"Zap our App"

colegsirgâr

Mynediad Symudol Llyfrgell

Rhowch Zap i'r App!

Library Mobile Access

Zap our App!

http://apps.appshed.com/99039/

Marketing Innovation Awards Application 2014

colegsirgâr

INTRODUCTION

Coleg Sir Gâr is an FE College based in South West Wales offering a comprehensive range of academic and vocational programmes that includes 14-19, Further Education, Work Based Learning, Adult and Community Learning and Higher Education. Annually it enrols in excess of 10,000 learners. The College has five main Campuses located at Llanelli, Carmarthen (Pibwrlwyd and Jobs Well), Ammanford and Gelli Aur and primarily serves the unitary authority area of Carmarthenshire. The College has four libraries which cater for the needs of learners and lecturers across a wide range of curriculum areas, from Entry level to Higher Education.

CONCEPT AND TARGET MARKET

The Library is constantly exploring new marketing ideas to target new audiences and develop innovative ways to engage our current and existing users. We continually strive to increase awareness of our resources and improve our user's information literacy skills – developing a Library App seemed to be the perfect way forward. Most people now carry a mobile device, be it phone or tablet, and as their usage increases, this seemed to be the perfect way to bring our resources closer to our audience, in a creative and technological way and make them available 24/7 anywhere with internet connection.

CREATIVE THINKING AND INNOVATION

During the summer of 2013 we carried out our initial investigations by looking at other FE academic Library Apps on the market and discovered that very few institutions had developed an App, let alone a specific Library App. A library team brainstorming session was held to establish a structure for the App. It was decided that as our library web-page had been re-designed in 2012 this would be used as a template for what information would be made available via the App. A plan was created (see Appendix 1) and all the relevant information recorded.

We decided that the main aim of the App was to take the library closer to our users with the objectives being to:
• provide opening hours and contact details for all libraries
• enable users to browse the library catalogue
• allow users to easily renew/reserve items
• provide quick, easy access to on-line resources – books, journals and databases
• allow users to contact the libraries by phone or e-mail using just one tap of a button within the App
• provide an "Ask a librarian" service for users who may have library related queries
• encourage feedback from users, not only on the App but also on library services and library environment to enable us to make improvements where possible
• provide quick, easy access to College e-mails
• provide quick access to documents which are saved on the College network

The Library firmly and actively supports the College's Welsh language policy so all information on the App had to be bilingual.

The next step was to investigate App creator software; our requirements were that it be:
• available to be used on both Apple and Android devices
• no initial outlay with no follow on fees
• user friendly and easy to use to design the App online with no coding required
• available to be installed freely via QR code for distribution and sharing; eliminating the cost of publishing to the "Google Playstore" and "i Store"

- quick and easy to develop as the App would need to be ready to be launched when learners returned for the new academic year in September
- customer focused software – making it easy for our users to get in touch via email or phone, and that it would provide a link to the Library Facebook page
- tested in real time on browser or mobile device
- expandable in future to provide further services

EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP WORKING

We worked closely with the following departments to achieve our goal.

ILT Department

The idea of a Library App was discussed with the Colleges' ILT co-ordinator and Appshed (http://appshed.com/) was suggested as it had been recommended to the library by another College. It was agreed that it was the most suitable free software available and was the way forward.

A training session was then delivered to two members of the library team on how to start building our App. Once the framework of the App was set up library staff were left to our own devices to input all the information and links.

MIS Department

Once the App was developed, the College web graphic designer created the icons which identified the different pages. A member of the IT team also attended the 'road-show' sessions to support learners with any technical and access issues.

Translation Team

In order to ensure that the App supported the College's Welsh language policy the Translation department carried out all the necessary work.

Marketing Department

All promotional materials for the road-show and general "Zap our App" posters and bookmarks were designed by the Colleges' marketing department. They also wrote and distributed the press release to promote our App.

Reprographics Department

In order to keep costs to a minimum all promotional materials were printed in-house using the reprographics department.

Senior Management Team

College Senior Management were consulted for final approval prior to the launch.

The App development provided an opportunity to work closely with other departments within the college and these links can be further developed in future.

