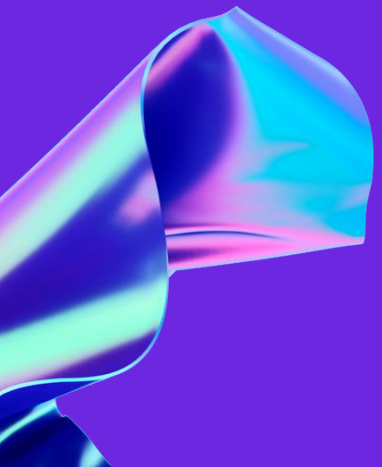
Strategies for Streamlining the Stony Brook University Career Fair



CSE 300

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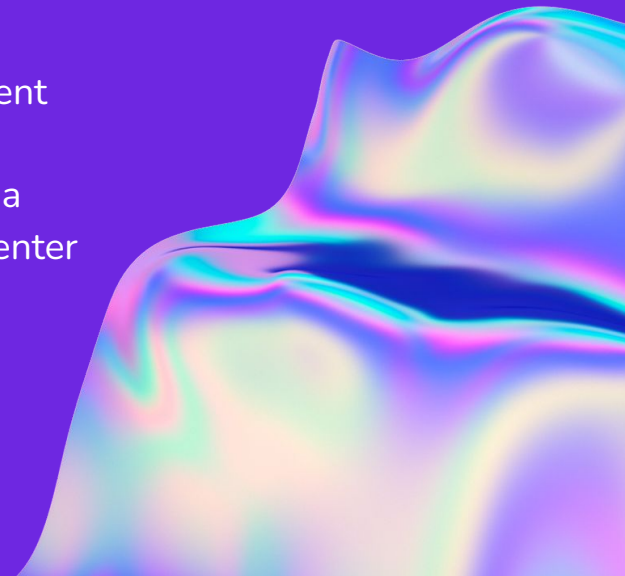
Challenges at SBU's Recent Tech Career Fair

The SBU Technology & Engineering Job & Internship Fair is an annual event designed to connect students with leading tech companies.

However, the most recent fair faced significant challenges. The event quickly exceeded capacity leading to overcrowding. The situation escalated to the point where the fire marshal had to intervene. As a result, we'd like to bring this issue to the attention of the Career Center and the Dean of Students and propose a potential solution.



Factors Leading to the Issues

Combining IT & Engineering Students: A significant factor contributing to the overcrowding was the merging of IT and Engineering student groups into a single event.

Limited Space Designated for the Career Fair: The fair only had the 2 SAC ballrooms as allocated space. This consolidation resulted in an unprecedented number of attendees, surpassing the venue's capacity.

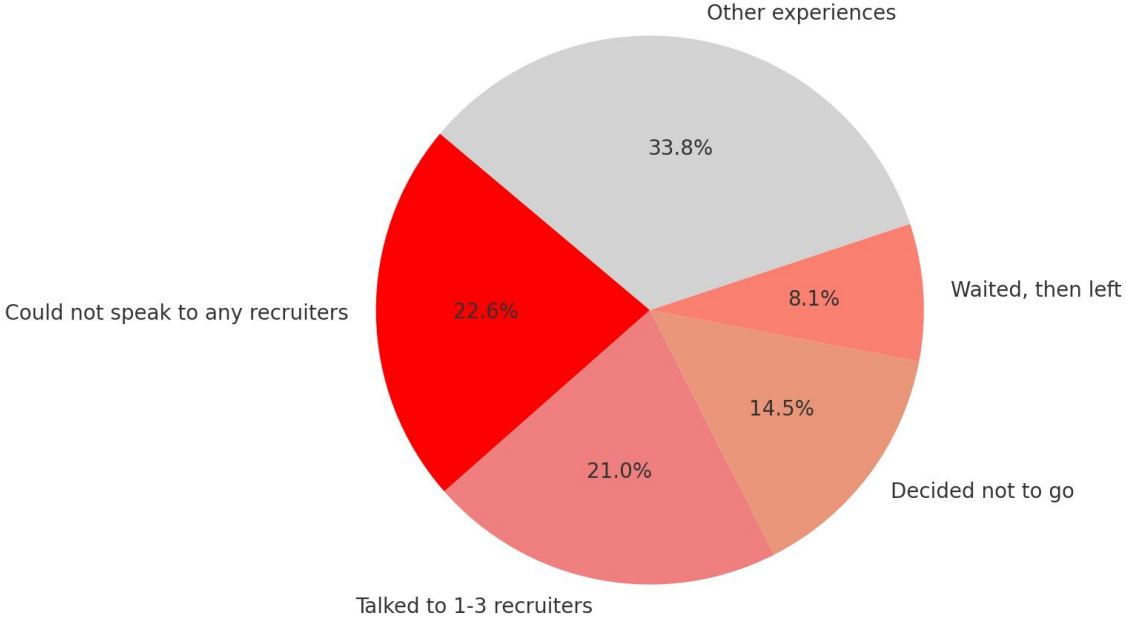
A Barrier to Career Progression

Already coping with intense technical interview preparation, Stony Brook University's students encounter yet another hurdle: **excessive waiting times and overwhelming crowds at career fairs**. These long waits, compounded by dense crowds, not only test their patience but also limit their chances to network and advance their careers.

