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A detailed, black and white photograph of the intricate gears and mechanical components of a watch movement, viewed through the transparent case back. The gears are of various sizes and are interlocked, creating a complex, circular pattern.

GOVERNMENT HACKATHON WORKSHOP

THE ROI OF PIZZA AND MOUNTAIN DEW

Welcome!

- ★ Introductions
- ★ Expectations and Agenda



What is a hackathon?

- ★ An event in which people with a common interest assemble for intensive collaboration over a set period of time
- ★ Attendees often include software coders but can include a variety of skill sets able to contribute to a common goal
- ★ A social affair that encourages ideation, innovation, creativity and, in many cases, usable software
- ★ A relatively low-cost, low-risk approach to community and/or team engagement



Now that I know what...why?

- ★ The first and most important step is to understand your goals—what are you trying to achieve?
 - Public outreach and community engagement?
 - Free software developed by the community?
 - New development methods for an internal team?
 - Encourage business to innovate using your data?
 - Find new ways to innovate?
 - Others?



The internal hackathon...

- ★ Started with technical brown bags 5 years ago
- ★ Progress to “all hands on deck” workshop 2 years ago
- ★ Leverage prototyping and proof-of-concept for new possibilities
- ★ Resulted in 24-hour Hackathon due to grass-root interest

Ideation & Innovation



Innovation lunches

Voting

Problem solving

Improvising



Hackathon Highlights



The Tools:

sleep, space, technology & support structure



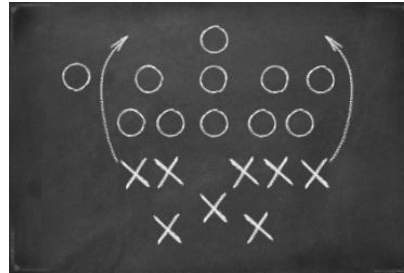
The People:

web services, user experience, server-side web developers



The Methodology:

24-hours, Agile SCRUM – release planning, sprint planning, sprint standups, sprint reviews



The Game Plan:

Mobile app that scans QR/bar code to renew service; and tool for Finance team



What You Get

Benefits

- Team building
- Employee satisfaction
- Gain execution experience
- Solve problems
- Prototype for new opportunities
- Reduce investment risks with proof-of-concept
- Improve culture by demonstrating a “can do” attitude backed by results

Possibilities

- New project execution plans
- Emergency handling
- Sustained annual planning
- And more ...

Executive Viewpoint

- Fosters blue-sky thinking
- Entire organization can participate
- Teaches effective decision making
- Deliver results in astonishingly short timeframe
- All about the team – environment & empowerment



The community hackathon...

- ★ Started with the City of Austin and Open Austin partnership in 2009
- ★ Gained fuel with the launch of the Austin Open Data Portal in 2011
- ★ Formalized with the City's partnership with Code for America in 2012
- ★ Resulted in 3 co-hosted hackathons through 2012

Ideation & Innovation



Engage civic partners

Promote use of data portal

Encourage innovation

Model real-world solutions



Hackathon Highlights



The Tools:

space, food, Internet (WiFi), online collaboration tools, BYOD



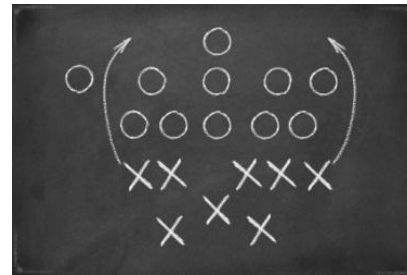
The People:

Who you recruited, who showed up, ticket/registration in advance



The Methodology:

Group decision but frequently agile/startup methods



The Game Plan:

Group decision, present raw materials (data) and possibly theme – let them at it!



What You Get

Benefits

- Ability to increase visibility and use of the City Data Portal
- Community outreach and participation
- Harness the collective wisdom of the community
- Realizing start-up speed
- Great library of apps to highlight possibilities for City applications development

Possibilities

- An idea could eventually evolve into a vital application benefiting the City and community
- Government data owners see the benefits and are encouraged to increase participation

Lessons Learned

- Plan for the transfer and sustainability of projects
- Plan the capture and retention of project participants and assets created
- Find incentives for increased organization participation and community engagement



Good stories, now how do I do it?

- ★ Getting organizational buy-in
- ★ Determine your goal and plan around that
 - Type? Competitive? Community? Internal?
- ★ Set the rules of the hackathon
 - Tailor your rules for the results you are looking for.
 - Time? Themed? Judged (judges)? Prizes?
 - Create an agenda for the day
 - Identify an MC(s) to direct the event and a small team to provide event support on the day of the event



Good stories, now how do I do it?

