**UCF Downtown App - Strategy Guide**

This strategy guide will serve to act as a comprehensive list of all future content that our team believes will be of benefit to the University of Central Florida for the future development and maintenance of the UCF mobile app. The advice provided in this guide was curated by our team members after months of research and cross-checking in order to ensure that the UCF mobile app will continue to thrive while maintaining its targeted audience.

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**A. Responsiveness**

Before we discuss our recommendations for future content and maintenance of responsiveness we must first offer you a clear picture of what responsiveness means in web design. In web design responsiveness refers to how the content of the page is laid out according to specific elements such as platform, screen size, and user preferences. If the platform is a mobile app, then the design should reflect that and should be easy to navigate according to a mobile phone’s screen size and how it navigates through different pages. Since our product is a mobile app, it is extremely important that the UCF mobile app is responsive.

Through our additions we have made the app a much more inclusive and accessible resource with the incorporation of accessible settings allowing the user to pick their language, text size, and the option of dark mode.

Unfortunately we were unable to change all hyperlinks, the reason why as well as advice for future implementation is discussed under the topic ‘Removing hyperlinks’.

1. **Additional Accessibility**

UCF is a diverse university and can boast of having a large international student population. Thus, in the future it is imperative that more languages are added to the UCF mobile app in order to create an inclusive environment where users are comfortable and able to utilise services written in their mother tongue. Our team has already made progress in this aspect, incorporating settings which allow for the user to switch between English, French, Spanish and Dutch. However, in the future additional languages should be added.

Another accessibility feature that needs to be added in the future is the option to change font styles. Additional font styles, such as ones created specifically for dyslexia, would allow future users to pick a font that is easy for them to read. Which will in turn raise user satisfaction as well as allowing for the app to become more accessible to those with cognitive disability. The future addition of a colour blind option will also achieve the goal of being more accessible, with this point targeting those who have a visual disability.

Another accessible option that our team believes will be of great benefit to add is the addition of a text-to-speech option as well as a voice command option. This will target those who have visual disabilities as well as those who have physical disabilities. Our team initially would have liked to have added this feature ourselves but this was deemed out of our range as of now. Thus, the idea was moved to the strategy guide for future implementation.

1. **Removing hyperlinks**

With a goal to reduce off-app portaling, our team's original plan was to get rid of all hyperlinks and instead re-create the exact pages of the links into the UCF mobile app. However, after much deliberation this plan was deemed too time consuming at present due to time constraints and was thus placed here in the strategy guide as an option for future implementation.

Currently, the redesigned UCF mobile app provides the user with buttons that, when clicked, takes you to the corresponding webpage. This is fit to be a temporary solution to the problem. And, once the UCF mobile app is launched, the client can then proceed to slowly develop and implement in-app experiences, which will shape the app into its own experience rather than just have it be a hub of hyperlinks. This will make the mobile experience a lot more satisfying and useful to all UCF Downtown students and staff, rather than the app just taking up storage space on their phones. From our research we found an [Apple article](https://developer.apple.com/design/human-interface-guidelines/ios/app-architecture/navigation/) that discusses effective navigation between pages and its medium.

**B. Mobile Experience**

With the relaunch of the UCF mobile app, providing an excellent mobile experience was our top priority. Menus and surfacing of relevant information should reflect current real world environmental factors including but not limited to the following: Location, time of day, weather, class schedules, campus, and local events. Content should not be stagnate and irrelevant to the user. This was provided by our team in the form of a dynamic homepage, providing notifications such as traffic reports and upcoming academic deadlines. Your schedule, showing class number, location, and room number is also portrayed on the homepage for ease of access.

1. **Adding a Weather API**

Florida is known for having weather that changes on the flip of a dime and thus we believe a great future addition would be a current weather broadcast. The addition of a current weather report would allow for even more dynamic content. Our team recommends that you provide said weather report on the top of the homepage. Our choice of weather API is [OpenWeather](https://openweathermap.org/current), it has been used by countless large businesses such as Facebook, Microsoft, Ikea as well as many others. It provides a range of different options, from a starting price of $0 a month to $2000 a month. Our team recommends that the client begins with the free option in order to get a feel for the technology. And, as the client becomes more comfortable with the API, and as the amount of users grows, they can then proceed to purchase a more expensive option.

