

Waukesha County Recycles app vs iRecycle app

The Waukesha County Recycles app was presented as “an app that educates residents about recycling by breaking down what to recycle, how to recycle, how to safely dispose of items and where to take them.” (<http://www.waste360.com/waste-reduction/10-innovative-and-informative-waste-and-recycling-apps/gallery?slide=2>). This is somewhat like my intentions of making it easier to recycle properly and locally.

This app was pretty easy to use but it wasn’t amazing. The main navigation was a bar on the bottom with “What?” and “Where?” and “News & Event” which was oddly worded and could be confusing for some users. The What tab contained a 3x3 grid of titles such as “Automotive” and “Household,” it seems like anything you were wondering about would be located in one of the titles but you never know. Once selecting a title, you get a long list of different things associated with the title that need to be disposed of. The list for household, which I assume is most often used, is a long tiring list of black and white words. This could be improved upon. In a dream app I would make, items would be scanned instead of having to look for them.

In comparison, the app iRecycle has a similar purpose but a few key differences. It has 4 more titles to pick from about what you want to recycle. BUT, that’s all it has. There is no navigation bar. Once you pick an item, it gives you the closest locations to dispose of that item. This is in some ways better and some ways worse than the other app. For one, it can be used anywhere in the US while the other app is specific to the Waukesha County. It doesn’t have the map feature that the other app does have though until you click a location and transfer the address to google maps. The other app’s map with the locations as pins was useful to determining the closest place to you.

The two apps differ greatly on design interface. Neither is really very pleasing. The background to iRecycle is some stock image of a serene lake and mountain. It looks fake and unnaturally colored. I also don’t like text over and image background unless it’s just one time as a banner etc. Having the whole website over a photo background is too much. The other app for the county was bare bones and got the job done. It could have been improved with more current graphics or a consistent color scheme.

I would suggest both apps learn from one another and combine their best qualities. The new and improved app would be available to everyone in the US or even world-wide. It would have a navigation bar with more intuitive titles like “items,” “locations,” and “news.” It would keep the map aspect of WCR app and include the additional titles of things to recycle from iRecycle. The style would follow more closely to WCR because the design of iRecycle is too amateur. Or it could follow iRecycle with a nicer background that didn’t take away from the words.

