

VIETNAM NATIONAL UNIVERSITY - HO CHI MINH CITY
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
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SPECIALIZED PROJECT

BUILD A MOBILE APP FOR
DATA COLLECTION AND
URBAN TRAFFIC ESTIMATION

Major: Computer Science

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Ho Chi Minh City, 11th December, 2023



DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY

We would like to state that to project "Build a mobile app for data collection and urban traffic estimation" is our own work under the guidance of Assoc. Prof. Tran Minh Quang and MSc. Bui Tien Duc. Related knowledge, information and research works that we refer to will be clearly noted in the references section. We are responsible for the truthfulness of our topic.

Ho Chi Minh, December 2023

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In creating this undertaking, the guidance of our instructors, Associate Professor Tran Minh Quang and Master of Science Bui Tien Duc was indispensable. For this, we are extremely grateful.



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Motivation

Ho Chi Minh City is a thriving metropolis known for its vibrancy and economic importance, but it also has a persistent problem with traffic congestion. An astounding estimated cost of 6 billion USD per year [2] highlights the crippling effects of traffic congestion on Ho Chi Minh City, indicating not only the financial toll on businesses but also the pressing need to put into practice practical solutions for sustainable urban development. Within this context, the project's driving force is the necessity to improve the current mobile application aimed at facilitating better traffic conditions in Ho Chi Minh City. [6]

The current measures taken by the government to alleviate traffic congestion in Ho Chi Minh City have mostly failed, despite their concerted efforts. The rapid urbanization and increasing vehicular density have posed challenges for infrastructure projects and traffic management initiatives to keep up with. Moreover, the current deficiencies in the public transportation system have hindered its capacity to function as a viable alternative for a significant portion of the population. The insufficient effectiveness of these measures underscores the intricacy of the challenge, requiring a thorough reassessment and inventive strategy to attain significant and enduring outcomes.

1.2 Available solutions

In response to the pressing issue of traffic congestion in Ho Chi Minh City, various measures have been implemented to alleviate the strain on the urban transportation system. One notable initiative involves ongoing investments in infrastructure development, with the construction of new roads and the expansion of existing thoroughfares aimed at accommodating the city's growing population and vehicular density. Additionally, the government has introduced and expanded public transportation services, such as buses and the metro system, as a means to encourage citizens to opt for more sustainable modes of commuting.

A different strategy for addressing traffic congestion involves the creation of specialized programs for the purpose of continuously monitoring the situation in real-time. These applications utilize technology to deliver real-time updates on traffic conditions, acknowledging the demand for immediate information. Through the collection and analysis of data from diverse sources, including GPS-enabled devices and surveillance cameras, these applications enable users to make well-informed decisions regarding their travels. An example is the TTGT HCMC application created by the Department of Transportation in Ho Chi Minh City. This application functions as a vital instrument, providing users with instant access to real-time updates on the status of routes and visual information through a network of 685 strategically positioned cameras throughout the city. These innovative technologies enhance the ability to effectively manage traffic congestion in urban environments by employing a dynamic and adaptable approach.

1.3 Problem statement

UTraffic [5] is a city traffic prediction system that relies on data gathered from the local population developed by Professor Tran Minh Quang, alongside his associates and students at Ho Chi Minh University of Technology. UTraffic's products aim to mitigate traffic congestion and enhance safety and convenience



for users. Using big data analytics and machine learning, the solutions estimate and forecast traffic conditions accurately and quickly, warn users of traffic jams, support efficient routing that takes traffic conditions into account, and provide statistical information and forecasts to help managers make decisions. However, despite UTraffic's commendable objectives and the overarching focus on the mobile application and backend technologies, several challenges have surfaced in the system's current implementation that require careful consideration and resolution:

- Observations from the previous authors highlight the necessity for refactoring the code base of both the server and mobile app to enhance reusability and readability. Furthermore, the documentation requires centralization to simplify the installation and configuration process for new developers.[3]
- In addition to impeding thorough data collecting and insights into traffic patterns in Ho Chi Minh City, the lack of an iOS version restricts our ability to interact with the sizable iPhone user base.
- In addition to relying on crowd-sourced data for efficient routing, our existing approaches to traffic congestion are not sufficiently diverse.

