DIGITAL EMPOWERS:

ACCELERATING INNOVATION FOR BUSINESS AND SOCIAL GOOD

EVENT SUMMARY & INSIGHTS

U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOUNDATION

TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES

ATLANTA, GA

ATL

12.4.2018

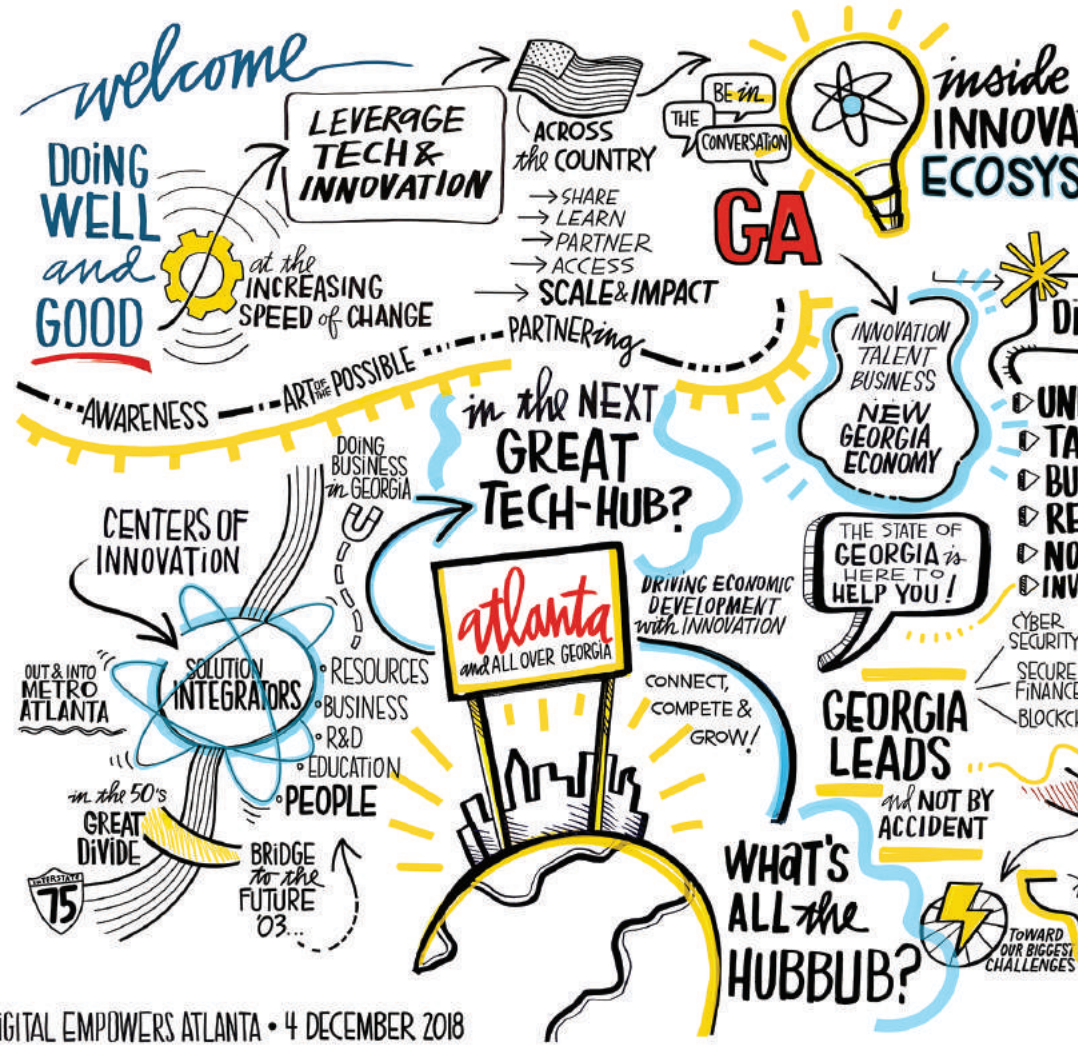
DIGITAL EMPOWERS:

Explores how cross-sector partnerships leverage technology to bring greater access and equity to individuals and communities.

On December 4, 2018, at the Campaign's first regional forum in Atlanta, city leaders and innovators shared new partnerships and technologies solving societal challenges. Three major trends emerged from the Digital Empowers Atlanta: inclusive technology ecosystems, public health and personal wellness, and community infrastructure.

