
Alameda County, California

March 2013

I Introduction

With 24 teams representing more than 120 participants offering a host of creative ideas, the Alameda County Apps Challenge or Hackathon#1 was an example of open government at its best: transparency, open data, and collaboration to provide apps that benefited the citizens of Alameda County. Providing a modern venue, open datasets, not to mention free food and prize money, the event attracted an imaginative and energetic cross-section of the Alameda County community representing varying backgrounds and skill sets. While this day-long event charted new territory for Alameda County - great planning, a great team, executive support and widespread community participation made it an overwhelming success. This paper aims to share with you our experience - the good and the bad - in planning and hosting Alameda County's Apps Challenge 2012.

1.1 Hackathon

Given that we wanted this event to be a positive and constructive community experience, the term "Hackathon'' may appear to be a misnomer, as it may conjure images of some sort of physical endurance contest involving sneaky programmers bent on a sinister plan to break into secured systems. But as these kinds of code-writing collaborations gain traction in communities across the country, and indeed the world, the terms 'hack' and "hackathon'' are taking on a positive meaning. Hackathon is best defined in Wikipedia- A Hackathon (also known as a hack day, hackfest or codefest) is an event in which computer programmers and others in the field of software development, like graphic designers, interface designers, and project managers and collaborate intensively on software projects[1]. The word "Hackathon" comes from combining the words 'hack' and 'marathon', and implies a long sprint to create something useful in a single event.

1.2 Open Government or Gov 2.0

"Gov 2.0 is the next generation of government. It is a public service renewal where government becomes more efficient, responsive, and open to citizens. It is a paradigm shift and, with enough citizen engagement, it is a societal transformation that includes citizens in governmental deliberation and decision making. And today more governments around the world strive to become more open, transparent and citizen-centric"[2]. The sharing of public data and encouraging citizens to explore what is available is vital to this initiative. Government entities starting from the federal to state and local agencies are focusing on promoting transparency, and finding new and better ways to collaborate and participate with the public through the use of '2.0 technologies[3]' like social media, citizen centric websites and mobile applications.

[1] Hackathon. (n.d). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved on Dec 27, 2012 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hackathon
[2] P.,L.(09/15/2011) *What is Gov 2.0?* Retrieved on Dec 27,2012 from http://www.gov2u.org/index.php/blog/163-what-is-gov-20
[3] Walcott, M. (05/17/2007). What is Web 2.0. Money Watch. Retrieved on Dec 27, 2012 http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-505125_162-51066094/what-is-web-20/

1.3 Where the Two Worlds Collide

So how do Hackathons and Gov 2.0 come together? These two movements have been gaining momentum within two separate communities - developers and the civic minded. Hackathon events and the idea of open government intersected one another, about the time when the White House delivered an Open Government Directive[4] in 2009, placing an important emphasis on open data and sharing of information with the public. This interest has migrated from the Federal Government to local public sector agencies like Alameda County.

Government open data sites allow people to download a vast selection of data i.e. crime stats, property assessments, restaurant health inspections, available county services, etc., and to parse, analyze, and use the data in ways that meet their needs. Many people could extract information from the datasets using common tools such as Microsoft Word and Excel, but as software developers have gotten more deeply involved, they have been able to extend the data by combining programming languages, web services, geographic locations, and API's from third party tools, creating web and mobile applications.

The growing interest in parsing public data and increased emphasis on government transparency has combined to raise the appeal of government-hosted Hackathons. Within a course of several days or even several hours, depending on the event, a Hackathon can bring civic minded people together with talented developers for creative collaborations resulting in web and mobile apps that citizens can use immediately. The process in which participants define the app they need and how they will use it – and then providing the opportunity for them to create the app themselves goes hand in hand with Abraham Lincoln's famous statement from the Gettysburg Address, "a government of the people, for the people, by the people."

1.4 Alameda County Apps Challenge 2012 and the Open Data Initiative

Alameda County officially kicked off its data sharing efforts in 2011 when the Alameda County Board of Supervisors created a Data Sharing Committee co-chaired by the Interim Director of Information Technology Department (ITD) and the County Administrator's Office (CAO). This committee was organized to address both internal and external data sharing initiatives. The centerpiece of this effort was the Alameda County online data portal from Socrata[5], available at data.acgov.org, which offers easy-to-access links to eighty plus datasets of public information about County operations. Examples of datasets include records of 2012 crime reports taken by the Alameda County Sheriff's Office, data about restaurant inspections and information about local parks and transit districts.

The online data portal is expanding and evolving, as Alameda County responds to public requests for data. The portal encourages the public to use the datasets to create web and mobile applications that

[4] Executive Office of the President (2009) MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES (M-10-06) Retrieved from http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/memoranda_2010/m10-06.pdf

[5] Socrata is a developer and provider of open data services. Their open data platform transforms varying public sector information assets into organized and optimized data that can be easily consumed by the public, go to www.socrata.com for more information about the company.

address community needs and enhance the quality of life in Alameda County. It was also the central source of data for the inaugural Alameda County Hackathon.

In addition to Data Sharing, Alameda County expanded its communication via email subscription and then took a leap into social media communication with Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Meet-up, enabling Alameda County to reach a new generation of citizens. The County has also started using more visually focused sites such as YouTube, Flickr, and Pinterest. By reaching out to the public using different technologies and traditional means of communication, information is being shared with more people than ever before.

In 2012, Alameda County quickly became a great example of Government 2.0 – first, by receiving a third place award in the Best of the Web Awards, a joint endeavor of Government Technology and the Center for Digital Government, for designing a more user-friendly that encourages residents and businesses to conduct business with the County online as well as take advantage of a growing number of mobile applications extending our services to people on the go. As these efforts continued to gain traction, it made sense for Alameda County to step to the next level by hosting its first Hackathon - **Alameda County Apps Challenge 2012**.

II Learning about Hackathons

What is a Hackathon, what type of people attend, how do you run one? To become better educated, a small team comprised of the Interim Director and his two Deputy Directors reached out to other counties and cities with experience planning and/or hosting one of these events. Websites were researched to see how the sites were designed, the types of prizes given, the rules created, and the judging criteria used. The team read all the Hackathon tips that they could find on the Internet and shared what they learned at weekly project meetings. They met with many experts and attended as many events as possible. Everyone they met was extremely helpful. All events were attended for free and were a focus of Alameda County's efforts to develop new contacts in the Open Government community – contacts that would be essential later on as we worked to alert the community of our first-ever Hackathon event.

The first Hackathon attended was the Code for Oakland Hackathon, which was a two-day event. A Deputy Director advertised our data during the pitching of ideas and participated in developing an app called 510* Eats. The app used Alameda County restaurant data and won second prize. Attending the event was a great step for our Alameda County team, in that it provided them with an understanding of the challenges and the blizzard of details involved in organizing a Hackathon - logistics, people, software, tools, master of ceremonies, format, etc. From that day forward, it was clear that hosting our own Hackathon was not going to be easy.

Next, our team talked to Code for America and attended a Code for America Summit in San Francisco focusing on data driven decision making and how data can inform and reform education policy and bring about equity and justice in our cities. This introduced us to the importance of social media and having the right contacts.

To understand the local community, a Deputy Director attended "hack night'' at a local technology hotspot and salon known for supporting hackers and Hackathons, to reach out to the local hacker community.

To continue learning as much as possible, team members participated in a Greenbiz Hackathon at Code for America in San Francisco. Many participants were interviewed to find out what types of people attend Hackathons and how to attract them to our event since it would be in the suburbs rather than the more common urban setting. The team analyzed how the event was scheduled and organized, evaluated the website, and again looked at the tools used and the types of people in attendance.

Every available article on tips and tricks to successful Hackathons was obtained and read. People who had run Hackathons or participated in Hackathons were contacted and asked for advice. No stone was left unturned. Experts in the industry were sought out for advice and tips. This included people from Urban Strategies Council, Code for America, Socrata and other hackers our team met along the way.

