Company: Yapp Sailing Course®, Issaquah, WA
Company Description: Mobile-first sailing education platform that blends storytelling, visual design, and AI assistance to teach beginners essential theory before they ever step on board. Over 140 interactive micro-lessons make complex nautical topics clear, engaging, and accessible.
Nomination Category: App Categories
Nomination Sub Category: Learning & Education
Nomination Title: Yapp Sailing Course — Education Redefined for Mobile

1. Date this app or site was first released:

   July 29, 2021

2. Briefly describe this mobile site or app's objectives and how it has met those objectives (up to 200 words). If applicable, include here the platforms your app supports:

   Total 200 words used.

   Yapp Sailing Course is a mobile-first learning app that reimagines how complex sailing theory is taught — replacing dense textbooks, scattered videos, and offline classes with interactive lessons designed for beginners.

   The app blends instructor-style guidance, rich illustrations, and built-in activities that gamify progression and reinforce learning.

   It covers 140 micro-lessons and offers premium tools like an AI sailing assistant, a nautical dictionary with 300+ terms, and illustrated handbooks on knots, buoys, and marine lights.

   Early development focused on building a strong MVP, leading to official company registration in August 2023. In early 2024, the launch of paid plans transformed Yapp from a free tool into a scalable platform with growing engagement and revenue.

   Conversion from new to paid users has grown from 0% to nearly 10%, with ~60% trial-to-paid rates and 20% retention into month four — all achieved without ads. Analytics show 10 minutes average session time and 84% of new users returning — strong signs of product stickiness and educational value.

   Available on iOS and Android, the app is now used in 25+ countries — including sailing hubs like the UK, Denmark, Australia, France, and the U.S. — confirming the app's value in real-world sailing cultures.

3. Provide the applicable creative and production credits for this entry:

   The app was conceived, produced, and led by Nick Leonardo, who shaped both the educational vision and product execution.

   Nick co-developed the core curriculum with the course instructor, then assembled a freelance team and led content production and lesson recording.

   He designed the user flow, collaborated with a designer on the initial interface, and oversaw development of both the backend infrastructure and front-end experience.

   Branching instructor responses — where the user receives different feedback based on their answers — were designed to mimic real engagement and maximize retention.

   More than 1,000 illustrations were created in collaboration with an illustrator, while a separate designer and a web developer contributed the main product website.

   Nick personally finalized and structured all lesson content — trimming video clips, building timed visuals, crafting quizzes and activities, and refining interactions.

   He also led QA and product iteration, incorporating user feedback such as zoomable images and smarter playback, while continuously expanding the app's capabilities.

   Supported by a small team of freelance contributors, Yapp remains a founder-led product, guided by hands-on involvement across every layer of design, development, and education.

Attachments/Videos/Links:

[redacted]

[REDACTED FOR PUBLICATION]