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iOS Boot Camp teaches how to create and load mobile apps

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According to the 2012 Smartphone Usage Statistics Report, there are more than 91 million smartphones in the United States, and the average person uses their mobile device to download an average of 48 apps per month. On August 5-15, LSU's Center for Computation & Technology held the third annual iOS App Boot Camp, giving the public an opportunity to learn how to create iOS apps, load them on personal electronic devices and market them.

"I have been interested in programming apps for several years now," said Ryan Tortorich, an electrical engineering graduate student at LSU. "Since the iOS Boot Camp started two years ago, I have wanted to participate, but was unable to do so because of summer jobs. Fortunately, this year it worked into my schedule perfectly."

Collaborating with a four other participants, Ryan created an app called "Cache Me if You Can." It is geared towards new LSU students in hopes of helping them discover and learn about places on campus.

The primary screen of the app shows a map of the LSU campus with various points of interest (POI). When the user is within range of a POI, he is notified and presented with a question or a task. Once the question is answered or the task is completed, the user receives a coupon piece. After a few questions/tasks, the user eventually obtains a full coupon, which can hypothetically be used at a restaurant on campus.

The boot camp is open to all interested parties–LSU students, high school students, students from other institutions, even professionals who already have a job but want to gain new skills. Prior programming experience is not necessary, but basic computer skills are required.

Last year's participants, LSU's Josh Poirier and Emerald Skye Bird, created and recently released an app to support the preservation of the Koasati language, which is spoken by the Native American tribe in Louisiana and Texas.

"Development for this platform engages business people, graphic and game designers, musicians, engineers, social media practitioners, marketing and advertising specialists, and of course, programmers," said Dr. Jesse Allison, camp co-organizer, assistant professor of experimental music and digital media and CCT faculty member. "I am excited about the future of this endeavor – exploring new modes of engagement in mobile environments, as the platform reaches an incredible variety of users."

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