The last conference attended was an unconference called CityCamp, which was sponsored by the City of Oakland just two weeks before our event. The theme was *"technology meets the citizens"* where working sessions were held to discuss current issues and how to solve them through technology. Our Interim Director led an impromptu session on Open Source and the Government which was well attended and received. Again, our team used the event as an opportunity to study logistics, reach out to the participants, obtain insights on operations, and finally, to learn how to most effectively promote our event (always marketing☺).

The many nights and weekends spent at these events and meeting with experts proved to be invaluable to our success. We developed insights about effective outreach, built a vast network of new contacts and obtained advice that turned out to be crucial to the planning of our Hackathon.

III. Getting Started

From the beginning, it was decided to treat the Apps Challenge as a project. Microsoft-Project was used for the project plan, a budget was allocated, and weekly stakeholder meetings and working sessions were held. Issues and risks were tracked and reported. Tasks that were late were followed-up on and reassigned if necessary. A formal agenda and minutes were produced to track weekly progress.

All documentation was housed in SharePoint – including design materials, marketing, project plans, links, reference materials, budget, sponsors, etc. for easy reference. Since this was our first Hackathon event, the plans, forms, check off lists, etc. had to be invented, designed and created from scratch. In addition to the normal project- tracking materials, a marketing plan and a logistics plan were created and refined in parallel to the regular activities.

3.1 Weekly Stakeholder Meetings

Our core team consisted of five representatives from ITD, and two from the CAO's office. Every stakeholder meeting began with a roundtable to discuss the previous week's events and any new decisions or ideas. We went through the project plan and reminded the team of upcoming tasks and

any late tasks. With both the Interim Director and the Principal Administrative Analyst in attendance, we were able to make decisions quickly or list those issues requiring input from a higher-level executive as needed. All decisions were documented through the minutes.

3.2 Eight Key Decisions

Eight decisions were required before we could officially kick-off our event and post our website:

1. Duration
2. Location
3. Date
4. Number of Participants
5. Theme
6. Budget
7. Prizes
8. Fees

Figure 1-Project Triangle

These eight decisions ultimately helped shape our project and defined the three pieces of the infamous project triangle-**Scope**, **Budget**, **Schedule**.

3.2.1 Duration

We watched and participated in events to learn how to organize our event. Some events were three days and one event was one day with a follow-up two months later. While we received recommendations favoring an event lasting more than one day to allow more time for mingling and hacking, we decided on a one day event to allow for a clean start and finish with little follow-up required.

3. 2.2 Location

We looked for a County-operated venue to save on costs and focused on the district of Supervisor Nate Miley because he was a co-host of the event. Our first pick was a fairgrounds site as there were spacious facilities available. However, the facilities were too large and not close to public transportation. Even though the facility was free to use, it would be expensive to set it up (Wi-Fi, seating, food, carpets, etc.) and get the people to the site (if they would come). This turned out to be a deal breaker. Instead, another facility in Supervisor Miley's district, the 2-year-old Castro Valley library, was recommended.

At first we thought, "A library?" Once we saw it, though, we knew it was the perfect site. This modern facility has all the amenities: a large conference room and break-out rooms, proximity to public transportation and windows everywhere bathe the interior with natural light and enhance its reputation as a pleasant place to spend time. The library also has become an exceeding popular place in its home community and is a source of great pride among Castro Valley residents who want to show it off. The heavy Saturday foot traffic inside the library paid off as curious library patrons were drawn to our Hackathon, thus expanding public awareness of Alameda County's Government 2.0 activities and commitment to public involvement and transparency. The decision to use the Castro Valley Library was

also a big hit with the County Administrator, who came to realize that Hackathons can be effective not only for showcasing County data but also for showcasing our finest facilities. This is sure to be a theme for all future Hackathons hosted by Alameda County

Figure 2-Castro Valley Library

3.2.3 Date

Once we decided on a venue, we faced a time crunch: our direction was to hold an event before year-end and it was already October. We knew that holidays and other civic or Hackathon event dates needed to be avoided. Since Thanksgiving and Christmas were coming up, we needed to figure out when best to squeeze it in. We settled on Saturday, December 8. It was after Thanksgiving and well enough before Christmas that we thought we were in the clear. To our surprise, two other public events sprung up – one on 11/9, an event called Hack City in San Francisco that focused on Green Biz; and one on 12/2, the Oakland CityCamp Unconference. As it happened, Oakland CityCamp occurred the week before ours. Knowing that those attendees may potentially be participants in our event, we were able to take advantage of the situation by participating and speaking about our event as well. The other surprise was Hanukkah started on 12/8 and somehow this important detail was missed. There was no turning back – we were on!

3.2.4 Number of Participants

As critical as location and date were, the number of people anticipated was important as well. This was our first event, so we decided to keep it small in preparation for a larger event in spring 2013. At first we decided to plan for 300 people, a number we soon reduced to 180. In reality, 120 people attended which turned out to be the perfect number. Due to the composition of the turnout, which included many developers, , there were 24 teams that presented their apps or ideas. We were lucky to get a very diverse crowd. There were teams from high schools, teams of seniors, women- only teams, and ethnically diverse teams.

3.2.5 Theme

One key lesson we learned in this process: it's important to have a theme. The theme sets the stage for marketing, rules, judging criteria and publicity. It is carried through the entire event.

Seniors and domestic violence were our first choice since these were very important to our host, Nate Miley, President of the County Board of Supervisors. But our research soon showed there was not enough data to support these themes so a more general approach was chosen.

We wanted to continue down the path of promoting open data and collaboration with our constituents. There were over eighty datasets to share with the public via data.acgov.org and a Hackathon was going to be the best way to get the citizens excited about using this data. Utilizing the datasets to create web and mobile applications or concepts that would benefit the public would be a great example of open government.

Our theme was as follows:

Challenge residents to combine technology with transparent government to create web and/or mobile apps or concepts that will benefit Alameda County residents, businesses and/or visitors by using at least one dataset from data.acgov.org or other data about Alameda County.

3.2.6 Budget

It is important to know your budget up front. This drove our prizes and location decisions. The budget was limited so we needed to remain flexible. Once the prize amounts were published, we were locked in.

3.2.7 Prize Amount

Prize amounts and number of prizes needed to be decided at the beginning both for budgetary reasons and for PR and marketing. Our first approach was to determine the first three prizes and reserve some money for other prizes to be determined at a later date or for the day of the event if something amazing came up. Because of the budget constraints, we stayed with the top three prizes. To determine prize amounts, we studied other civic Hackathons held in San Diego, Oakland, Detroit and New York to see what they awarded. The dollar amounts we settled on seemed very reasonable and enough to attract people from other cities in the county to join. First prize was $3000, second prize was $1500 and third prize was $500. There were several honorable mentions as well that did not win money but were called out as winners. This plan worked very well and was easy to manage.

3.2.8 Fees

Finally, we needed to determine the fees that would be charged. We considered the possibility of charging no entry fee, but our research showed that if you allow the event to be free, it is likely that many people will sign up and not attend. Some of our contacts said, in fact, that up to forty percent of those who register for a free event don't show up. The message we heard repeatedly was that if you charge a nominal fee, you may not get immediate registration but you will get a commitment and larger attendance. Once again, other Hackathons were researched to see what they charged to help us to determine our fee structure:

- Students and Seniors: $10
- General: $15
- Government and Media: Free

Eventbrite was chosen as primary means for collecting the fees because we did not want to handle cash or credit cards. Registration was accepted at the door which is the only time we handled cash. Credit

cards were still processed through Eventbrite. Eventbrite charges a per-transaction fee depending on the payment method and we decided to absorb those fees.

IV. Marketing

The marketing plan for the Hackathon had two major components:

- Branding
- Promotion

4.1 Branding

In trying to generate interest in our Hackathon we realized the event needed brand identity that would set us apart from other similar Bay Area events. We also wanted to be very clear that our Hackathon was being sponsored by the County.