Why Atlanta

Atlanta is an economic powerhouse. Home to major transportation depots, strong academic and research institutions, and significant financial and retail infrastructure, growth and innovation are thriving. According to the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, between 2017 and 2018 the state reported a 233% growth in corporate headquarter listings—of which a significant portion includes the tech sector, reporting a 153% growth. Atlanta's technology industry is expanding, in part, due to the work of groups like the Georgia Centers of Innovation and the Technology Association of Georgia, as well as academic institutions such as Georgia State University and Georgia Institute of Technology, and its incubator, Advanced Technology Development Center (ATDC). Still, Atlanta is so much more. Local leaders are invested. The community is welcoming. And it's altruistic, entrepreneurial spirit radiates—leaving no doubt as to why Atlanta is leading the world in terms of inclusive innovation.



Digital Empowers Atlanta: Key Trends

BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE ECOSYSTEM

In addition to its diverse industries, Atlanta has a diverse population in term of age, race and ethnicity, experience, and ability. A notable 62% of Atlantans identify as an ethnic minority and 38% of the metro area is between the ages 20 and 39. Yet, like other cities, Atlanta faces challenges in varying the technology industry. To counter these trends, Digital Empowers Atlanta speakers shared the importance to curate STEM experiences for youth. They also shared the importance of developing talent in the early stages of careers through mentoring and intentional recruitment of minority entrepreneurs. Speakers from the Atlanta Hawks and Points of Light highlighted that established companies need to look for talent in unexpected places and institute specific strategies to better engage and retain minority employees.

The Farm, a Comcast NBCUniversal corporate accelerator, is one of many organizations supporting local entrepreneurs. The accelerator, which focuses on local talent and early-stage entrepreneurs, offers seed funding, educational resources, mentorship, and community. Its most recent cohort was nearly 20% women and more than 75% people of color.

Digital Empowers Atlanta also featured several success stories which addressed diversity through different lenses. Startup Acivilate created a cloud-based service designed to streamline and digitize reentry programs, courts, and support services. This creates a secure, transparent, and shared platform between parolees, service providers, and correctional officers. Access to technology, which is beneficial to parolees in many ways, has enabled the growth of digital skills and empowerment, playing a role in reducing recidivism rates.

IMPROVING PERSONAL WELLNESS

Community health and individual wellbeing are priorities for many Atlanta stakeholders. Two forum speakers, representing companies outside the traditional health care industry, presented tools designed to support patients, doctors, and caretakers through personalized care.

Rimidi, a woman-led digital health startup, created a cloud-based software platform to treat cardiometabolic conditions, such as diabetes, a disease the company estimated to affect over 1 million Atlantans. This software integrates real-time patient-generated data, clinical data, and medical practice guidelines enabling physicians to optimize treatment and care according to patient progress, risks, and needs.

Aflac Inc., headquartered in Georgia, views the delivery of effective and responsible medical care and support—especially for children and their families affected by pediatric cancer—as a corporate social responsibility (CSR) priority. To that end, the company designed My Special Aflac Duck, a plush companion that is both a social robotic duck and a medical device. The duck provides emotional comfort to children from treatment to recovery. Sensors enable life-like movements and emotions, to help children verbalize their feelings and pain. My Special Aflac Duck provides a foundation for building doctor-patient trust, which leads to better care and comfort.

DEVELOPING COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

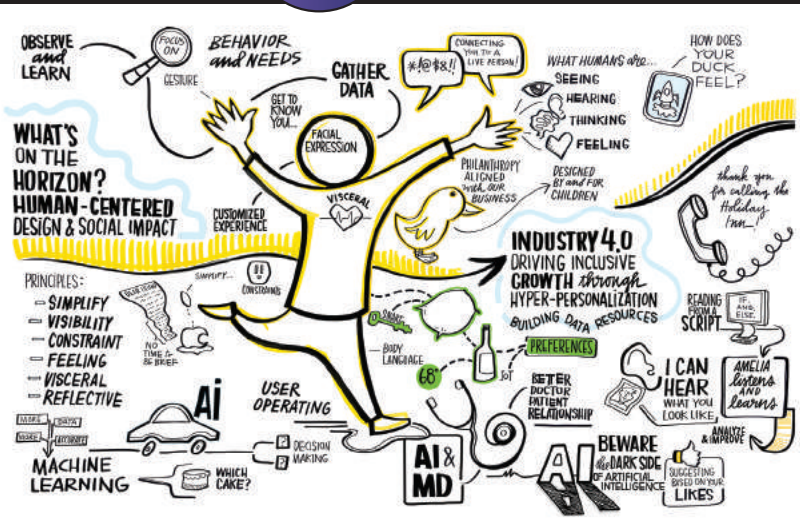
The launch of many social enterprises in Atlanta have emerged to serve unmet community needs. Affordable housing and waste management have risen as priorities because of both population and business growth.

