

## 《Cuban software designers market skills to US》

The Obama administration recently announced a further loosening of the US trade embargo against Cuba. American businesses can now import Cuban-designed mobile phone apps as well as hire Cubans to develop them. Cuba has one of the lowest levels of internet access in the world. Most computers there are old and much of the software is pirated.

Yondainer Gutierrez is a freelance Cuban web and software designer. Working out of his bedroom in Havana, he services clients in Europe, Canada and Latin America.

He studied web design in college and later taught himself to build mobile phone applications like this one for a Canadian company used by drivers to find parking spaces. All of this in a country with few smart phones, and little access to the internet.

There are a large number of graduates in Cuba with degrees in computer sciences, engineering and design. But with no well-paid jobs in the state sector, many have set up small private businesses repairing computers and phones.

Others have discovered that they can market their application design skills at competitive prices abroad.

This online outsourcing could grow now that President Obama has eased the embargo to allow US companies to do business with Cuba's private sector.

Many of Gutierrez's university classmates have left the country to work abroad. These latest developments give him an added incentive to stay.

"There are many opportunities in Cuba for this and we can do much more. I think it's crazy for talented Cubans to leave the country. There is so much to be done here, so many opportunities. If you leave, who is going to do it? There are business models to develop here," Gutierrez said.

Gutierrez still lives with his parents in a Soviet-era apartment block on the outskirts of Havana. If his outsourcing to the US really takes off, he could soon afford to move out and set up on his own.