The first step in the branding process was to name the Hackathon. The team met and brainstormed ideas. Concepts and ideas that were discussed included these types of words: bright ideas, apps, challenge, contest, mobile, Hackathon, coding, data, and data sharing. Other Hackathon websites were looked at like Code for Oakland and NYC BigApps to get ideas.

It had already been decided that a new URL would be created for the event's website. One consideration in naming the event was utilizing the name in the URL so that there was a direct correlation between the event name and the URL for the website. In the end "Alameda County Apps Challenge 2012" was chosen as the name and a separate, shorter URL would be created.

Our next step was to create a logo to brand the event to be used in marketing materials and the event website. For previous initiatives, the letters "ac" had been used to brand Alameda County and so we decided to shorten the event name to ACApps Challenge 2012 for marketing materials. (That shortened name also became a key marketing term for social media which we discuss below.) One of the key concepts the logo needed to promote was that the Hackathon wasn't just for hackers; it was to engage the public as well. One of the easiest ways for the public to participate was to give us their "app ideas." This was also one of the concepts that we brainstormed. During the brainstorming meeting for the logo, someone suggested the idea of a light bulb. The light bulb was seen as an obvious representation of "bright ideas." We didn't want to show just a light bulb so we took a design cue from New York City's Hackathon website and created a pixelated light bulb to represent the coding aspect of this event. A pixelated font was chosen for the name.

Figure 3-ACApps Logo

4.1.1 Website

We knew we needed a new website to promote the event. However, we didn't want that website to be part of the County's regular website so a unique URL was created for the event. As discussed above, one strategy would be to include the event name in the URL so that users could easily remember the URL, but the name "ACApps Challenge 2012" was too long for a URL. Instead, it was decided to use an existing branding strategy for the County's websites. We have been naming websites using sub-domain names of the County's main website www.acgov.org. For example:

- data.acgov.org is the County's data sharing website
- m.acgov.org is the County's mobile website

A new URL "code.acgov.org", was created - this URL ties the event to Alameda County but allowed us the freedom to design a new website separate from the County's main website.

Figure 4-Website

4.1.2 Website Design

The website design was to be reflective of the people who were going to be using it. It was important to make the website look "non-governmental." We also wanted to implicitly tie the Hackathon website to the County's data sharing website. The design cues came from the County's data sharing website and were incorporated into the Hackathon website design.

4.1.3 Social Media

It was decided early on that use of social media would be pivotal - not only in promoting the event, but to document it as well. We decided Twitter would be a central communication tool. The account, @ACData, utilizing the County's existing branding strategies was immediately reserved. That account was used to promote new and available datasets. It would also become our primary social media tool to promote the event. We started following contacts we met through other local Hackathons. Local and national leaders were identified in the Hackathon community as well as in the open government and open data movements, and we started following them. Over time, this enabled us to generate our own following.

The County also has its own Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, and Pinterest pages. All of these would be used as well.

4.2 Promotion

To promote the event, we decided to use both traditional and newer methods to "get the word out."

Several press releases were created and distributed via email to the County's established local media distribution list. These press releases were also posted on the County's main website. This method proved effective as several people at the Hackathon mentioned they had heard about the Hackathon from local press coverage.

Flyers were printed for the event. Local colleges and universities were visited and flyers were posted on public bulletin boards around the campuses.

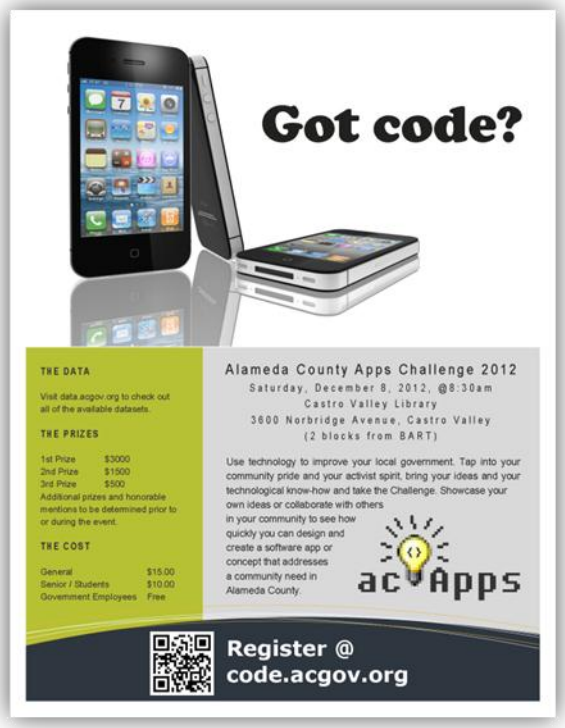


Figure 5-Flyer

Our Interim Information Technology Director also visited several local high schools and spoke to students about the event. In fact, the second-place winning team was composed of two students from a local high school that he visited. They told us that they were very impressed that someone of his "status" would take the time to visit their school and that is why they attended.

Twitter again proved to be very effective for us in promoting the event. Based upon our experience at Code for Oakland, we decided to use Twitter as our major social media tool. A laundry list of tweets was created and scheduled for posting. Each tweet included hashtags "#ACApps" and "#Hackathon". Also, "#opendata" and "#opengov" were included when space allowed. The tag "#ACApps" became our main tag that we would use the day of the event as well.

Illustrating the power of social media in the promotions process, several of our followers on Twitter retweeted information about the event. We also tweeted about local news stories leading up to the event.

We visited the Castro Valley Library before the event and took several photos of the facilities. These were then posted on Flickr and pinned to Pinterest so that attendees could see ahead of time where they would be meeting and coding. Links to the photos were also tweeted.

The County's Facebook page also was utilized for promotion. Status updates, an event to the calendar, and posted photos were added.

Using Meetups was new to us but we had heard that it was popular with the hackers. We posted our Apps Challenge on the Meetups site and took part in many Meetups events to create more

opportunities to plug our event. These events proved to be a valuable use of time, as several contacts made a Meetups events ended up participating in our Apps Challenge.

4.2.1 Media and Student Outreach

We were all extremely enthusiastic about the Apps Challenge and its potential to open new doors as far as civic engagement and public education regarding Alameda County's mission. But getting the word out about our event involved many old-school methods – a plethora of press releases and cold calls to schools and civic organizations where participants could be found.

In October, our first press release was sent out to announce the Apps Challenge event. The release also took pains to present the event in the larger context of Alameda County's Open Data Initiative – in essence, it redoubled our effort to commit to Government 2.0 by offering a large volume of County data to the public and creating an online portal where suggestions for more data offerings could be made by our residents. The press release was sent to more than 100 local media contacts. The contacts included the editors' desks at all the mainstream Bay Area daily and weekly newspapers, local television news programs, radio news and public affairs programs. We also augmented this list of contacts to include local news and business blogs, student publications at local universities, junior colleges and high schools, as well as business and technology publications and ethnic media – newspapers, blogs, television and radio outlets focused on serving specific ethnic groups or non-English speaking residents. The press release was followed up with phone calls to editors and reporters to offer interview opportunities and to ask what more we could do to interest them in publicizing the event.

In planning our Hackathon, one of our key priorities was the involvement of local youth. Our Interim IT Director felt it was important to connect with the local high schools and colleges to encourage participation. A series of cold calls was made to local high schools, junior colleges and universities, most often inquiring about computer science/technology programs on campus or student clubs whose members focused on computer programming and creating apps. This latter effort proved extremely fruitful – as we were able to secure speaking engagements at some local schools that appeared to generate significant participation in the Apps Challenge among students of this age group.

Our Interim Director met with fifteen high school classes giving them an overview of technology and the Hackathon. It provided not only an opportunity to talk about the Hackathon and encourage the students to participate and/or network at the event, but allowed him to discuss with this generation what a technology career entails. He explained that they don't have to be technical; they can have great ideas - so he reached out to both the business school and computer science curriculum.

His observations: recognize the kids in the AP computer science course - they are very smart and technology is not their only option. Exposing them to technology as a career helps them make decisions for college. This was a great outreach event to bring in young talent as interns – we are currently speaking to a student about a possible internship. The teachers were extremely grateful for his outreach and even offered to fund a team of students if they came up with an innovative idea.