1.4 Scope and objectives

The UTraffic app and backend, developed by previous teams, serve as the basis for our efforts to enhance and innovate Ho Chi Minh City's traffic circumstances. The objective of the project is to expand the number of users by creating an iOS version of the current Android application. The objective of this iOS expansion is to enhance the accessibility of the UTraffic application, thereby encouraging a broader range of users. Objectively, the introduction of supplementary bus-related services is intended to encourage the greater use of public transportation. These services will provide users with up-to-date information about bus routes, schedules, and other information, improving the attractiveness of sustainable commuting choices. Moreover, a crucial component of the project entails the reorganization of the code base, with a focus on enhancing the internal code structure to achieve better clarity, readability, and reusability. This aims to streamline development and enhance long-term maintenance efficiency. The project aims to make a substantial contribution to the improvement of urban mobility in Ho Chi Minh City through these collaborative efforts.

2 RELATED RESEARCH

2.1 Bus-Related Services

Our research investigates a range of applications that provide services related to buses. Through a thorough analysis of established solutions within this field, our objective is to acquire insights that will guide the improvement of our application, thereby providing our audience with a more comprehensive and intuitive experience.

2.1.1 FPT Ecosystem

Besides Go!Bus TPHCM, FPT offers a wide set of choices for citizens to track traffic data, and these services are linked together. Most notably, the TTGT Tp Ho Chi Minh app allows users to see public cameras for traffic. We place particular emphasis on Go!Bus as it aligns with our project's focus, and Buýt TPHCM holds significance for data collection, as detailed in subsequent sections. These applications play pivotal roles in informing our research and development efforts.

2.1.1.a Go!Bus

Fundamentally, Go!Bus offers solely bus-related services like bus stop searching, bus route searching, and routing. The app also has some support for Grab when routing. The home screen for the app is as follows:

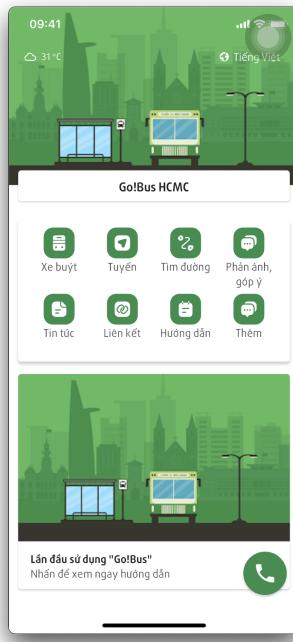
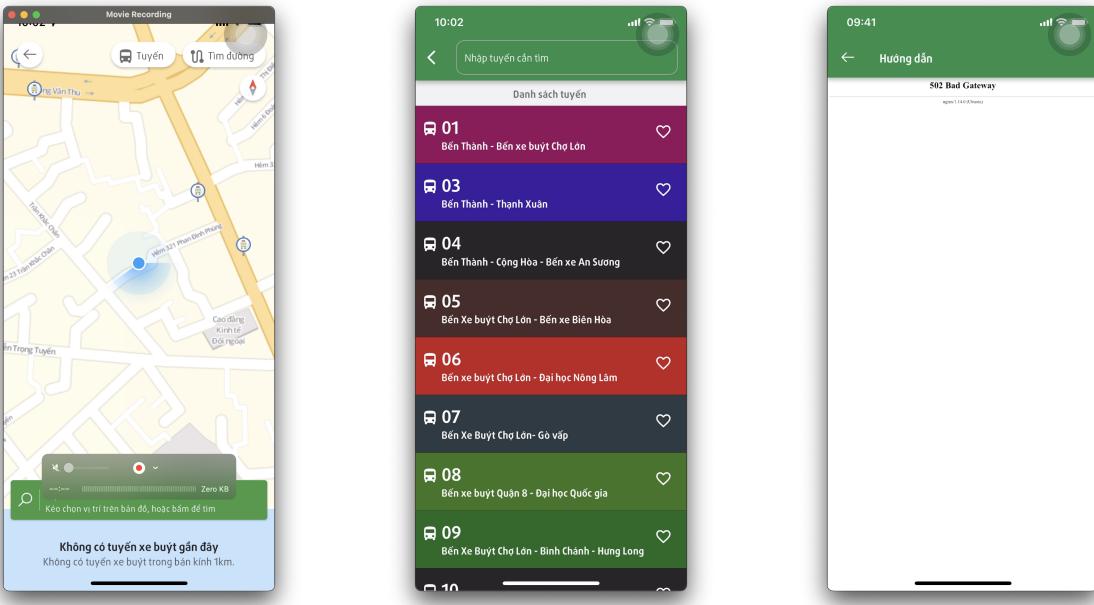


Figure 1: The home screen for Go!Bus.

