

● youth

SIPHILISELWE MAKHANYA

A DURBAN software developer's innovative smartphone application has won him the title of Vodacom App Star.

Kishyr Ramdial, a mobile applications developer for IT firm immedia, earned kudos at the inaugural contest to find South Africa's best smartphone applications.

The 25-year-old's RadioPod application outshone entries from throughout the country, winning first prize as the best designed and most relevant local smartphone application.

RadioPod allows smartphone users to listen to podcasts from their favourite radio stations through a single channel, instead of having to go to individual sites.

Ramdial, who also heads research and development at the company, said he and his team had created the application a few years ago, when the app market was relatively new.

Ramdial thanked his "great colleagues" for helping him "pull the app together".

"I'm incredibly excited to have been a part of the competition, and provided with an opportunity to show what Durban talent is capable of.

"Winning the competition means RadioPod scored highly in each of the judges' criteria for the competition, and is a huge milestone, something I'll never forget."

Ramdial, who lives in Umhlanga, believes Durban talent is often underestimated.

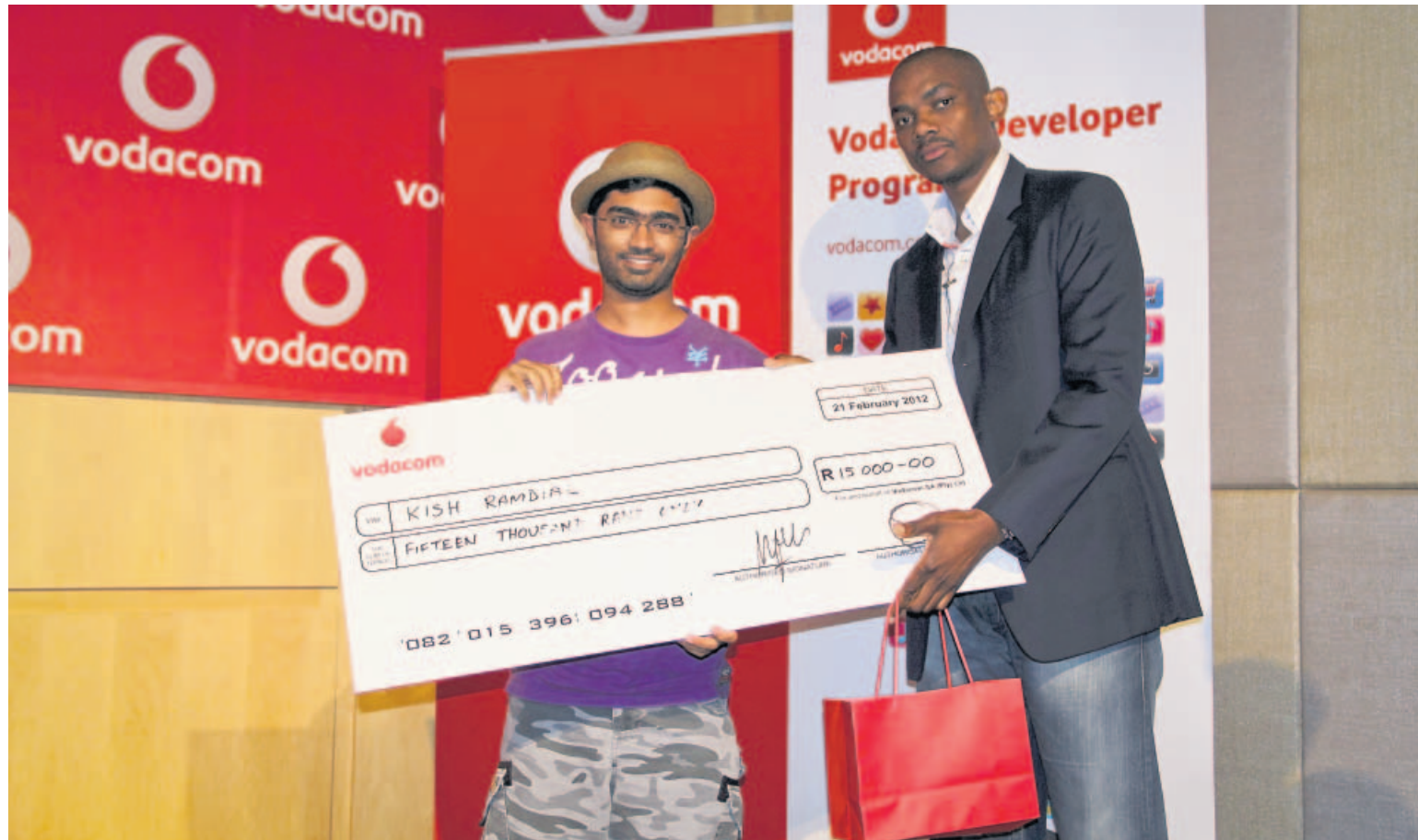
"We really have talented developers here, along with great development houses.

"I think it's a tragedy that, in the past, Durban developers have resigned their fate to the faux financial gain of the bright city lights of Johannesburg and the glamour of Cape Town.

"It's a shame. But, fortunately, all is not lost on this front."

Ramdial decided to become a developer in 2007, when internet entrepreneur Steve Jobs announced the release of the iPhone — and "we knew it was going to change our lives forever".

Appmeister aspires to create something great



TRAILBLAZER: Kishyr Ramdial, who loves creating apps for smartphones, receives his prize — which included an iPad 2 and tickets to an IT conference of his choice — from digital media managing executive Prins Mhlana
Picture: SUPPLIED

Ramdial said: "When Apple announced in 2008 that they'd open it up to allow developers to create apps for them, our company realised that we needed to evolve and be a part of this new mobile revolution.

"We've been developing apps since 2008, and have now grown our team to focus on multiple mobile platforms such as Android

Durban's talent is underestimated too often, says winning developer

and Windows Phone."

Ramdial, who also blogs about technology, said he found fulfilment in the constant evolution of his field.

"It makes me really happy. There's never a dull moment when you're figuring out ways to better an app by making it more user friendly. Technology is changing

at an incredibly fast pace and keeping up with it is what I really enjoy."

But fame and fortune isn't Ramdial's goal. "I'm a big believer in doing what you love. Fame and fortune . . . should always be the byproduct of aspiring to create something great."

● **Ramdial blogs on**
kishyr.ramdial.co.za