Our second prize winners were two juniors from one of these high schools. Their presentation was very polished and their app was up and running in just five hours.

A second press release was sent out in early December to remind people about the event and to encourage coverage of the Apps Challenge itself. This helped us get coverage in some mainstream newspapers, on the KTVU television news and in Government Technology magazine. Following the event, an overview "story" was produced that we are pitching to government publications including those run by the National Association of Counties, Government magazine, American City & County and the news blog operated by the California State Association of Counties. We also benefitted from the support of event sponsors such as Socrata, which publicized the event through their own channels.

4.2.2 After the Event

We continued to promote the event even after it was done. We monitored Google news and Twitter to find information posted about the event. We used Twitter and Pinterest to post links to photos, news stories, and videos found online. We are continuing to use Twitter to stay active in the Hackathon community.

V. Logistics

Outside of marketing and high level planning, event logistics is one of the most important aspects to managing and running a Hackathon event smoothly. Our Senior Systems Analyst was dedicated to developing and coordinating the logistics planning from the beginning. Logistics included preparing for the event itself, timing the event just right from start to finish, being flexible and planning for possible pitfalls.

After the high level vision and plan were defined, a plan was developed to get from A to B to C.. This is where logistics comes into play - Supplies, Volunteers, General Services and Technology were four important factors in our event logistics planning.

5.1 Supplies

We began with defining the supplies and services needed, breaking them down into several categories - General, Seating, Technical, Presentation, Registration, Food, Services, Signs and Templates. See Appendix A for the list. This list contains everything we thought would be needed for the event from table cloths to easels and outdoor tables. There were quite a few lessons learned and while more will be added to the list for future events, it helped us quite well in getting through our first Hackathon.

5.2 Volunteers

The supplies list helped to facilitate the type of volunteers we would need to prepare for the event, run it and take care of cleanup. A lead was identified for General Setup, Technical (Networking and Presentation), Registration, Signs and App Roamers. Team members were assigned to each lead. In addition, the appropriate people were identified to fill the roles of MCs, Key Note Speakers, Judges, and Subject Matter Experts from various County departments (Sheriff, Social Services, Assessor and Clerk Recorder) to assist in providing the participants with information about their datasets. A Public Relations/Media group was available whom we assigned to Social Media, Video, Photography and General Media. The majority of the volunteers also participated as App Roamers. Since the breakout rooms for coding were located throughout the library, the majority of the team, easily identified by Staff

stickers, roamed the areas so that the participants could ask for help and get questions answered without leaving their computers. This proved to be very useful. In the end we had 47 amazing volunteers and one great team.

5.3 General Services

The County's General Services Agency (GSA) was used for two key services - renting volume supplies (outdoor tables/chairs, easels, and power strips) and janitorial services. Once the event date, time and location were known, the General Services representative was contacted to communicate purpose and needs. Our General Services Agency was extremely helpful in providing everything we needed. Their management called us a couple of days before the event asking if ALL our GSA needs were being addressed. They supplied us with cones to block off VIP parking and most importantly, since over 120 additional people would be in the facility, provided additional janitorial help for the restrooms, trash pickup and clean-up.

5.4 Technology

5.4.1 Networks

ITD began the infrastructure requirements gathering process by comparing the specific needs of the event along with the existing technology footprint of the Castro Valley Library. Through discussions with Library management and event coordinators, the technical requirements were developed. The Library proved an ideal location for many reasons. The modern construction of the building allowed for additional cabling, wireless access point placement/relocation and hard-wired switch placements to be relatively straight forward. Given the estimated number of event attendees along with the Library's normal Saturday patrons, network engineers determined that internet bandwidth required scaling up – so we doubled it from 50 MB to 100 MB. As the plans for event day became clearer and number of attendees began to grow, it became apparent that ITD had to augment the Library's current wireless networks to a more hardened, more robust and even more 'high-density' capable wireless network. ITD engaged our Cisco account team and cabling vendor for overview site visits and equipment capacity deep-dive sessions. Additional Cisco 3600i wireless access points were purchased and existing access points were relocated to provide the best wireless user experience. Twenty-one access points were online and broadcasting the day of the event.

On event day, the infrastructure components were ready to go. The access points deployed, the circuit bandwidth increased, and support staff onsite standing by. We had considered what alternate options we had if the wireless network proved insufficient and options were limited. Hard wired 12-port switches were strategically placed - very few hard wired connections were used and most for a short period of time.

When attendees began to arrive, there were only a handful of connectivity issues. For the attendees who did have issues and needed help, the Alameda County ITD team jumped right in and helped assess and remediate. The few incidents that did occur were tracked back to local client related issues. Some attendees had statically assigned network information, which needed releasing or had issues with the

Library's banner pop-up page. Other than that, it appears that due to a combination of advanced planning and testing, we were able to avoid significant complications.

Throughout the day, ITD staff monitored the number of connections, bandwidth draw and user experience. Increases in utilization (minor to moderate spikes) were evident as the Library opened to general public, but overall the network performed well. Throughout the day active real-time monitoring showed about 200 +/- connections from various devices: laptops, mobile, etc. At the end of the day, we felt comfortable the combination of additional access points, increase in bandwidth and attention to planning and support were components to the successful event.

5.4.2 Presentations

Preparation for the end-of-day presentations by the participants included surveying the library's audio-video system. The audio system was a PA system that had a microphone at the podium and a wireless hand microphone. The video aspect was a projector that had a wall mount VGA connection that we connected via VGA extension to the podium.

The technology used for the event was a little challenging since this was our first Hackathon. First order of business was to make sure we had laptops available for the event agenda, PowerPoint, streaming information, event workers and a few for participants who needed them.

Prior to the event we gathered as many VGA adapters for the different types of systems people would use in their presentations: iPads, MacBooks, laptops, and iPhones. One hour before the presentations, we did a survey of the teams and asked them what devices they were going to use..

We assembled a "Nascar"-like team to keep the presentations going as quickly and smoothly as possible. Each presenter was given three minutes so we had to have a fast turnaround of the presenters. The Nascar team consisted of three staffers assisting the presenters by giving them the adapters they needed and keeping the presenters in the right order. We had one person assisting the presenters as they got to the podium by disconnecting one presenter and then reconnecting the next presenter. We also had a technical assistant who would assist if video resolution or configurations on the laptops needed to be reconfigured.

One lesson we learned for the Nascar team was that more adapters were needed for the various devices that the presenters were using. We should have assembled the presenters ahead of time and had them do a walk-thru of connecting their devices so that the video resolution and video settings were configured properly.

VI. Sponsor Outreach

It became quickly apparent that vendors were needed to sponsor the event since public money could not be used to fund prizes. It was too late in the process to reach out to our large vendors so we chose smaller, more accessible vendors and offered the following depending on donation amount:

SPONSORSHIP LEVELS

	Gold Circle $2,000	Silver Circle $1,000	Bronze Circle $500
Invitation to judge apps developed at the Apps Challenge	✓		
Prominent logo display in media material	✓		
Prominent logo display at the Apps Challenge	✓		
Logo display at the Apps Challenge		✓	
Prominent logo display on website	✓		
Logo display on website		✓	✓
10 Admission tickets	✓	✓	
5 Admission tickets			✓
Oral recognition at the Apps Challenge	✓	✓	✓
Vendor display table at the event	✓	✓	✓

General donations of any amount are always welcome and are essential to the success of our Apps Challenge.

Figure 6-Sponsor Levels

In addition, the sponsors were acknowledged in our welcome slide deck and through Twitter. Several vendors introduced their company and their product during the opening remarks. One vendor used their free tickets to advertise the event through Meet-ups and Twitter by offering free tickets to the first ten people who responded. Another vendor created an app to showcase while the judges were deliberating which highlighted our data and helped fill the deliberation time.