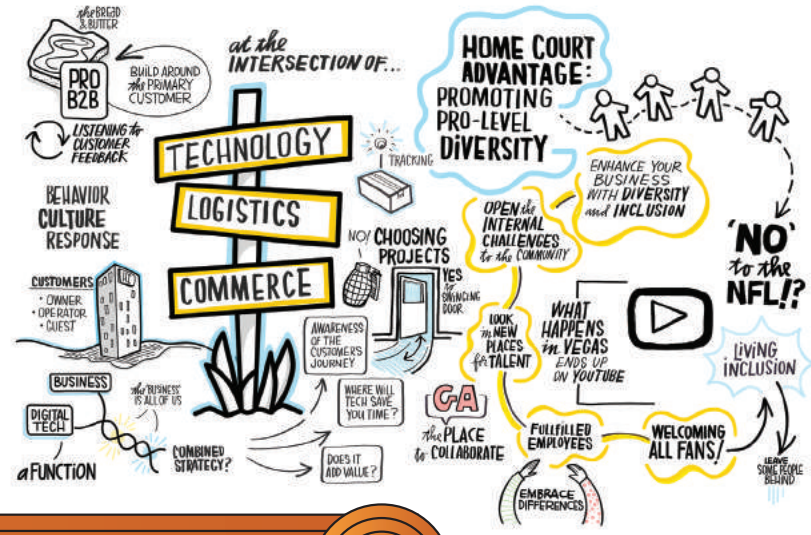
Startup PadSplit created a platform to enable Atlanta's property owners to retrofit houses into shared, yet individual living spaces. The company's platform allows both landlords and renters to monitor payment history and financial transactions, maintenance requests, and more—thereby increasing efficiency and transparency.

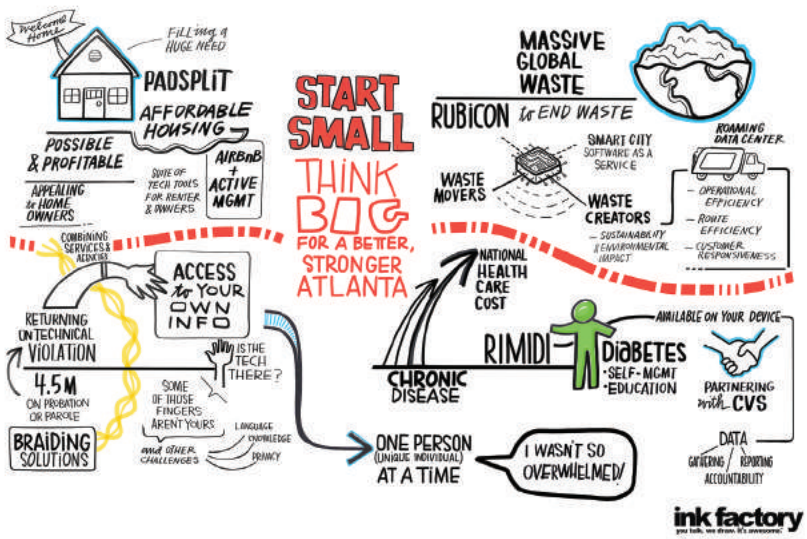
Atlanta is also committed to transform into a leading smart and resilient city. In 2017, Rubicon Global and the City of Atlanta began a private-public partnership to improve operational efficiency of waste and recycling facilities and collection fleets. By installing RUBICONSmartCity technology on waste trucks, Rubicon Global identified strategies to improve fleet maintenance, route optimization, divert waste to landfill, and reduce greenhouse gases—$750,000 in potential annual savings for the city.

Digital Empowers Atlanta: Key Takeaways

- Businesses of all sizes, sectors, and stages play a role in Atlanta's progress—economic, social, and environmental.
- Technology is growing as the underlying foundation of cross-sector partnerships—empowering, committing, and informing all stakeholders by means of shared, transparent systems supported by advanced analytics.
- Despite advancements in artificial intelligence and personalization, the human factor is equally important in solving social problems.







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