Queen Mary
University of London

Students' Union App

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The brand new Students' Union App launched in October 2016 following consistent student feedback that a new app was something that they wanted. In addition, involvement in student activities over the past 3 years (sports, volunteering, buddy scheme, Get Active, etc.) has grown immensely. For example, the number of students involved in societies alone has grown by 88%, and students are looking for better and quicker access to information. As technology develops and changes, it is clearly important that the Union evolves and develops its outreach and the new app enables this to happen.

Following the successful award of Westfield Funding, the Union began investigating the options available and were successful in being chosen by Membership Solutions Limited (MSL) to be a pioneer of their new app. This allowed the Union to steer the development and design of the app, and ensured the Union became one of the first in the country to launch anything of its kind.

The initial 12 month development phase was overseen by the Union's in-house Web Developer Ruhena Begum and MSL. The Union asked students in the 2015 Annual Survey, "If the Students' Union were to develop an app, what features would you like to see?" The priorities identified by students were, in order, 'Events and Ticketing', 'Student Groups and Activities', 'Election Voting', 'Loyalty Rewards', and, 'Easy Ways to Provide Feedback'. These responses helped to confirm the 'roadmap' of the app and identify design priorities. Further user testing was carried out with students in focus groups and at student group training events to further guide development, whilst ensuring the app was delivering what the students wanted.

The Launch

The app was 'soft-launched' in time for Welcome Week 2016, with memberships and event tickets purchased on the first day. A full launch took place during October 2016 with a wide range of visually-striking marketing produced by the Union's in-house designer Jenny Evans. The campaign included pop-up banners, table talkers in Union venues, business cards given out with receipts, social media posts, website advertising and a feature in the all-student email 'Your Union'. The app was also heavily promoted to student groups as a method they could use to increase their memberships.

What's on the App?

The new app delivers a wide range of functionality allowing students to:

- Find out information about Societies, Sports Clubs and other student groups.
- Buy memberships for student groups.
- Buy tickets for events and opportunities.
- Securely vote in Union Elections.
- Find out the latest up-to-date Union news.

An important part of student satisfaction and building a student community is having fun at University and meeting people with similar interests. The app facilitates this by opening up awareness and accessibility to the activities and Societies that are available. Overall the app is allowing students to integrate into University life, helping them to get involved in activities, student groups and events.

In future updates the app will provide location information for way-finding and will be able to message students, offering a more personalised experience than the website can provide.

Evaluation and Next Steps

Six and 12 months after the app's initial launch the following measures will be used to evaluate its success:

- Transactions and Downloads.
- Student Satisfaction.
- Increase in involvement in student groups/membership numbers.
- Number of tickets purchased through the app.
- Number of Votes using app during the Union Elections.

In addition, we hope to bring further developments in the next 12 months including:

- Launch of voting through the app
- A 'Student Ideas Hub' where students can submit ideas easily.
- Loyalty Scheme for QMSU outlets and other Union initiatives.
- Location-based services such as direct messaging, push notifications and special offers sent direct to students based on their location.
- Further improvements in the appearance of society/student group pages.
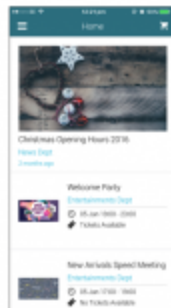
1246 Downloads for iOS

898 Downloads for Android

100+ students involved in testing & development

£1631.96 value of transactions through App to date

Available on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play