To add credibility to the event, one sponsor's contributions consisted of assistance in supporting and running our Hackathon, in lieu of a monetary donation. This sponsor was treated like any "silver" donor and was very prominent at our event.

The sponsors are a critical part of the event and should be included throughout the process. The sponsors were thanked at the beginning and end of the event and we were grateful for their participation.

VII. Guidelines and Data

As the logistics and marketing plans evolved, there were a few more important items that had to be worked out. More datasets needed to be published as well as the Judging Criteria and Rules so the attendees would:

a) Know what challenges they would be up against.
b) Have many datasets to choose from to help facilitate the creativity and design process.

7.1 Judging Criteria

Of all the things needing to be written or created, judging criteria by far was the most difficult. It needed to include the theme and it needed to be easy and quick for the judges to score – it had to be

simple and intuitive. We stayed away from technical evaluations since it was possible that many of the judges may not have the technical background required to perform this type of evaluation fairly.

Each entry was evaluated on the following criteria:

- **Usefulness** — the app or concept will have a positive impact on Alameda County residents, businesses or visitors.
- **Usability** — the app or concept is intuitive and easy to use.
- **Data** — the app or concept leverages Alameda County datasets or other information within the County.
- **Originality** — the app or concept provides an innovative or creative approach to an idea.
- **Technology** — the app or concept can be used by multiple devices.

One of our mentors told us that we should publish judging criteria early so that participants would know how their entries would be evaluated. We got a late start but had it available about three weeks before the event.

7.2 Rules and Tips

Coming up with the rules for our event was not easy. In looking at other events, some had just a few rules while others seemed to include pages and pages of legal text. The simple approach was taken, which proved to be quite effective. Our rules were as follows:

1. You must be registered to participate in the event.
2. Explore the Alameda County Data on the data.acgov.org website.
3. Explore the Alameda County App Ideas page.
4. Each participating team will have the same amount of time as all of the other competing teams to develop a fully or partially functional application or concept. The coding kicks off at approximately 11:30 AM on December 8, 2012 and will end the same day around 4:30 PM.
5. Entries must be apps or concepts that use at least one of the datasets from Alameda County Open Data (data.acgov.org) or – if not requiring a dataset – clearly benefit the citizens of Alameda County.
6. App entries may be any kind of application – be it for the web, a personal computer, a mobile handheld device, SMS, or any software platform broadly available to the public.
7. Concept entries should be presented in a way that communicates their intent or vision - and how this would be achieved technologically.
8. Entries must not be indecent, defamatory, in obvious bad taste, demonstrate a lack of respect for public morals or conduct, or adversely affect the reputation of the County or sponsors. Any determination made by the County's judges under this paragraph is wholly within their discretion and will be final.
9. Sponsors of this event and employees of Alameda County may participate in the event, but are not eligible for prize money.
10. Each team will have the same amount of time to present to the judges their app/concept at the end of the coding period.
11. Judging criteria is to be published prior to the event. Wholly within their discretion, the County's judges' determination will be final and not open to appeal.

There were originally 12 rules but one was eliminated because it caused confusion around open source and who owned the app. Rule numbers 5, 6 and 7 rolled into the judging criteria and were very

important since they embraced our theme - the data needed to benefit the public. Two rules, 2 and 3 were really tips suggesting participants take the time to explore the data we offered and the app ideas that already had been submitted. Prior to posting the rules, County Counsel reviewed them to make sure the County was protected.

Having the rules published made answering questions very easy. Quite often, questions could be easily answered by referring to the rules.

7.3 Dataset Outreach

To ensure there were a wide variety of datasets available for use by the hackers, an internal outreach program was kicked off. The Interim IT Director met with many department heads to explain the Data Sharing Initiative and Apps Challenge to encourage them to supply datasets and subject matter experts for the event. This was done by sharing ideas for what was possible. In addition, the Deputy Director of Infrastructure Services who is responsible for the Socrata website reached out to many of the departments as well enlisting their support. To get buy-in, they stressed the importance of the initiative and gave departments creative ideas on how their data could be used. These activities resulted in over eighty datasets being available in time for our Hackathon. Activities in this area will continue for future events in order to keep our data current and interesting to the community.

VIII. Pre-Event Day Activities

8.1 Two Weeks Before

Preparation really picked-up two weeks prior to the event and escalated into overdrive the week before. The core team increased dramatically to include the 40 volunteers so we could begin coordinating their efforts. Meetings were held with volunteers who also included App Roamers, Subject Matter Experts, leads and the core team to educate, review the schedule and agenda, discuss the day of the event and finalize preparations.

Signs were made to identify areas in the library that were available to the hackers, for directions from the BART station to the library and to block off the VIP Parking.

Marketing activities increased with outreach to everyone including the participants who had signed up on Eventbrite.

Eventbrite was checked daily to determine number of participants and their demographics, in order to plan food needs and room layout. Seating charts were designed for 60 and 120 people so the main room could be set-up quickly with either design.

A map of the library with the hack areas highlighted was finalized.

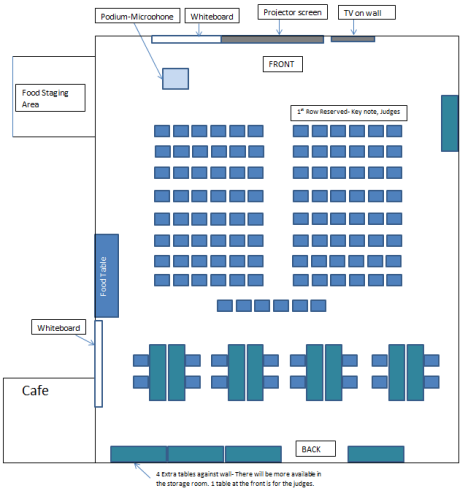


Figure 7-Seating chart for 100+

Our planning team made one more visit to the library to validate all our plans and review with the Library staff. Tables and chairs were counted to ensure there were enough for all scenarios. Rooms and break-out areas were confirmed and the schedule finalized.

8.2 One Week Before

Though questions about the level of community participation persisted throughout our planning period, we found that one week prior to the event, 60 people had signed up. Any thought that we would cancel the event was abandoned – we would stay the course. We still needed sponsors but felt confident we could get enough and on time.

Five days before the event, the weather was checked for rain. There was no rain in the forecast, so benches and tables were ordered for the outside. The caterer needed a final participant count for food even though, at this point, only half the people who were attending had registered. We submitted a "best guess'' of 100 participants at that time.

Posters were made to display sponsors at the library. Video decks for the Library TVs were finalized.

A dress rehearsal was held with the core team to ensure our timing was correct, the slide decks were complete and there were no holes in our planning. This gave us time to make any course corrections if necessary before the event.

8.3 The Day Before

On the day before the event, the library was closed to the public, which allowed for setting-up early and executing a final dress rehearsal. Our plan was to do setup in the morning including verifying all technical equipment so that the afternoon could be used to fix anything that didn't work or buy anything that was still needed while the stores were still open.

The outside tables, chairs and easels were delivered by GSA, the network was completed and all other supplies were delivered by the volunteers. UV equipment and laptops were delivered and tested.

Packets for the judges and the winners were completed. Welcome and closing decks were finalized, and cash was obtained for onsite registration if change was required. Clipboards with the day's materials for the event coordinators were created and contact lists updated.

Setup was extremely smooth since the logistics plan covered all the details. The volunteers knew exactly how to setup the large conference room, where to hang the signs and posters throughout the library, and how and where to set-up the registration, sponsor, media and food tables.

IX. Event Day

When the big day arrived, we had a thorough and well-considered plan of action to follow. We had an overview of objectives as well as a checklist, timeline, back-up plans, team leads, and practice runs. Socrata posted the following comment:

> ***"Organized.*** *I've never seen a Hackathon run so smoothly. Teams knew where they needed to be for what, kickoff and presentations started on time, and their execution was almost flawless."*

9.1 Event Day Set-up

Since set-up was done the day before, we were able to focus our Event Day activities on the checklist and ensuring everything was in place. The core team and volunteers started arriving 1 ½ hours before the doors were scheduled to open. The food and the additional janitorial service arrived on time and the tables and chairs were set-up outside. Signs were posted from BART to the library by one of the volunteers who took BART to the event. Sponsors arrived and set-up their tables and give away merchandise. Our MC's were here, the flag and county seal were delivered and the Alameda County Apps Challenge 2012 was good to go!