The Waiting Dilemma

- Long waits often discourage students from staying
- Students miss crucial opportunities to connect with potential employers

Student Experiences at the Career Fair



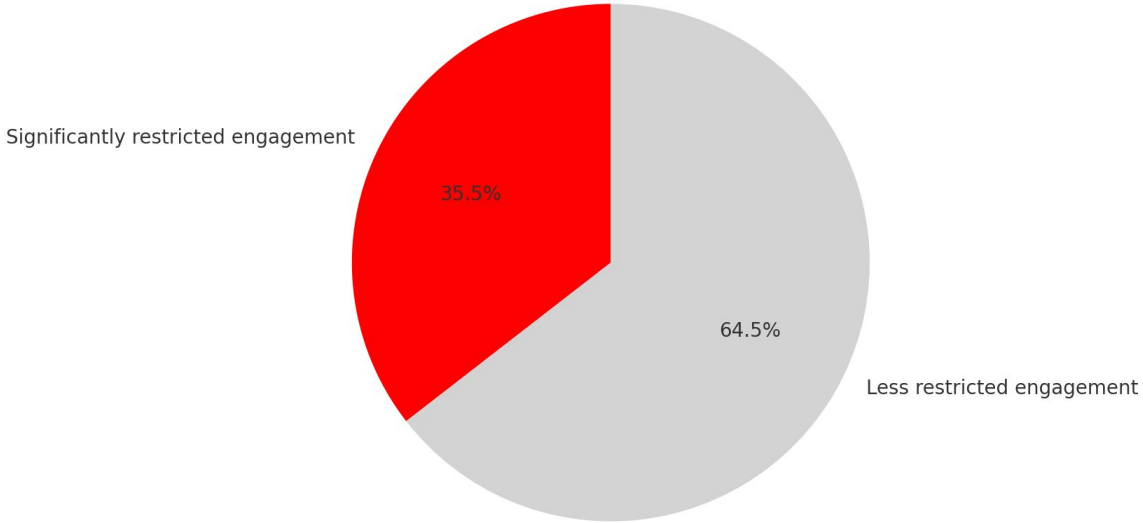
The Waiting Dilemma

- Overall, 66.1% faced significant waiting times or avoided the fair
- 22.6% couldn’t speak to any recruiters

Space Shortage

- Overcrowding leads to an uncomfortable and inefficient environment for networking
- A significant portion of attendees leave without any meaningful engagement

Impact of Crowding on Student Engagement



Space Shortage

- Over 40% of the students were significantly restricted in engaging with employers
- 33.5% could only talk to 1-3 recruiters and enter only one of the ballrooms

Proposed Solution

- A **virtual queue system** would allow for
  - Less crowded room
  - More controlled flow of people
  - Gives more students a chance to attend the career fair
- We would like to see this project complete by Spring 2024

Proposed Solution

- How does it work?
  - Upon registration, you are given a time slot
  - Notification will be sent to your device when it's time for you to come to the fair
  - Can also possibly choose which booths to sign up for
  - Time slots determined by the amount of people attending and the average amount of time a student takes to finish their conversations
  - Allows recruiters to know how much time they have with each student

Other Solutions

Some smaller scaled solutions include:

- Splitting the IT/Engineering Fair up into an IT fair and an Engineering fair
- Having 2 days dedicated to the career fair where students attend only 1 of the 2

Costs

- Costs to implement this solution are minimal
  - Time cost to set up the queue system
  - Cost to purchase the queue system

Queue Software Comparison

2meters

- $20/month
- Cloud-based and easy to use

NextMe

- $50/month
- Recognizes returning users so they don't need to reenter data

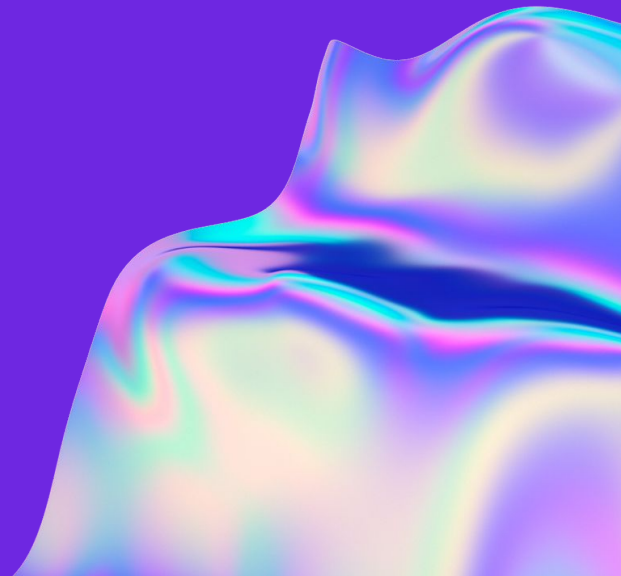
qudini by VERINT

- Price based on custom quote
- Intended for use by large groups

- CSE/ISE students could also create a queue system as a paid project with the Career Center

