USC Digital Access Problem Statement

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Problem Statement:

Students at the University of South Carolina rely on their physical Carolina Card for access to essential campus facilities such as dorms, libraries, gyms, dining halls, and college buildings after hours. There is currently no digital alternative, meaning students must carry the physical card at all times. If a student loses or damages their card, they must pay a $35 replacement fee. This creates inconvenience, potential access issues, and unnecessary costs for students.

Who is experiencing the problem?

All students, faculty, and staff at the University of South Carolina who use their Carolina Card for identification and building access. New students are particularly affected, as they rely on the card for nearly every aspect of campus life.

What is the problem?

The lack of a digital Carolina Card (e.g., in Apple Wallet or Google Wallet) forces users to carry a physical card at all times. Misplacing or forgetting the card can result in being locked out of dorms or facilities. Replacement costs and wait times for new cards further add to the inconvenience.

Where does the problem present itself?

Across campus facilities including dorms, libraries, gyms, classrooms, and dining halls. It is especially problematic during late hours or weekends when access offices are closed. It also affects students off-campus who forget their cards and need re-entry to dorms or labs.

Why does it matter?

The Carolina Card is essential for daily campus life, and the lack of a digital alternative limits convenience and accessibility. Implementing a digital card option would enhance security, reduce replacement costs, and modernize campus technology in line with peer universities. A digital solution promotes student satisfaction, efficiency, and accessibility — aligning with USC's mission to provide a connected, innovative campus experience.