9.2 Registration

The initial work of the Registration team began the week prior to the event by first making sure all of our supplies were available. We prepared the Registration table so the processes of check-in and registration of attendees would run efficiently. A table cloth with our County seal was used to help designate the Registration area. The table was placed near the building's front entrance. Various devices were designated for check-in: one iPhone that scanned ticket barcodes, one laptop for manual check-in and a third device for registering new attendees that also required taking cash or checks. In addition, Eventbrite's online interface was utilized for those who wanted to use a credit card. To our surprise, there were at least ten attendees waiting for the doors to open when we arrived to begin the day. As it turned out, we had to add at least three more volunteers to manage the name badge section. They worked with the participants to help them choose their category stickers highlighting their skill sets from one to many: Developer, Marketer, Observer, Collaborator, and Promoter (pitch an idea). At least one person was needed to staff' the station at all times as many attendees came to registration to ask questions about the event. When planning for registration, overestimate staffing and be prepared for ebbs and flows of participants checking in.

9.3 Breakfast and Mingling

After the attendees registered and checked in at the front door, they were welcomed to the main meeting area for mingling and to nosh on breakfast foods to prepare for the eventful day.

The event was catered by Aramark Food Services, which partners with the County's Fresh Start Café Program[6]. The breakfast consisted of continental breakfast foods – bagels, fruit, yogurt, tea, coffee, and juice. In addition, Aramark provided lunch – sandwiches, salad, drinks, and snacks.

There were two key lessons we learned regarding food provisions – order more than you think you need and have food that is easy to pick up and carry. We allowed participants to make their own sandwiches, which caused long lines that could have been avoided had the sandwiches been pre-made.

[6] Fresh Start Cafés are at the heart of the New Beginnings program. Born out of collaboration between Alameda County and ARAMARK food services, the cafés offer incarcerated and emancipated foster youth work experience to help ease their transition into adulthood and independence.

9.4 Master of Ceremonies (MC)

It's important to have MCs who can control and communicate well with the crowd. We were lucky because our Interim IT Director and the Principal Administrative Analyst shared MC duties. The two MCs were able to cover much important ground, with our Interim IT Director skilled at covering the more technical aspects of the event and the Principal Administrative Analyst adept at explaining non-technical aspects and generating a sense of excitement as we embarked on this inaugural event. With the support of runners who helped with microphones and team formation, our t two MCs made a perfect team.

9.5 Welcome and Overview

This is the most important part of the morning after breakfast and mingling. It includes the welcome speech, keynotes, and team creation setting the tone for the remainder of day. Fortunately, our Welcome and Overview proceedings were well planned and practiced, yet fluid enough to handle any change such as a change in the lineup of speakers or unexpected variations in the event schedule. Throughout this part of the day, we felt we had an alternative plan of action in the event of unexpected changes in the flow of events. For us, Plan B included having vendors and Information Technology staff showcase apps at the beginning, if time needed to be filled. If time needed to be reduced, the intros could be eliminated or the team formation would be done faster

Messages were projected in the main meeting room with our logo and theme to keep the morning activities on track. The PowerPoint deck (see Appendix D) included the following talking points:

- Welcome and introduction of MCs
- Why the event is important, title and theme
- Thank you to the participants
- Thank you to the sponsors (time for sponsors to present if they choose to)
- Outline of the agenda and the day's events
- Present the rules of the day (different than rules of the event - remember, this is a library, silence is important, no skateboards, etc.)
- Overview of the data available
- Introduction of Subject Matter Experts and App Roamers
- Description and location of breakout areas
- Speed Intros
- Pitch Ideas
- Team Formation

9.6 Speed Intros

After the Welcome and Overview part of the morning presentation, it was time to get the audience involved. Before the pitching of ideas, speed introductions were held and that turned out to be quite fun. Everyone in the room was allowed fifteen seconds to introduce themselves, tell where they were from and why they were at the event. A microphone was passed around the room as each participant rose to introduce themselves. This approach allowed everyone in the room an idea of the types of people who were participating.

9.7 Pitch Ideas and Team Formation

The team formation section of the event was pivotal to the day's success. As part of Eventbrite sign-up, participants stated the role(s) they expected to play – developer, ideas person, marketer, or collaborator – in order to give us an idea of the overall group's specialties, interests, strengths and challenges (we had 31 developers). On event day, each participant picked a sticker or multiple stickers to identify what role they were playing, which were placed on their name tag. Some participants played more than one role and had many stickers. This really helped jumpstart conversations during breakfast.

Figure 8-Name Tag

During the morning session, the MC started the team formation activities by having everyone with an idea stand up, re-introduce themselves, pitch their idea (they had thirty seconds) and move to the side of the room.

Figure 9-Pitching ideas

Once the ideas were pitched, participants were allowed to pitch their ideas and call out for the types of people they needed to join their team: developer, marketer, or collaborator. The teams that were most successful had both a developer and marketer so they could do a good job of selling their idea/app at the presentations. Overall, the process of pitching ideas and huddling with collaborators went quite smoothly. Five hours of hacking had started! Our designated App Roamers were available to show people to the breakout areas and help with initial questions during brainstorming sessions. There were lots of questions and activity at the beginning of the hack, but as time went on the proceedings became more focused. For the next several hours, the teams huddled together, preparing for the event's culmination when they would present their apps/concepts at day's end.

Note: A back-up plan was available if no one came forward with ideas. Four of our App Roamers were equipped with ideas and were prepared to lead a team if necessary. They also doubled as developers if required!

The pitching of ideas and team formation was very smooth even though we had four times the number of ideas anticipated. Socrata stated the following in their blog:

> ***"Productive.*** *The majority of the teams were actually able to build a workable app and demonstrate it in five to six hours. If you've been to enough Hackathons you'll be impressed by this – it's actually pretty rare to have so many teams be able to make real progress during the actual event. It just goes to show how well organized everything was – teams were able to settle right in and work."*

9.8 App Roamers/SME's

We had two types of support staff available to the teams. The first were the Subject Matter Experts (SME's) who really understood the data available to participants in building apps. The SMEs were available to answer any questions from the teams about usage, meaning, etc.

The second type of support staff were what we called App Roamers. App Roamers were developers and analysts from the Information Technology Department (ITD). They also understood the data and in addition, could answer any technical questions. They helped the teams stay on-track in working on their presentations and were vital in informing participants of any changes that occurred throughout the day. They also doubled as the setup and clean-up crew! We found this role invaluable to the entire day's events.

One of our App Roamers prepared an app as a back-up plan to present during the presentations if we did not have enough teams. Since we were lucky to have 24 teams present, the App Roamer presented during deliberations at the day's end.

9.9 Afternoon Session

The afternoon agenda included:

- Hacking (5 hours)
- Lunch
- Presentations
    - preparation and presenting
- Deliberations by judges
- Closing Remarks
- Awarding of Prizes

During the 5-hour hacking period, event staff circulated the event area to help teams, and assist in the preparation of presentations and the closing remarks. A panel of judges was chosen.

9.10 Presentations

For the presentations, each team signed up to present on an easel displaying each their product name. Event staff had worked closely with participants to check on the equipment that would be needed for the, a front-end effort designed to save time at the end of the day The original plan was for presentations to last three to five minutes per team based on six to ten teams. When 17 and eventually 24 teams signed up, we knew we had to stick to three minutes per team, while keeping staff focused on keeping a constant flow of presentations to minimize delays. With the NASCAR team ready to go, the

teams were lined up in order to make transitions quick. While team one presented, the team that was next in line had their devices in hand and were ready to go. There was an App Roamer on one side of the room with a three minute timer that the entire room could see. The timer was started as soon as a presenter began talking. When three minutes were up, the clock rang and the team was asked to sit down. Time for the next presentation to begin!

