

Chatty Bank, House Tinder and Bank of Mum or Dad scoop top prizes at Ulster Bank's Hackathon

Over 150 developers, coders, designers, entrepreneurs and investors from 34 countries gathered in Dublin's Dogpatch Labs this weekend to 'hack' ideas about 'open' banking

Monday, 20th February, 2017: Ideas on buying a home, communicating with customers and family finance were awarded the top prizes at the Ulster Bank Hackathon held in partnership with Dogpatch Labs in Dublin last night.

Participants in the three-day hackathon came from 34 countries and included coders, designers and mentors from large multinational companies in the finance, technology and consumer space, as well as students from universities across Ireland. The event culminated in twenty two pitches to the room and judging panel on ideas hacked together over the weekend, using a range of rich APIs*. RBS' sandbox BlueBank was available for groups to integrate with and test their app using simulated transactions based on real world bank data, along with HP's Haven, a platform that provides access to 70+ API's that could compliment banking technology such as facial recognition software.

The groups were asked to deliver working prototypes to enable 'open banking', so that banks can communicate better with each other, develop relevant solutions across the banking sector and better serve customers.

The winning teams from the event are:

- Gamification: House Tinder – browsing for and purchasing a home using banking data, credit scores and property information
- Business enablement: Bank of Mum or Dad – enabling kids to manage money with the help of their parents – onboarding using the parent's bank details and facial recognition
- Creative combination: Team DeLorean – Chatty Bank, an AI platform for voice interaction creating a conversational banking channel

Friday's opening session generated a wide range of ideas to enhance the customer experience during their journey with the bank and to ultimately make banking a more enjoyable experience. Engineers were on hand to help with technical queries and mentors helped guide teams towards the perfect pitch for the judges on Sunday afternoon.

Commenting on the event, Ciaran Coyle, Chief Administrative Officer, Ulster Bank and member of the judging panel said:

"I want to congratulate the winners of this year's Hackathon and thank everyone who took part for their energy and creativity all weekend. Every year the Hackathon brings about new and innovative ideas and this year was no different as we looked at ways to create a more 'open' banking system. The Hackathon is one of my favourite events of the year as it gives us further chance to engage directly with those at the heart of the FinTech community and helps us challenge traditional ways of banking and ultimately create better experiences for our customers."

Patrick Walsh, Managing Director, Dogpatch Labs said:

"The energy in Dogpatch over the last few days has been incredible as people from various industries came together to 'hack' ideas. We're always grateful to be part of these events with Ulster Bank as it speaks to the heart of what Dogpatch Labs is about, creating a collaborative space for creativity to thrive. The ideas we saw over the weekend here show the potential Ireland has to offer in the FinTech arena."

The judging panel at the event were Patrick Eltridge, Chief Information Officer, RBS, Ciaran Coyle, Chief Administrative Officer, Ulster Bank, Margot Lyons, Chief Risk Officer, Ulster Bank, Patrick Walsh, Managing Director, Dogpatch Labs, David Erixon, Head of Digital and Customer Innovation, Ulster Bank and Amelia Casey, Chief of Staff at Ulster Bank.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

Hackathon: A group of people from a number of disciplines will come together to 'hack' out new ideas and bring them to a certain stage to pitch to a multi-disciplinary panel of experts. The process is two-fold and as well as creating ideas, participants will be able to avail of some pitch training and mentor sessions both at the event and following the event, for the successful projects. This process uses no real customer data, the project will create a 'sandbox' of data specially constructed by the project to emulate real situations, to use in the development phase.

The goal is to provide an environment which fosters intensive innovative thinking and entrepreneurship for new service provision for bank customers. The event is a partnership between Ulster Bank and Dogpatch Labs.

Customer Insights: NileHQ were onsite with a Customer Insights booth, collecting together aggregated information on business and retail customers to provide insights to support business cases and assumptions.

Hosted Environments: Participants were provided with free credits to access Microsoft Azure, their cloud computing solution. Additionally 3 cloud architects were on hand for any queries or technical issues.

*Application Programming Interfaces (API's) are procedures that allow the creation of applications which access the features or data of an operating system, application, or other service. API's enable the participants to quickly piece together a proof of concept to demonstrate to the judging panel.