

## Demand for Computer & Software Jobs Offers 2nd Career Opportunity

Written by Ginny Grimsley  
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*'You Don't Have to be a Math Whiz to Learn,'  
Says Trainer/Programmer*

There are *plenty* of good jobs to be found on sites like Monster and Craigslist, says Mark Lassoff, a self-described computer geek and founder of LearnToProgram, Inc. ([www.LearnToProgram.tv](http://www.LearnToProgram.tv))

). The problem is, the glut of unemployed, college-educated professionals available to fill them aren't qualified, he says.

"American companies will post positions for jobs like developing mobile apps and video games – good, high-paying jobs with benefits – but there just aren't enough qualified computer programmers out there so, after a few weeks, they send these jobs overseas," says Lassoff, who has trained employees at the Department of Defense, Lockheed Martin and Discover Card Services.

Computer programming jobs are expected to grow by 12 percent by 2020, while software developer jobs are forecast to grow by 30 percent, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In 2010, the median salary for software developers were earning more than \$90,500.

There aren't enough people to fill these jobs because technology and the job market are moving much faster than education in high schools and colleges, says Lassoff, who develops online courses, books and other materials for people who want to learn programming.

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“People think you have to go back to school to learn programming and other computer skills, but you don’t,” he says. “There’s also the myth that you have to be some kind of math or science genius to learn it. Not true. You just need to learn the process, and then practice it. You can build a portfolio by doing volunteer work for a church or charity.”

What types of people are ripe for skills like web development through an online course – and landing a great new job?

- **Career-hoppers with an IT background:** Current and former Information Technology workers are fast learners when it comes to new computer skills. If their current job is in customer service or corporate support, getting the tools to unleash their creativity may be the ticket not only to better pay but to a more gratifying career.

- **Retirees:** The cliché is that older folks are so far behind on tech knowledge, they struggle with email. However, many retirees are highly motivated, curious and have plenty of time for the business of learning. They may even have worked with early computers in their careers. “I know seniors who learned programming later in life and they like staying stimulated and challenged, and having an in-demand skill,” Lassoﬀ says.

- **The kid who plans to study computer science:** Junior high and high school curricula are still woefully behind when it comes to preparing kids for careers in computer technology. Ambitious kids who want to take their relationship with technology to the next level are thoroughly engaged by web, mobile and gaming code classes – and they do very well.

- **The good-idea person:** Very often, someone has a great idea for a mobile app, but no idea what to do with it. A basic understanding of mobile app coding can start turning that great idea into an entrepreneurial adventure.

Courses for these training programs do not have to be expensive – high quality yet affordable programs can be found for less than \$200, he says.

### **About Mark Lassoff**

Mark Lassoff is the founder and CEO of LearnToProgram.tv, Inc. Lassoff majored in communication and computer science in college, and later worked in the software and web development departments at several large corporations. While his contemporaries were conquering the dot-com world, Lassoff fell in love with training. He's a top technical trainer whose clients including the Department of Defense, Lockheed Martin, Discover Card Services and Kaiser Permanente. For people who want to dip a toe into programming, he offers free tutorials on his website.