ATTRACTING NEW AUDIENCES AND EFFECTIVE USE OF A COMBINATION OF PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Once the library team had planned what was to be included in the App it took only one afternoon for it to be created. A week was spent testing the links to ensure that there were no glitches once the App went live.

The App was ready to launch at the beginning of the autumn term; all new and many returning learners were introduced to the App during their Library induction. This will be an on-going process for all new courses starting throughout the year.

The Library Services Manager was asked to give a presentation to the College's Senior Management Team who gave very positive feedback as they were impressed with how quickly it had been developed, how simple it was to use and that there had been no cost implication other than the minimal staff hours needed to develop the App. Other sessions were then delivered to various Curriculum Areas in order to increase awareness across the College.

The library holds an annual "Library Open Week" in October, which gives learners who missed their inductions or were late starting College the opportunity of visiting the library to be informed of what resources are available and what services are provided.

"Library Open Week" posters including the "Zap our App" QR Code.

To further promote the App and reach an even wider audience it was decided to run a "Library App Roadshow" to coincide with the Library Open Week, thereby taking the App to the users instead of waiting for users to come us. This allowed us to demonstrate App in action and promote the advantages of downloading it to mobile devices; learners and staff were encouraged to "Zap our App". A team of Library staff and a member of the IT department visited each of our four campuses for a day and set up a stall in the Refectories to make the most of the opportunity and engage with as many learners and academic staff as possible. All users were asked to create a shortcut to the App on their phone or tablet home-screen for the chance to be entered into a prize draw with the opportunity of winning one of four £20.00 Amazon vouchers.

Due to the close proximity, Job's Well campus learners and staff have use of University of Wales, Trinity Saint David Carmarthen campus library services, however Pibwrlwyd holds a broad range of resources to support these users. A member of the Pibwrlwyd library team regularly holds a drop-in session at the Job's Well campus and the "Zap our App" road-show was also promoted at one of these sessions. This ensures consistency with library support to all campuses.

All Library staff were also instructed on how to download the App, so that they could promote "Zap our App" in the Library not only during the Open Week but throughout the year. A help- sheet for downloading the App on to Android and Apple devices were developed and distributed to all library staff.

All four libraries produced eye-catching promotional displays using posters, flyers and bookmarks and the events were posted to the Library web pages and Facebook page, as well as the Coleg Sir Gâr and librarywales.org Facebook pages to increase awareness.

Library displays and Facebook promotion

Notices encouraging participation were placed on the message board of the learners and staff College Gateway pages. Generic and targeted e-mails were also sent to academic staff encouraging them to bring their Tutor groups in to "Zap our App"

The events reinforced the working relationships between library staff across the four campus libraries, with the whole team working towards the same goal.

SUCCESS OF THE PROJECT IN TERMS OF ATTENDANCE/FEEDBACK/PRESS COVERAGE

An article on the "Zap our App" campaign appeared in local press; it was featured on the Library Wales web-site News page and on the College and Library Facebook pages. It was also featured in the Autumn edition of Lolfa, the College's Welsh language magazine.

This project was the library's first attempt at developing and using a new technological tool for marketing purposes. The Library has been the first department within the College to develop an App and other departments are now considering following in our footsteps; the Senior Management Team were very impressed with the final product.

Over the last few years the libraries have gone from strength to strength in raising their profile to learners, staff and management and this has been another successful campaign.

Library staff "buy in" to the benefits of the product and active promotion has been the key to the success of the project with the realisation that it ensures our viability in challenging times.

As this was a new venture, the library was apprehensive about its success. The road-shows on all campuses were well attended by both staff and learners. Having five separate campuses means that our App can provide the essential library information required at the touch of a button in a new and exciting way. Marketing the App is an on-going process; engagement with our users is vital and library staff utilise this interaction to promote services and support available.

It has been accepted positively by college staff especially as it allows easy access to College e-mails. Staff can now tap one button and enter their passwords to open their e-mails rather than having to access them via the College web-site which was much more cumbersome.

We believe that our App has helped to improve the image of the library for users by illustrating that we are making the most of technological advancements and taking the library out to the user.

