

Mobile Applications Working Group Minutes

November 15, 2011

Attendees:

Constance Wisdo	Melissa Ketten	Gerard Dombroski
Michael Baumhardt	Kristen Yarmey	Mary Kovalcin
Brendan Walker	Tim Meade	Benjamin Bishop
Lynn Pelick	Cindy Hricko	Julie Brackeva-Phillips
Lori Nidoh	Joe Casabona	John Culkin

1. Review of the group's charge, results of Phase I and introduction of members (Connie Wisdo):

Last summer a small group, led by Tim Meade began working on some preliminary work. The group worked on obtaining an "official" mobile app for the university. The first phase of the group's charge was to have an app that would be used for prospective students and admissions.

During the next phase, the Mobile Applications Working Group will explore expanding the app for teaching/learning purposes and for student administrative use.

2. Review of the current functionality of the university's (Straxis) mobile application (Lori Nidoh):

Straxis hosts the data base for the University's mobile app. Straxis is paid an annual fee for building and maintaining the app. If we request additional functionality that other schools may benefit from there is usually no charge. Modules are released to the client as Straxis completes them, the client can then choose whether or not to implement. Lori points out that there have been some challenges with Straxis meeting deadlines. Straxis only provides iPhone and Android support at this time.

Currently, 18 modules are up and running. The fact that we have 18 modules is raising some questions about the current interface. Straxis is offering a grid of icons as a solution. The Library module was the most recent one added. Kristen mentioned that it only offers very basic functionality and does not meet the Library's requirements for a mobile app.

In the summer, Lori conducted a poll, out of 560 votes, 55% were current students, 28% alumni, 4% faculty/staff, 11% prospective students and 2% community members. We should be close to 10,000 downloads by now.

3. Planned enhancements by Straxis to the University's mobile app (Lori Nidoh):

A dining module will be added next, offering basic functionality, such as menus, hours and locations. An Alumni module is expected to launch in the fourth quarter. A Reunion module app that Stamford currently offers is being explored. The Athletics module has been enhanced and now offers newsfeed, schedules and scores (still needs work). The Events feed, which links to the Helios Calendar is currently being improved. Currently, Events do not have a location tag, so Straxis is creating a custom feed that will provide a location for the event and they are working on opening up the feed to view several hundred future events. An iPad app should be added by the end of the year. Straxis is also working on an emergency module, adding push notifications and the ability for a user to self-identify by group (e.g. students, faculty and staff).

4. Review of Scranton Smartphone survey results (Kristen Yarmey):

Last year, as part of Kristen's research into how Smartphones affect information literacy, she examined how students use Smartphones. Kristen's survey which was modeled after the ECAR survey was offered to 832 undergrad students between the ages of 18-24. There was a 40% response rate. The ECAR study is an annual look at undergraduate students and information technology across the country. The ECAR report can be found online.

In October 2010, students were asked the type of internet capable cell phones they were using – 20% are using Blackberry, a small group of people were moving towards iPhones and Androids and a large number of students do not have internet capable phones. Kristen notes that since the survey study in 2010, a lot has changed with these stats.

Students were asked to self-identify their technology adoption using the Rodgers adoption scale that ECAR also uses. People who identify themselves as "Innovators" and "Early Adopters" were much more likely to have an Android or iPhone. The people identified as "Laggards" didn't have Smartphones. Kristen expects to see more people on campus adopting Android and iPhone devices this year and in the future.

An interesting trend was discovered. The study showed that a people with different majors were more likely to have different phones. For example, the majority of Science majors were Android users and Business majors were likely to own a Blackberry.

Looking forward to this year's national data, ECAR has changed the survey language, they are now asking about Smartphones instead of internet capable cell phones. They are reporting that only 55% of students have Smartphones. (Kristen believes this number is inaccurate, she believes the language is confusing and expects the number to be higher nationally.) 62% own an iPod which can give you some of the same functionality of a Smartphone and about 10% are buying tablets, mostly iPads. As tablet prices drop, we will probably see more students moving towards those devices.

There seems to be campus interest in tablet devices. Since June, the library has been circulating iPads and has had 131 checkouts for a 24 hour period. CTLE has a couple of Faculty iPads that they lend out for a week and there is a 15 person waiting list.

Kristen's 2010 survey and the ECAR survey has shown women students were less likely to have the more advanced Smartphones and were likely to report themselves as being mainstream, late majority or laggard adopters of technology, whereas male students were more likely to report being innovators. Compared to male students, women students seem to be slightly more interested in eReaders/eBooks and would like to see them in the classroom.