Our concerted effort to keep things moving paid off: all 24 presentations were completed in just eighty minutes! This was good news for everyone involved, as this day-long event – no matter how stimulating and rewarding – left many of us quite exhausted!

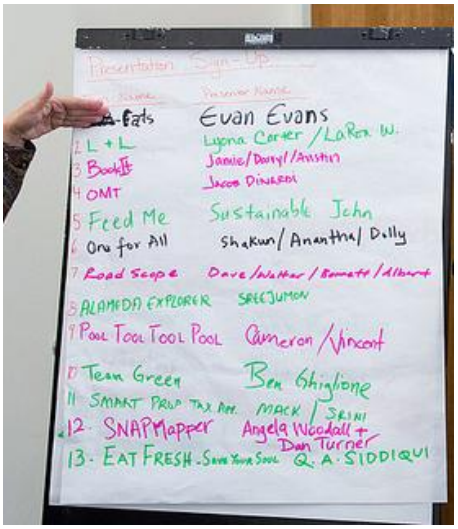


Figure 10-Presentation List

9.11 Judges Deliberate

Thirty minutes prior to the presentations of the apps, we met with the judges as a group to go over the scoring form so the judges could take notes on each presenter's apps as well as discuss what they should be looking for and thinking about. It was important that the judges get to know each other and have time to ask questions prior to determining the winners.

The judging criteria were reviewed with the judges. The order of the teams presenting had been pre-printed on the judging forms (see Appendix B) from the easels during the hacking period. The presentations began and the judges sat up front with their packets. The packets included the list of presenters on a scoring sheet, the judging criteria and the rules. The MC introduced the judges to the audience and presenters.

Once the presentations were complete, the judges were escorted to the deliberation chamber (a table inside the library). They had only been given fifteen minutes for deliberation so the first step the judges took was to go through each app and declare which ones would be discussed - to narrow the field. This final list of apps reduced the field from 24 to a more manageable seven or eight.

After reducing the number of apps to be reviewed, the judges began with an informal poll that quickly yielded an immediate consensus on the winning app. Quite a bit of time was spent on second and third place as there were several very qualified contenders.

Eventually, after five or ten minutes of energetic conversation, the judges agreed on the second- and third-place-winning apps. As a group, the judges decided to create an honorable mention category because there were so many good apps. Four apps were put into this category.

All in all, the judges enjoyed the experience and were very pleased with not only the ones chosen as winners, but the high quality of all the apps presented.

9.12 Awarding the Prizes

Special 3-by-5-foot mock checks were made with our Apps Challenge logo to be presented to the winners during the presentation of awards. The MC announced the winning teams starting with the honorable mentions and ending with first place. Our County Administrative Officer and the President of the Board of Supervisors awarded the checks to the winners and then pictures were taken with the teams and VIPs. Once the teams received their prizes, event staff moved in to distribute W-9s and winners forms for the winners to fill out. We needed to know how the prize money would be divided among the winning teams so that W-9s could be properly distributed and payments could be processed through our payment process. This process moved quite quickly, and helped us additionally in gathering the contact information of each prize-winner. This information would prove to be useful in the days following the Hackathon to facilitate follow-up questions from County staff and the press. We decided early on to not be involved in how teams split up the prize money. Each team was given a form to allow them to decide on their own how the prize money would be distributed.

It turned out that one of our sponsors worked on a winning team. He was disqualified from receiving a payment but he had the choice of leaving the money with the County or giving it to a team member. Again, this situation underscored the importance of establishing a clear set of rules before a Hackathon event.

Figure 11-Ceremonial Check

9.13 Closing Remarks

A PowerPoint deck was prepared to help with the conclusion of the event. The deck included the following information:

- Names of Judges (which we finalized in the afternoon ☺)
- Presentation Rules
- Actual Presentations
- Showcase Apps
- Thank yous to participants, sponsors, volunteers and the library staff
- Closing Remarks

As the event moved to its final stages, it became apparent that displaying the final PowerPoint deck would be unmanageable and confusing, because the final presentations were also to be projected. So the PowerPoint deck was used instead to provide talking points for staff leading participants through the Hackathon's final steps. We also found the pre-prepared closing remarks unnecessary, as the host Supervisor and County Administrator had prepared remarks of their own. Nevertheless, we were prepared to draw the event to an appropriate close in the event one of our County leaders was not available. It's important to have your framework, but be flexible.

In addition to the apps created by teams, one of our sponsors prepared a crime app and one of our own ITD developers prepared an app on Green Businesses. These were put to very good use, as we showcased them during the judges' deliberations and they were very well received. Supervisor Miley then spoke and the judges were ready to announce the winners!

Once the winners were announced, our CAO made some closing remarks and thank yous. The Alameda County Apps Challenge 2012 was officially over at 6:30 PM, Saturday, December 8, 2012! Or was it?

9.14 Social Media

We "live tweeted" all day during the Hackathon. Tweets included event updates like schedule reminders, conversations with attendees who needed help and sponsor promotion. When the teams were presenting their apps, updates were posted about each app. Also, photos were posted showing a range of activities. When the winners were announced, the results were "live tweeted".

9.15 Photography/Video

While our social media staff was uploading pictures via mobile device, a photographer was taking more formal pictures with a Digital SLR camera. These types of images can capture the day in a higher resolution with more clarity. These high resolution pictures can be posted on the web after the event is complete and given to media for print. Also, we had staff member record much of the event with a video camera. The resulting video captures the spirit and energy of the day, and is available to interested parties who missed the event.

9.16 Media

Since we pitched newspaper and TV reporters to come cover the event, we had a staff member assigned to work with members of the news media when they arrived. This worked well as several news reporters and TV stations arrived and were directed to key people and provided with a consistent message about the event's purpose and goals.

X. Post-Event Day Activities

It was very surprising at the number of activities that happened after the event – we thought we were done when the event ended at 6:30 PM, but there was still a lot to do. With social media, you must be fast and current.

10.1 Immediately

Immediately following the event (by next working day), we had to:

- Post Pictures of the event (Flickr, Pinterest, Website or both)
- Update website with winners and explanation of winning apps
- Update Pinterest with news articles, apps
- Provide Github link to point to apps created
- Create a one page doc with the winners, their names, demographics and explanation of the apps for distribution to the many people who will ask for it
- Create a press release with winner information
- Prepare for interviews with reporters
- Create short video to capture the event

10.2 First Week

- Send thank yous - don't underestimate the number and importance of thank you notes. A lot of people and work went into the event. Thank you notes need to go to everyone who participated:
    - Vendors
    - Judges
    - SME's
    - Hosts
    - App Roamers
    - Network Folks
    - Anyone that helped you along the way
- Post event review – meet with key members of the team to determine what went well and what we could do better (see section on key lessons)
- Memo to participants with winner information and links to social media

10.3 Second Week:

- Store all documentation relating to the event to be used again
- Prepare your next Hackathon plan – when the event is successful, they will want more!
- Pay the winners!
- Celebrate

XI. Lessons Learned

While Hackathon #1 was an overwhelming success (thanks to everyone involved - volunteers and participants), the team captured everything we thought went well at the event and aspects of the event that could be improved. Our sequel needs to be as good as or better than the original.

11.1 The Good

1. We had two of every device connector, by luck☺.
2. Good planning paid off!
3. Having the technology team prepare the laptops, etc. made the presentation transition move fast.