★ Target a date

- Find a time convenient for your target audience and to accommodate your hackathon goals
- Try to align your event with existing hacking or conference related activities where people are already interested
- Try not to conflict with events that are too similar or may pull participants



Good stories, now how do I do it?

★ Select a location

- See what's available on the date you've chosen
- Look for free locations you may have access to—or organizations who already do these types of events
- Plan for anticipated space needs and logistics
- A room with a projector, whiteboards, etc. for pitches and demos and space for groups to break out and work independently
- A location with broadband internet, sufficient power connections, adaptors and possibly audio (PA) if needed



Good stories, now how do I do it?

★ Market your event

- Identify sponsors that can help with providing space, food, prizes, etc.
- Get the word out. Work with local developer or interest groups to let them know about your event and use their network to generate interest
- Use social media to connect with existing networks of interested people or groups
- Use traditional media (news release, etc.) to reach everyone else



All items checked. Now the event...

- ★ Show up early and set up the venue
- ★ Create a group area and individual break out areas for teams
- ★ Post (project) instructions/rules in the common area
- ★ Test your equipment – projector, wifi, etc.
- ★ Set up food/refreshments
- ★ Set up sign-in sheet, name tags, markers, Post-It Notes and/or easel pads, etc.



The kickoff...

- ★ Welcome the hordes of attendees that have enthusiastically showed up to your event
- ★ Launch the kickoff by introducing the sponsor participants, reviewing the rules, goals and schedule of the event
- ★ Allow participants to briefly introduce themselves and their interests
- ★ Get started!



Pitches and teams...

- ★ Allow individuals or teams to pitch their idea or interest
- ★ Allow 1-2 minutes for them to describe the following:
 - The problem they want to solve
 - A general plan/outline how to solve it
 - A name to identify the project or team
- ★ Vote on projects or self-form into teams
- ★ Announce projects, break into teams and go!



Keep things moving...

- ★ Have the MC or support roam to assist teams
- ★ Don't break for lunch or refreshments—just make sure they are available for people to grab while they work
- ★ Keep teams aware of schedule and advise when important milestones in the day are approaching
- ★ Have a hard stop for work to complete and for demos to be presented
- ★ Call everyone back to main room for demos and judging



Nothing teaches like experience...

★ Today—we would like to demonstrate how this works...



Nothing teaches like experience...

★ Brainstorm

- What community problems do we need to solve?
- What burning issues/business problems need a solution?
- What would be a cool/fun app to engage citizens?



Nothing teaches like experience...

★ IDEAS!



Nothing teaches like experience...

★ Form your Start-ups

- Count off and get situated
- Choose CEO
- Organize and pick a problem to solve or app to build



Nothing teaches like experience...

★ Develop and make your pitch

- Use “Kick-Start Canvas” as a guide
- Use flipcharts to capture team’s ideas
- Address each of the 7 segments during pitch
- Be creative, captivating, and compelling
- Limit pitch to 5 minutes



Nothing teaches like experience...

- ★ Awards!
- ★ Feedback/Q&A



Important lessons learned...

- ★ Adjust your expectations
- ★ Place as much effort into recruiting projects as you do participants
- ★ Capture contact and project information
 - Who worked on the project? How did they do it? Do they want to do more?
- ★ Capture assets and work products
 - Use online collaboration tools like GitHub to capture the work and project information



Important lessons learned...

★ Plan for sustained success

- How will the outcomes be used and promoted?
- How will the participants be incentivized to continue projects or return for future events?



Important lessons learned...

★ Getting organizational buy-in

- Demonstrate the value experienced by those that have gone before you
- Sell the ideas of innovation and public outreach/internal team building
- Highlight the potential for a ROI – low-cost to harness the energy and skill sets of talented people
- Share the load with partners or with established organizations
- Relationship building which brings goodwill, good press and positive dialogue



Questions?

- ★ Anything we didn't cover or that you are interested in finding out more about?



Next steps...

- ★ Planning for partner data sharing organizations to host a Data Jam in the April timeframe
- ★ A Data Jam brings data owners and users from business and community together to highlight how government data can be used when it is opened.
- ★ The third event will be an actual hackathon which will take place in the June timeframe—possibly aligned with GTC Southwest 2014



Credits and Resources

★ Socrata Hackathon in a Box:

<http://hackathon-in-a-box.org/>

★ Code for America Brigade:

<http://brigade.codeforamerica.org/>

★ GovFresh CityCamp:

<http://citycamp.govfresh.com/start-a-camp/>