In 2010, Kristen asked students about their favorite apps, students named Facebook, The Weather Channel, sports, news and games. Kristen was surprised to see students were using educational apps such as flashcards to help students study for the GRE, calculators and dictionaries. She was also surprised to see that students were reading on their Smartphones.

The library conducted a recent informal survey asking students their favorite apps, students named Angry Birds, Twitter, Spotify, Skype, and iBooks. Nationally, in 2011, about 37% of students use their phones for academic

purposes and 45% are using them in class. The national survey results provided a graph that highlights how students are academically using their phones. Students use their Smartphones to access grades, course syllabuses, collecting data for class work, library resources, registering for courses, research, financial aid information, transcripts, and textbook purchases. These are all things we should consider with our mobile app.

In 2010, Kristen asked students what they would most like to see highlighted on our mobile campus. The big things students want to see are Angel access, Royal card balance, schedule, and dining hall menus. Another find: students are always connected to other people.

5. Integrating the new functionality, built by the University, into the Straxis app (Connie Wisdo):

When we began considering the different vendors that would build the app, we took into account all of the phases-public relations, teaching, learning, and student services. There was prior discussion of having two separate apps-one for prospective students and one for everyone else. The initial group, as well as the VP for PR and the VP for Planning decided that it's not a good idea and we should only have one application for the whole University community. Therefore we should try to integrate anything we build into the current University-branded app.

Straxis has a template that we can use to test the functionality we build before it is integrated into the University app. Straxis could not provide the functionality of accessing your personal information such as schedule, grades, etc. since it requires authentication to our internal database and ERP system. SunGard does have this functionality through its Mobile Connection framework.

A concern was raised about ownership of the code that's developed by the University, but integrated into the Straxis-built app. Connie said she expected the code to remain under our ownership, but would check our contract, and with our Straxis rep.

6. Demo of SunGard Mobile Connection Framework for app development (Joe Casabona):

SunGard uses a framework called Rhodes that allows us to develop one set of code and it generates the app for multiple types of phones, such as iPhone, Android and Blackberry. SunGard framework comes with apps such as: checking your schedule and grades, a directory, and an RSS reader and web frame module that is fully customizable. Joe did a demo for the group using an Android emulator running on his computer, which included some customizations that Joe made.

Access to the directory, schedule, events, and news could not be demonstrated at the meeting, because they require access to the mobile app server which Joe and John Culkin are currently working on implementing. Joe mentioned concerns about integrating SunGard with the Straxis app because he doesn't think the Straxis app will mix well with Rhodes. However, he may be able to integrate the native code that's generated by the Rhodes middleware for iPhone, Android, etc.

Benjamin Bishop asked, "Why can't my.scranton be opened on a Smartphone through a web browser?" John Culkin explained that it was due to us being on an old version of Luminis (the software upon which the portal is built). Some members have had trouble getting onto the webpage from their phones, while others have had no problem at all. It is browser-specific.

Connie brought up the SunGard Commons which is a transitional website for their support. For the mobile connection, this is the site that you go to for documentation, help, support, and code repository. (<http://www.edu1world.org/CommonsMobileConnection/>)

Connie also discussed current updates with Angel 8. The upgrade to Angel 8 will occur between December 21st and 23rd. This upgrade will allow users to use Angel 8 with Chrome and Safari which will become supported browsers.

7. Examples of how other schools are using SunGard's products

- **William Paterson University (Connie Wisdo)**

William Paterson University did a presentation at the last SunGard summit in March. Connie was hoping that they would have an app completed by this meeting, but they did not. She will try to get a demo for the next meeting.

- **Temple University (Cindy Hricko)**

TUMobile-Temple University is one of the fore-runners of implementing SunGard's mobile framework. A lot of the things that Kristen discovered in her survey are included in their app. Temple went live April 15, 2011. Temple has a bus that goes around campus and they had a GPS site that would tell you the location of the bus. They also had apps for open lab computers on campus, 911, and student holds.

The next meeting of the Mobile Apps Working Group is Tuesday December 6th, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Connie asked if everyone could come next meeting with ideas of what to include in our mobile apps. Joe, Cindy, and Lynn will be going to the PA Banner Users Group meeting on November 21st. Joe plans to attend a lot of the mobile app sessions. Connie is hoping the next release of Luminis will be implemented in January 2012.