4. The teams worked well together and were ready to help in any way.
5. Having App Roamers was great to direct participants, find resources, help with technology, etc.
6. Good marketing and planning prior to the event resulted in great participation.
7. Having the network team available to troubleshoot and monitor the network was great.
8. Wi-Fi boost to handle the usage made all hackers happy.
9. Having Socrata available to help with the API's, datasets, etc.
10. Having SME's (subject matter experts) from departments available.
11. Great marketing-press releases, social media, word of mouth, flyers posted, Meetups, media interviews, and visiting with high schools. This helped the event to have a diverse group of attendees. Developers and non-developers were in the house.
12. We had the event captured on camera along with all the great attendee feedback and kudos for a job well done.
13. The Library was a great facility. The event showcased the venue well and we were able to utilize a lot of features-screen, podium, microphone(s), Wi-Fi, printers, rooms, chairs, cafe, etc.
14. The attendees appreciated the work areas that were already setup in the main conference area.
15. Some teams took advantage of the books in the library to help with their project.
16. Eventbrite was a great tool for online registration, maintenance, etc.
17. We had two workable apps immediately available for the public with four more in progress.

11.2 The Do Better

1. Buy connectors that we don't have.
2. Have internal staff be more familiar with the Socrata API's.
3. Have more SME's to represent more datasets.
4. Make more time (30 min) available to teams to prep their devices prior to presentations.
5. Provide better dataset schema/datasets in Socrata
6. Review registration process to streamline and make more efficient.
7. Explore using pre-printed coded labels for roles.
8. Advertise the existing ideas better.
9. Create a digital “how to be successful at a Hackathon” guide.
10. Provide tips and tricks for presenting apps or concepts.
11. Have better food arrangements-physical location of setup, different kind of food to serve.
12. Have a better selection of music during the morning mingle and evening dead time while waiting for the judges’ decision.
13. Maintain a wiki where roaming SMEs can record questions being asked researched and answered. Several teams had the same question on restaurant code tables and several SMEs were responding. Publish wiki url in advance.
14. Have two podiums available-1 for the presenter, and the other for the next presenter to prepare their laptop while someone is speaking.
15. Include another videographer for non-formal event footage using a DSLR or phone camera to post online immediately after the event.
16. Plan better for post event publicity. -Have video, photos, press release, website, memo to attendees ready to go one to two days immediately after event.

Appendix A-Supplies

Supplies	**Check Off**
Tables/Chairs	
Outdoor seating (4)tables/(25) chairs	
Vendors/Sponsors (4)	
Judges table setup	
Registration Section	
Breakout sessions	
Places to eat and place to put food	
Communication/Presentation	
(5) Easels	
Markers (2 boxes) dry erase and flip chart	
(2) boxes of Pens	
1 stack of Paper	
(3) rolls scotch Tape	
(24)Post-its	
(2)Painter's tape	
(10) Paper table cloths	
(3)Ceremonial Check	
(2)Laptops for presentation	
(5) USB's for presentations and digital signage	
(20) Signs-directions, Bart, Registration, Sponsors, Agenda	
(2-4)VGA cables	
(2) iPads (timer and presentation backup)	
apple connector for Macs & USB to VGA converter	
Backup projector	

1-2 loaner 48 port switches	
PA System for announcements	
Microphone for MC	
back up microphones	
Projector	
Screen	
White boards	
General	
(38) Power strips-participants ,registration, vendors	
Extension cords	
Trash bags and Trash Cans	
Traffic cones for 2 reserved parking spots	
Assistance with clean up during and after event	
Additional toiletries and clean-up of restrooms	
Registration	
Labels and stickers	
Check in sheet with VIPS/Sponsors	
Winning Team Form-contact info ,% of winnings	
Bring 20 copies of W9 forms for winners	
Sign-up sheet for scheduling presentations later in the day	
Receipt book for at the door cash/check registration	
iPhone barcode scanner (download Eventbrite app)	
Cashbox with change	
(2)Laptops for check -in	
Internet access (wifi or LAN)	
Food/Drink	
Food/Drink	
Utensils/plates/napkins/cups	

Appendix B-Judges Packet

We presented the judges with a packet which included a definition of their role, the judging criteria and rules they needed to apply when viewing and rating the presentations, a rating sheet which included all the team names, a pencil, and a calculator.

Rating Sheet

View the team presentations and rate each team's app or concept based off of the criteria and rules that were published online. You are welcome to observe the teams prior to viewing presentations. You will be deciding on the winner places-1st, 2nd, 3rd

Judging Rating Sheet Example	Rate 1- 5 for each criteria listed below, 1 being the least and 5 being the best							
Team Name	**Usefulness**	**Usability**	**Data**	**Originality**	**Technology**	**Total**	**Indicate 1st, 2nd, 3rd**	**Notes**

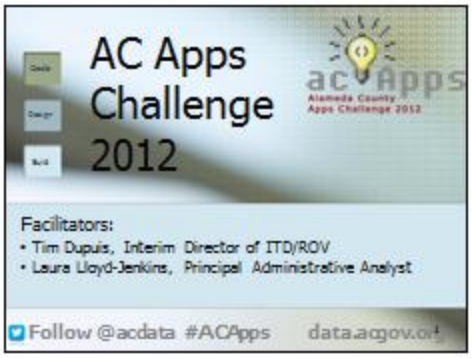
Appendix C-Winner Forms

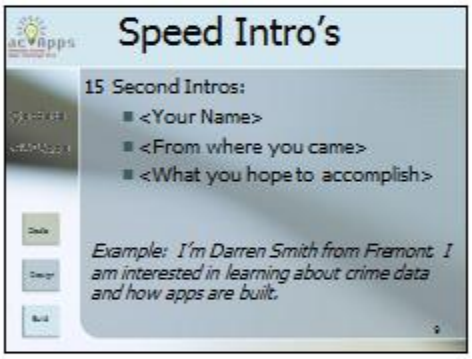
The winning teams were provided forms to fill out their information and to define how they would divide the prize money amongst themselves.

Team Name / App Name -	
Contact Information	
Full Name	
Home Address	
Telephone	
E-mail Address	
Share of Winnings (Amount or %)	
Contact Information	
Full Name	
Home Address	
Telephone	
E-mail Address	
Share of Winnings (Amount or %)	
Contact Information	
Full Name	
Home Address	
Telephone	
E-mail Address	
Share of Winnings (Amount or %)	
Contact Information	
Full Name	
Home Address	
Telephone	
E-mail Address	
Share of Winnings (Amount or %)	

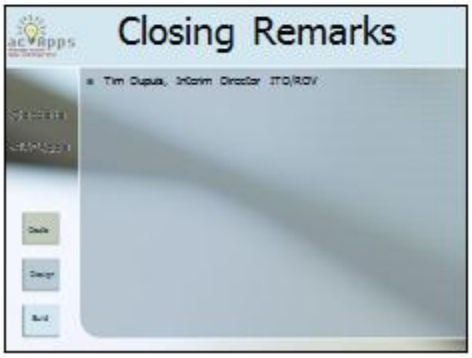
Appendix D-PowerPoint Slides

D.1 Welcome PowerPoint





D.2 Presentations & Closing Remarks PowerPoint



Appendix E-Agenda

With 24 formed teams, we had to adjust the presentation schedule from 30 minutes to 1 hour 30 minutes.

8:30	Breakfast and Sign-In
9:30	Welcome & Overview
10:30	Introductions and Pitches
11:00	Form Teams
11:30	Hacking Starts
12:00	Lunch Available
1:00	Hacking Continues
4:00	Schedule Presentations
4:30	Presentations (3 min ea.)
6:00	Judges Deliberate
6:15	Winners Announced

Appendix F Alameda County Contacts

Tim Dupuis, Director of ITD/ROV
tim.dupuis@acgov.org

Sybil Gurney, Acting Assistant Director, ITD
sybil.gurney@acgov.org

Tobin Broadhurst, Acting Chief Technology Officer, ITD
tobin.broadhurst@acgov.org

Sandra Dinardi, Senior Systems Analyst, ITD,
sandra.dinardi@acgov.org

Michael Rock, Webmaster / Social Media Strategist, ITD
michael.rock@acgov.org

Appendix G Alameda County Websites

COUNTY of ALAMEDA acgov.org

data.acgov.org Alameda County Data Sharing Initiative

http://code.acgov.org/2012/

acApps Alameda County Apps Challenge 2012