EFFECTIVE USE OF RESOURCES

The library decided to develop an App in July for launch in September. By this time the annual budget had already been allocated meaning that no actual budget had been set aside specifically for the App. All associated costs therefore had to be kept to an absolute minimum. The software was free to use and by ensuing that the App is downloadable via URL or QR code there has been no need to make it available via either Google Playstore or Apple App Store, which would have incurred hefty costs (approximate saving of £1500).

The ILT manager set up the structure and then two member of the library team spent a day inputting the relevant information into the software followed by rigorous testing. As this was carried out during the holidays there is a little more time available to develop projects.

Support from the various internal departments was provided on a good will basis as the project was to the benefit of the learner.

The on-going promotion of the App is now part of the daily routine for staff when they assist learners' within the library and will form part of the annual library induction eliminating the need for any further road-shows.

SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROJECT

The App was initially set up in a very short period of time and only included the basic functions required to make it relevant and useful for learners and staff. As it has been so positively received the functions available via the App can be further enhanced and expanded. The library produces many Helpsheets and Guides for learners on topics such as referencing, searching the library catalogue and using on-line databases. A link to these could be added to the App allowing the library to support learners when they are both on and off campus.

We have seen an increase in the number of mobile devices being used by learners which will expand our market for downloading the App.

The software was free of charge and does not contain reporting functionality it has therefore not been possible to track the number of users who have downloaded the App. In an attempt to capture data the library will ask for a question to be included in learner surveys asking whether learners know of the library App and whether they are using it. This should give us some indication of its value.

An increase in communication via our library e-mail addresses has been noticed which may well be down to the success of the App. On a couple of occasions the libraries have been contacted by enthusiastic teaching staff, fully of techy glee, who wanted to tell us that they had just successfully placed a reservation using the App, a really positive outcome.

We found that many users didn't have a QR code reader already installed on their mobile device. In order to overcome this issue we made the web link available which simplified the downloading procedure.

Gaining the ear of senior management is to be celebrated. This quote from one of the Assistant Principals of the college is testament to the impact our App development has had from management to learners.

"The library App has revolutionised the way learners' access information at Coleg Sir Gâr. Instead of the library waiting for learners to enter, the library staff have developed a contemporary system whereby the library goes to them. This change in approach to communication has been a cultural change in our institution which is to the benefit of our learners. Primarily the library team have developed the App themselves and it has been extremely well received by learners and visitors form other educational establishments".

Dr. Andrew Cornish, Assistant Principal (Teaching, Learning and Quality)

"I was pleased to hear the news of the advent of a college "app" for the library. I downloaded the app straight away ... and made immediate use of the resource! My enquiry was acknowledged promptly by staff at the LRC, and the request was efficiently completed.I can now efficiently access LRC resources anytime and anywhere!
A growing number of my students use mobile technologies to fit in with their digital lives', and any initiatives such as this library 'app' to integrate their learning into the lifestyle has to be a bonus for them, and improves the learning ethos for our college"

Robbie Matthews, HE Lecturer, Job's Well Campus

"The "Library App Roadshow" gave us the opportunity to reach a wider audience and actually demonstrate the App's functionality and advantages face –to-face with both learners and staff. It was a fun event for all involved and the response from all those that downloaded it was very positive.

From a personal view point it was great to meet and chat to learners on the other campuses as well as engaging with learners that don't necessarily use the library. Making our resources easily available has got to enhance the learners experience and promote the library in a favourable way."

Jean Sullivan, Pibwrlwyd Campus Librarian

"The App is easy to navigate and very user friendly. It's particularly useful for checking my college emails when I've emailed in an assignment and am waiting for feedback from my tutors."

Perry Wood, Countryside Management learner, Gelli Aur

CONCLUSION

The Library App has undoubtedly raised the profile of the library within the College. The Library has created and become associated with using an innovative approach to sourcing library information in the minds of learners and teaching staff - a new string to our bow! The App has successfully engaged learners of different levels and has provided a positive experience for all, allowing learners easy access to us and our resources to help them with their studies.

The library App was a first for the College and other departments are likely to follow using the same software.

