

ROOM RAIDER

Room Raider Proposal
Hop-Scotch Mafia

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1 Problem Outline

For most students, group study is not only beneficial, but essential to their academic success. In this report, we examine the potential of a student-run, opt-in room booking and communication application. There are currently little means provided for forming study groups at the University of Victoria, and those that do exist, such as the room-booking service, have several flaws that would be remedied by the creation of our application. The problem is two-fold:

Firstly, the current methods provided for room-booking allow students to consecutively book large blocks of time, which quickly fills the minimal number of rooms available. Students have limited time available to them and any time wasted on finding a study space could be better spent elsewhere. Additionally, there are currently no means for students to see which classrooms are available for studying. These problems of finding an appropriate area to study are amplified during midterms/exams.

Secondly, there are few communication channels provided to students that allow them to contact other members of his or her class, unless the professor has granted them access to a chat room or forums. Academic chat rooms serve as a record of learning that can be referred to by the entire group, and without them students miss out on important aspects of learning such as group study and developing relationships with their peers.

2 Evidence

From the results of our interviews a number of conclusions can be drawn. There is demand for a convenient, academic related, chat service. Also, students have trouble finding study places for groups and finding study locations around exam time. It was mentioned that in the summer months it is easier to coordinate study because the nice weather facilitates outside studies. However, the majority of students do not take classes in the summer so are limited to studying indoors. Students also mentioned that convenience is key. They cited services such as facebook and google drive as positive because it's easy to automatically login and stay logged in. Students also mentioned the convenience of having your contacts already available.

3 Proposed Solution

Room Raider is a room-booking and academic chat service. It shows you which study rooms and classrooms are available for given times. It schedules meetings based on your group's available times and facilitates meaningful group discussion. Room Raider is the perfect fit for anybody who has limited time and no place to go.

3.1 Features

Room Raider features chat and room searching. The chat includes a URL history to easily navigate shared documents and important links. When you sign up using your netlink ID it is easy to add anybody you share classes with using netlink or email. An important part of this application is room finding. You can search for a room by inputting parameters or you can click a group and let the application find a room for

you. The application allows you to view classrooms that are not in use. Many people assume classrooms are in use when in fact they are a quality place to study with whiteboards or chalkboards.

3.2 Technologies

We propose Room Raider as a web based application to be optimized for both PC and mobile in order to maximise the usability. Technologies involved will include an account creation that links with the current Uvic Netlink ID system, a chat room that hosts multiple users and has persistent messages and a room-booking portion that syncs with the current Uvic room-booking interface and schedule. This is to view the availability of all classrooms and study rooms.

4 Conclusion

This app would facilitate group study, either directly through the app (conversations in-app) or indirectly (organizing study times for face-to-face interaction), which we believe is essential to the success of a student. Through the app, students would be free to communicate with other students, to either arrange group study time, ask questions of one another, or otherwise communicate. Benefits could include reduced social barriers to meet and get to know other students, a more developed university community, and less time spent searching for suitable study space.