Toyota Announces Winners of Silicon Valley App Design Competition

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San Mateo, Cala, Dec. 9, 2014 — Toyota Motor Corporation awarded Eye in the Sky $10,000 for developing the best app for its CAN-Gateway ECU platform, which uses data from vehicle sensors. The winning app was created as part of the Onramp 2014 Challenge, a codefest held on December 6 and 7 at the San Mateo County Event Center. Eye in the Sky competed in a talent-heavy field of more than 20 teams of top-level Silicon Valley developers, with a diverse range of entrants from the IT and startup communities.

At the codefest, participants competed to develop innovative and unique apps over a 24-hour period. Six Scion FR-S vehicles were used to provide data on driving courses set up at the event, with Toyota publicly sharing for the first time its Vehicle Data Visualizer, the communication protocol for the CAN-Gateway ECU* vehicle-to-app connectivity platform. Codefest participants were able to receive real-time vehicle data on mobile devices via Bluetooth, allowing them to interact with the cars on the courses.

Over 20 apps in the categories of Safety, Fun, and Efficiency were submitted during the competition. The grand prize winner, Eye in the Sky, is a close-follow vehicle companion drone equipped with cameras and able to autonomously follow and film the vehicle, providing video from an elevated perspective.

"We were excited about the unique opportunity to access this car data on a closed course. To combine that with a drone following the car was too unique an opportunity to pass up," said Eye in the Sky team member, Nathan Schuett. "Our idea was to prove that the concept of parallel design and development would quickly bring a great product to life," said teammate David Witt.

Commenting on the choice of location for Onramp 2014, Toyota Managing Officer Riki Inuzuka said: "We are seeing a new generation of automotive enthusiasts emerge?one that thrives on open innovation and connectivity. Our goal with this open innovation event was to communicate the joy of driving to this generation, so Silicon Valley, as a hub for cutting-edge IT, seemed like a natural fit."

Event site: http://www.toyota-global.com/innovation/smart_mobility_society/news_and_events/onramp_2014/

*Abbreviation of Controller Area Network-Gateway Electronic Control Unit, which is a platform that enables app developers to make use of vehicle data. The platform receives CAN signals, which are used in onboard computers, and converts them to work with standardized protocols such as USB and Bluetooth.