

The “Better RIT” App

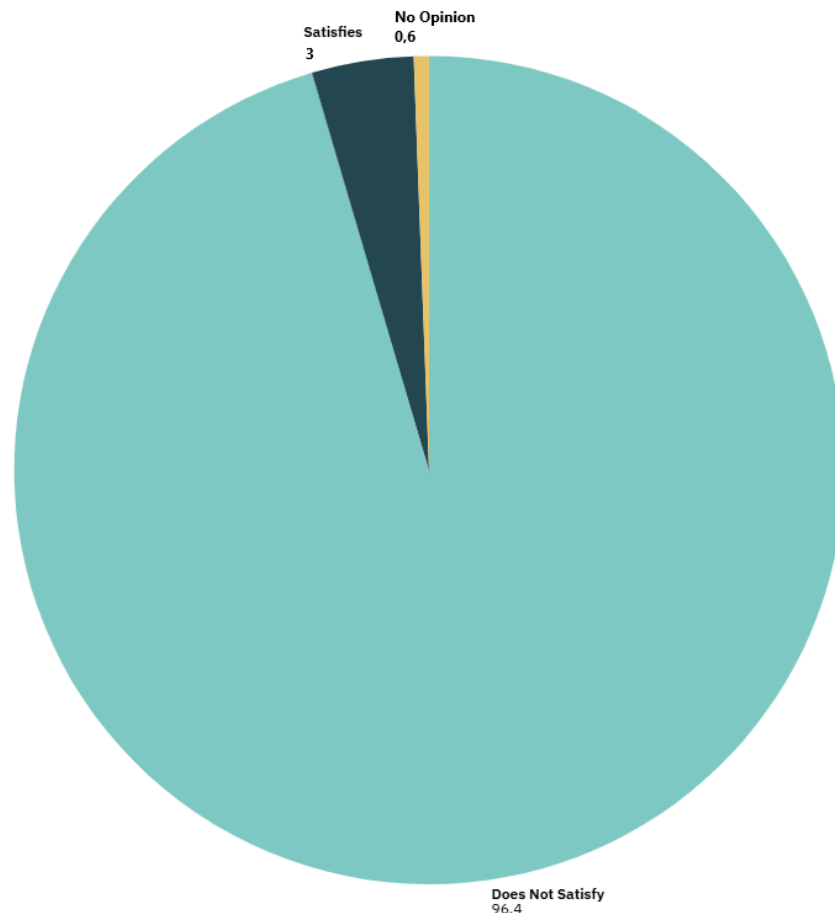
Project Team Members

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Executive Summary:

This proposal outlines the business plan pertaining to a new and improved RIT app. For a school that prides itself on “leveraging the power of technology, the arts, and design” many students and faculty report feeling dissatisfied with the current RIT mobile app’s functionality and design (RIT.edu). Ugly buttons which take you to separate websites, needing to cycle between at least three different apps for common tasks and a lack of certain useful features all come together to bring users of the RIT apps not a feeling of satisfaction, but one of extreme disappointment. The “Better RIT” app will provide students with an app that not only is easier on the eyes, but easier to use, and makes it easier for users to find what they need. With features like an in app gps for campus, a population tracker for dining halls and laundry rooms, and the integration of other apps like TigerSafe and TripShot, the Better RIT app will be a one stop solution for any problem which students, faculty, and visitors of RIT may face.

Market Research and Need Analysis:

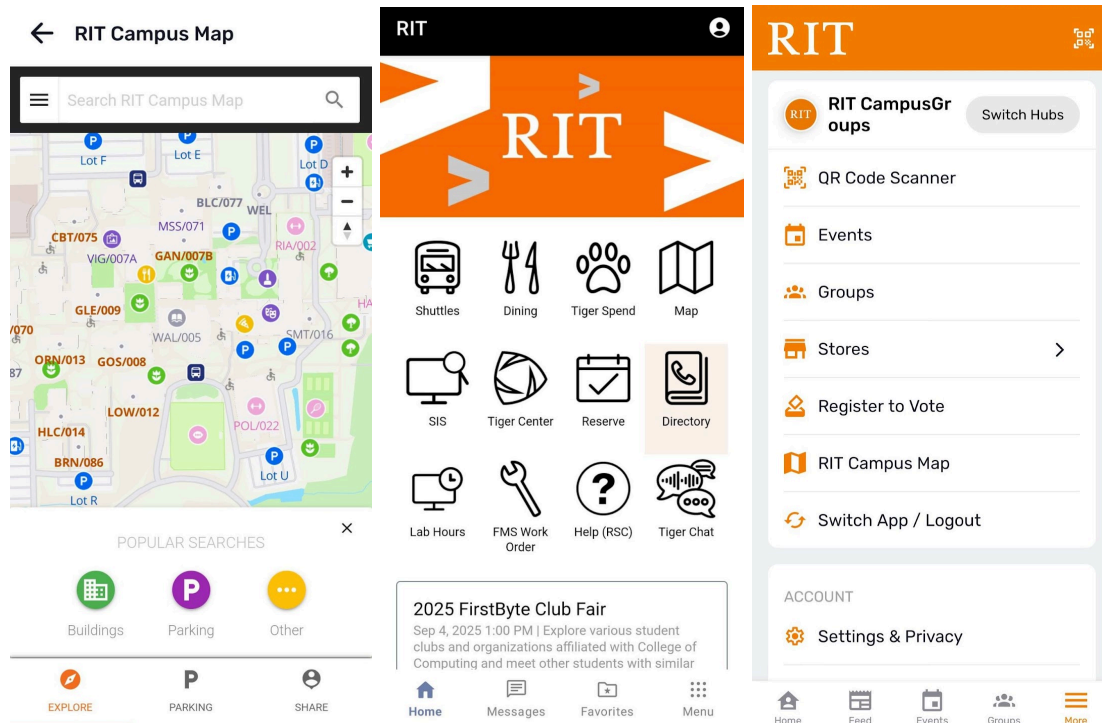


With data collected from a survey sent out by email to students & staff, 96.4% of respondents declare that the RIT Mobile App does not satisfy their needs. This is an overwhelming majority of the respondents showing that this is a clear issue that should be addressed. Some complaints collected by the survey were mostly with the UI/UX design & struggles with navigating some of the apps features. This is why it was decided that the Better RIT App would have its main focus on improvements to the flawed UI, as well as easier navigation through the greatly improved features on the application.

Competitors:

The current RIT app would be our main competitor in terms of usage, but other competitors include apps such as Tripshot, which can track the RIT shuttle paths, apps like google maps which have a current map of campus, and the Campus Groups calendar for campus wide events. While some of these apps like campus groups certainly serve their function well, none of them have the unity of applications that the Better RIT app will provide. For example, if there is a club meeting in a campus building, students currently would need to first go to Campus Groups

and find the description of the event and where it is at, then go to the web to find the RIT map and try to find their way around to the club meeting. However with the Better RIT app, students could be notified of a club meeting, and if interested, click a button that would pull up the campus GPS to the event, and get there. Overall, the Better RIT app would provide a much smoother and more unified experience for its users compared to the many competitors that current users struggle to swap between.



Product Description:

Our product would work similarly to the current RIT app, however with some major visual and technical improvements, quality of life updates, and some entirely new features. The R.I.T. app has some nice features but often fails to deliver them at their full potential. For example, the campus map is unable to give live updates of your movements on the app. Improvements like this would create a streamlined experience of app users and especially for freshman students who need to navigate campus. R.I.T. often has many of its services spread across a variety of apps such as Campus Groups, DUO, and Tiger Safe. The Better R.I.T. app aims to fix these problems by unifying apps for students under one program so that they only need to use one app to find everything they need.

Improvements:

- Campus Groups Calendar Integration: Events would be moved from various websites, apps, and social media into the calendar program within Better R.I.T. Students would be able to mark events they want to attend, and customize the calendar for which categories of events they want to see or not.
- Campus Maps Live Updates: The campus maps program would receive an update to give students live updates of their location on the map as they travel.

Quality of Life:

- Integration of the many different apps users cycle between:
 - Tiger Safe
 - DUO
 - Campus Groups
 - Various Campus Shuttle Apps and Websites
 - Polls
 - Etc.
- Improved UI/UX
- Improved organization of app functions

New Features:

- Community Reported Population Tracker- similar to Waze's system, for reporting accidents and police, but for reporting full dining halls or laundry rooms.
- Gracie's Swipe -> Dining Dollar Converter- Finally, a use for your leftover Gracie's swipes!



Possible Issues and Counterarguments:

Possible Financial Issues:

There could be difficulty receiving funding from R.I.T. due there already being an app and need for investment in server space for an app like this. There could also be a problem with the distribution of the app to current users of the old app.

Possible Technical Issues:

There could be problems integrating more advanced technologically and features like live tracking for the campus map and with the amount of people using the app at once there might be internet traffic.

Issue: The app may be cluttered with this many features

Solution: Unlike the current app with a wall of buttons, the Better RIT app would use a menu system with several subsection headers in order to keep each function of the app organized and well maintained. The system would also include a search system to find exactly what you need quicker

Issue: More tedious to get to a certain page

Solution: A favorite tab for users to bookmark their most common sections within the app

Counterarguments:

Counterargument - "The apps UI and design aren't worth it to change"

Rebuttal - The UI of an app is actually an incredibly important part of its usage. Writers at GoldenFitch, a website priding itself on its knowledge of app design, state "the application interface is the first impression on the user and a vast percentage of an application's first impressions are due to its design"

Conclusion and Recommendations:

Although the RIT App may seem to work well on the surface, its current features are lackluster and could be vastly improved with the aforementioned improvements. Its visual design is hard on the eyes and leaves users with an even larger sense of disappointment than what the lackluster uses of the app already provided to them. Investing in the Better R.I.T. app could show

the true capabilities of a technical college improving the experience of first-time and current students allowing for rises in student retention.

Appendix:

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