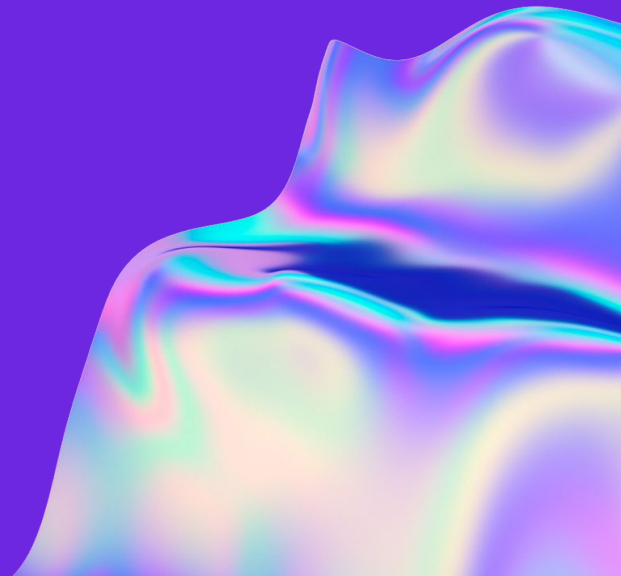
Benefits for Students

- Ample time to interact with each recruiter
- Ability to easily interact with multiple recruiters
- Less waiting time to get into the event itself
- Time to get into the right mindset for recruiter conversations

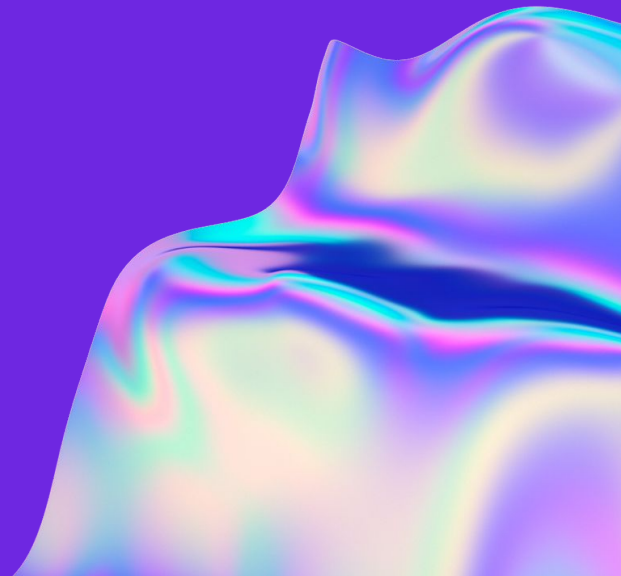


Benefits for the University

- Increase student interest in career fairs, justifying the cost of the event
- Increase recruiter interest in attending the fair
- Maintain the good relationships between the university and the recruiters
- Maintain the high job/internship placement rate of 90%



Questions?



Works Cited

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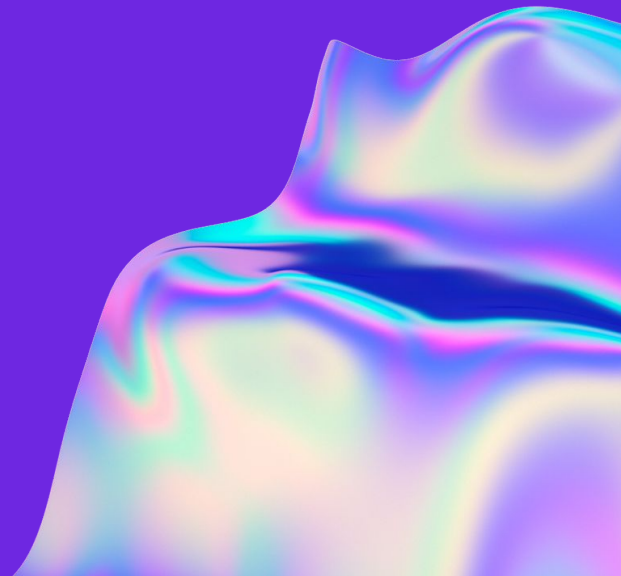
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