WINNERS OF THE "ZAP THE APP" COMPETITION

Perry Wood
Countryside Management
Gelli Aur

Jimmy Drozdek, Electrical Installation,
Ammanford with Liz Chester, College Librarian

Callum Harries, Graig being
presented by Sharon Thomas,
Graig Campus Library Assistant

APPENDIX 1

App plan
Logo:
Llyfrgell CSG Library (inc CSG logo if possible)

1st Page: CSG Logo

Cymraeg
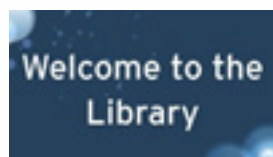English
English version (Welsh identical once translated):

2nd Page:

Image -
Buttons as follows:

- Welcome
- Opening Hours
- Borrowing
- Renewing/Reserving
- Library Catalogue
- Electronic Resources
- College emails / College files
- Contact Us
- Ask a Librarian
- Feedback

Follow us on Facebook

Welcome

Come to any of Coleg Sir Gâr's four libraries and you will find staff who are keen to help you use the broad range of quality resources we stock. Our information sources, services and support are available both on campus and online via the college website. You are welcome to use the facilities on any campus.

This App includes information on opening times at the 4 libraries, how to borrow, renew, reserve and return items, links to the Library Catalogue and Electronic Resources, details on how to contact us and an "Ask a Librarian" service so we can try to help you with any queries you may have. There is also a "Feedback" link and we welcome any comments you may have which will help us to improve our service.

We look forward to welcoming you to any of the libraries soon.

Opening Hours

4 buttons: Ammanford, Gelli Aur, Graig, Pibwrlwyd

Click on "Ammanford" and this shows

Ammanford	Monday and Thursday	08.45 - 18.30
	Tuesday and Wednesday	08.45 - 19.00
	Friday	08.45 - 16.30

Click on "Gelli Aur" and this shows

| Gelli Aur | Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday | 09.00 - 16.00 |
| | Thursday | 09.00 - 17.00 |

Click on "Graig" and this shows

| Graig | Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday | 08.45 - 19.00 |
| | Friday | 08.45 - 16.30 |

Click on "Pibwrlwyd" and this shows

Pibwrlwyd	Monday, Tuesday and Thursday	08.45 - 18.00
	Wednesday	08.45 - 17.00
	Friday	08.45 - 16.30

Borrowing

What do I need?
You will need your Coleg Sir Gâr Learner ID card.

How many items can I borrow and how long can I borrow them for?
FE, Foundation and Access learners: 4 items for 2 weeks
HE learners: 6 items for 2 weeks

You are responsible for the safe and timely return of all borrowed items.

Fines are charged at 10p per item per day.

Renewing/Reserving

How do I renew and reserve an item?
You can renew online, in person, by phone or email, provided that the item is not required by someone else.

You can reserve an item online using the catalogue (http://heriopac.colegsirgar.ac.uk), in person, by phone or email.

Contact details on the Contact us page

Library Catalogue
Click on this link to search the library catalogue:
http://heriopac.colegsirgar.ac.uk

Electronic Resources
To access our electronic resources click on this link:
http://www.colegsirgar.ac.uk/en/electronic-resources

College emails / College files
To access your Groupwise College e-mail click here:
To access your College files click here:

Contact Us

4 buttons : Ammanford, Gelli Aur, Graig, Pibwrlwyd

Click on "Ammanford" and this shows:

Dyffryn Road, Ammanford, SA18 3TA
Tel: 01554 748314
E-mail: ammlibrary@colegsirgar.ac.uk

Click on "Gelli Aur" and this shows:

Gelli Aur, Carmarthenshire, SA32 8NJ
E-mail: gelliaurlibrary@colegsirgar.ac.uk

Click on "Graig" and this shows:

Sandy Road, Llanelli, SA15 4DN
E-mail: graiglibrary@colegsirgar.ac.uk

Click on "Pibwrlwyd" and this shows:

Pibwrlwyd, Carmarthen, SA31 2NH
E-mail: piblibrary@colegsirgar.ac.uk

Ask a Librarian

If you have any library related questions click on this link and send us a message. We will reply as soon as possible.

Message is sent to: piblibrary@colegsirgar.ac.uk

Feedback

We value feedback on our services and libraries. If our have any comments, complaints or compliments please let us know by following this link: piblibrary@colegsirgar.ac.uk

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