Nevertheless, during our testing of these features, none of them functioned. Here are a few examples of these occurrences.



(a) No data for nearby routes.

(b) The stops do not show anything when pressed.

(c) Embedded web view with server error.

Figure 2: Go!Bus functionalities problems

It also portrayed some mobile app bad practices, such as embedding web views into the UI. Apple, in particular, is not fond of this approach and publicly stated that apps using this will not be accepted [1].

2.1.1.b Buyt TPHCM website

Buyt TPHCM website [4] is an online resource designed to provide comprehensive information and tools for navigating the public bus system in Ho Chi Minh City. This website aims to enhance the accessibility and user experience of public transportation within the city by offering the following key functionalities:

- **Detailed route information:** The website provides users with comprehensive information on all bus routes in Ho Chi Minh City, including individual stop locations, schedules, and route maps.
- **Real-time bus arrival predictions:** To promote efficient travel planning, buyttphcm.com.vn offers real-time bus arrival predictions for all routes, allowing users to make informed decisions about their travel time.
- **Convenient tools and resources:** This website provides access to the Go!Bus mobile application, enabling users to easily purchase tickets and plan their bus journeys on the go. Additionally, users can find helpful information about the Public Transport Management Center and other relevant resources.
- **Up-to-date news and information:** buyttphcm.com.vn keeps users informed of the latest developments in the Ho Chi Minh City bus system, including temporary route changes, service disruptions, and new initiatives.

With its regularly updated resources, Buýt TP HCM will play a crucial role in our data collection process for bus stops and routes in the later stages of our project.

2.1.2 BusMap

BusMap rose as a prime solution for city navigation using buses. It also expanded into other regions and countries like Thailand and is overall doing well.

The fundamental bus services like searching and routing are executed well on BusMap, bar some UI lag that could be due to the excessive inclusion of map views. Users can see the bus locations that are coming their way with an estimated time of arrival. There are also other services offered by BusMap, such as JobMap, MotelMap, and driver license support. However, sections like "Blogs" and "News" might be unnecessary for most users.

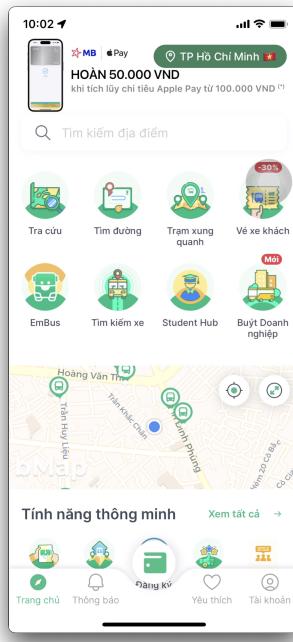


Figure 3: The home screen for BusMap

2.1.3 Conclusion

Both of these apps share a common feature of being equipped with an abundance of supplementary services. While Go!Bus TPHCM is compatible with Grab, BusMap has diversified its partnerships to include other businesses. One apparent limitation of UTraffic is the lack of access to real-time data, such as the current locations of buses and the duration until the next journey. Nevertheless, with sufficient effort and development, our application can excel as a dependable routing and search engine. Ultimately, the primary function of UTraffic is to process congestion data; therefore, care must be taken not to delve too thoroughly into other domains.



2.2 Data mining current bus stops and routes

In our endeavor to enhance urban mobility and public transportation services in Ho Chi Minh City, we embark on a comprehensive research initiative focusing on the Buyt TPHCM website. This platform serves as a valuable resource for gathering essential data related to bus stops and routes.

2.3 Current architecture of the backend system

TODO: write about



3 SYSTEM ANALYSIS AND DESIGN

3.1 Current code base structure

3.2 Implemented APIs

During our research to improve the performance and coherence of the application, we have come across some crucial APIs that are listed below:

- **Find Route by ID:** `/routes/route_id` - Retrieve detailed information about a specific bus route.
- **Nearby Routes:** `/routes/nearby` - Discover nearby bus routes based on location.
- **Find Stops by Route:** `/routes/route_id/stops` - Get a list of bus stops along a specific route.
- **Find Stops by Location:** `/stops/nearby` - Find bus stops near a given location.
- **Route Search:** `/routes/search` - Search for bus routes based on keywords or criteria.



4 IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Bus Services Integration

4.1.1 The data mining process

4.1.2 Data storage of bus services

4.2 iOS App Development



5 WORK EVALUATION AND FUTURE PLANS

5.1 Work Evaluation

5.2 Future Plans



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