1. **Dynamic Campus Map**

In the future, in order for students and faculty to know more about the campus and surrounding area our team believes that the implementation of a dynamic campus map would be a worthwhile investment. The Dr. Phillips Academic Commons hosts various resources such as the downtown library, tutor and study spaces, classrooms, and active learning spaces that are relatively unknown to a large population of students who do not have active classes in the building. These resources may see more use if there was an interactive map that displayed floor by floor information of each building downtown.

In addition to this, downtown Orlando is just steps away from the Downtown campus and students are provided an outdated map with vague information. With City Hall, Sunrail station, the Downtown Museum, Lake Eola, Downtown Orlando Library, and the Rodgers building, there are plenty of intriguing opportunities for students to explore. To achieve an interactive and in depth map of Downtown the client’s, UCF, already existing technique of using drones to map out areas can be utilized. This [article](https://sciences.ucf.edu/news/maps-apps-and-drones/) explains the process of mapping out the campus through drones.

Currently, our team has in place a standard google map. However, in the future this should be changed to a more in depth map that specifically focuses on the downtown campus. This map should have all three campus buildings, as well as the parking garages. When the buildings are selected the map should also display a side-bar depicting all of the services offered in said building. This will decrease any confusion on which buildings provide what. A great example to draw from is the [*University of New Haven*](https://map.concept3d.com/?id=1284#!ct/35267,35794,37576,37577,37578,37579,37581,40379,40380)3D dynamic map.

1. **Subscribing to OneSignal Notification System**

Notifications are an essential part of any mobile application as it allows the app to interact with the user and stimulates user engagement. Our team has provided a sample of what some in-app notifications will look like. However, the actual addition of a notification system has been left for future development. The notification system should be broken down into three types: push notifications, in-app notifications, and badges. These notification types will be used in accordance with overall priority and importance. Our team has already added an option to opt-out of specific notifications in the settings. But this number should be increased as the client adds more notification types. Our team has decided that to give the University of Central Florida a process which is both easy to understand and implement the use of a third-party notification service, [*OneSignal*](https://onesignal.com/)would be an ideal fit*.* OneSignal has proved to be a trustworthy company and is the world's leading notification service, providing its services to the likes of The Princeton Review, USA Today Sports, Burger King, and many more popular brands. This third-party notification service offers quick and easy maintenance as well as a relatively cheap cost of upkeep. Linked below are helpful videos and tutorials in setting up OneSignal.

<https://onesignal.com/webinars/using-onesignals-api>

<https://www.codemag.com/article/1609051/Push-Notifications-Made-Easy-with-One-Signal>

As well as other helpful how-to guides:

<https://onesignal.com/resources?type=guides>

1. **Customization**

The last future addition that our team believes would be beneficial to the UCF mobile app is giving the users the ability to customize the app to their liking. Customization would increase user engagement and retention as the app is now personalised to them. Though this [article](https://www.productsdesigner.com/blog/benefit-growth-product-customization/) is specifically referring to E-commerce, it provides a compelling argument on why customization is important for user growth and retention. This information can also be applied to the UCF mobile app.

When it comes to giving a more personalised experience our team believes that the client should focus on these key features: - Addition of a customizable profile picture, present on the profile page and all subsequent links that refer to the user profile. -Ability to select and rearrange the favourites located on the home page in order for it to be more tailored to the user. -The ability to select a different background image from the picture currently present on the home page.

With the work currently done, and with the help of this strategy guide, we sincerely believe that the UCF mobile app is on a great path to success. And we hope that in the future, you will look to us for any further assistance. As a gesture of goodwill we will leave you with one last piece of parting advice. The world of digital media is a continuously evolving field, and as someone with a mobile app it is extremely important that you are aware of these changes and proceed to act accordingly. Thus, we encourage you to keep an eye out for innovative changes in the field and to reach out to your target audience for their inputs and creative insights. Foster a community who will in turn help with the user experience of the UCF mobile app.

1. **More Accessibility focused features**

As the UCF mobile app continues to grow as a resource for UCF’s students and staff we will want to cater to the diverse needs and expectations of our users. Adding features that bring more accessibility to students who are visually impared such as a text to voice feature or offering more display options for students who live with colorblindness or dyslexia should also be an added focus of future development. In addition, the UCF mobile app focusing on the downtown campus should also have regular updates to all features with accessibility in mind. Following a research paper done by the [International journal of environmental research and public health](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6617020/), adding features to the downtown campus map that shows wheelchair ramps and accessible access points along with elevators would increase quality of life for our mobility impared users.