

Career Options

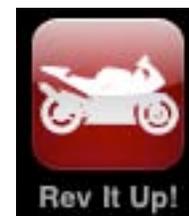
What does it take to become a software applications developer?

Apple's iPhone and the Google powered Droid offer countless applications that do everything from tuning guitars to tracking the weather. Mastering the skills to develop these "apps" is something that Mike Soderstrom knows a lot about.



To the people who want to enter the field, he suggests courses in math and science, and that aspiring developers seek out part-time jobs or internships at software development companies. A passion for computers is a must as are analytical skills, said Soderstrom. "You have to fix problems by checking them methodically, because there is no easy way to do it."

Soderstrom built a "Rev it up!" app for the iPhone that integrates sound, images and motion for a motorcycle revving simulation. In addition to the programming, he had to record the sounds, take photographs and work with Photoshop. When people purchase the app for \$1.99, he gets a portion of the proceeds.



Users turn the iPhone for motorcycle sounds

Instead, it must be organized, and it takes some imagination to visualize how it will work.

Software development involves lots of testing by others, but there's also a great deal of time spent alone working, which requires discipline. For people new to the field, it's best to start writing some open software to show others their capabilities. "Write and show the source code," said Soderstrom. "The benefit is that a lot of people can work on it, you get to fix bugs and add features. If you can show your work, this will help you get more jobs."

The developer earned a bachelor's degree in engineering from the University of Minnesota. He took comprehensive classes in basic programs. But he admits that a college degree is not necessary. There are many other ways to learn and become proficient in C language. For example, iPhone applications use Objective C language. He tells others that developers can't create "spaghetti code."

