Case Study | University of San Francisco

Powering useful digital experiences on campus

The University of San Francisco (USF) implemented campusM in June 2022. In addition to utilizing the app's out-of-the-box features to give students visibility into their daily tasks and schedule, USF has leveraged the app's developer tools to improve accessibility across campus and to streamline the delivery of real-time information.

USF's main reasons for selecting campusM included

Out-of-the-box product integrations, such as Canvas, Timetable, and an orientation checklist

The Application Extension Kits (AEKs), which empower developers to create their own features on top of the app's out-of-the-box feature suite

The ability to personalize the app with real-time updates and class-specific information

How USF is using campusM to engage students:

Personalizing the Digital Student Experience

Representing USF: Product Manager, Dave Hyman

Transforming accessibility around campus

The USF campus is 160 years old, with different buildings having been added to the campus over the years. Some of the more recent buildings were actually built for an entirely different purpose than what USF is using them for now. This has made navigating around campus a challenge – especially for students with vision impairments. Dave solved for this challenge by using the campusM developer tools to provide turn-by-turn directions to the hallway that a classroom is in, and to surface this information to students based on their class schedules.

"We don't want the student experience to be a carved-out, siloed undertaking for users that may have challenges getting around our 160-year-old campus. We want to be that helping hand that gets you where you need to go."

– Dave Hyman, Product Manager

To ensure that accessibility stays top of mind for himself and his team, Dave consults with Craig Duffeck, a master's student at the university with visual and dexterity challenges. It was Craig who pointed out the importance of detailed alt-text for students with vision challenges as Dave was working on improving the transit information on the app. Using the developer kit, the app pulls arrival times from the SFMTA (San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency), making it possible to provide accurate, real-time bus arrival data. At the same time, the alt-text for each bus stop goes into more detail than "this is a bus stop," so that users with partial vision can orient themselves and get where they need to go.

USF's tips for making the most of your campus app

Incorporate the student voice into digital initiatives

Dave makes it a priority to include student perspectives when designing new features for the app by running student focus groups as well as by using student beta testers and developers. His small team comprises one full-stack developer

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as well as two part-time student developers from the university's Master of Computer Science program. *"It's great to give the students some real-world working experience,"* says Dave.

Take advantage of development tools

The AEKs have allowed USF to create custom interfaces that make life easier for students and better promote departmental information. *"Ultimately, I've been using the AEKs we've built to display real-time gym opening hours to engage colleagues from other departments and show them that we aren't constrained by out-of-the-box tools,"* says Dave. *"'This is what we did for the gym, and we didn't even need a call with them to set this up. What would you like to do or promote within the app?'"*