

Memo Campus Map app



FRONT

FOR THE ACTIVE STUDENT

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Introduction

As discussed during a meeting with SALIS members on October 25th, and as advised by division M&C, the iStudent app does not seem to have a profitable and fruitful future and has lost its main advantages for TiU students. Front handed in an initiative last year in which several ideas for an app renewal were proposed. When compared with the university's starting points regarding apps and websites, Front recognizes that some functions are not realistic and feasible. However, the first proposed new function ("Map of the campus and its buildings") is in the vision of Front important for TiU students and staff and therefore worth to invest in via an application format, since it can easily save them time and stress. The relevance and helpful functions of such an app are described below. Next to this, it is described how Front would like to see developments in live overviews of workplaces involved in the app. Lastly, the preferred actions in the phasing out of the old app and the introduction of a new app are described.



What is the added value of a TiU map app for both students and staff?

Students, employees, visitors or service personnel can have troubles with navigating around the campus and possibly even more within buildings, especially when they are just starting their study or working time at Tilburg University. At the moment, the iStudent app contains a campus map which is connected with Google Maps, and therefore misses buildings and facilities. In addition, the app is not connected to GPS which is a unique function for mobile applications. When the iStudent app will be phased out, only the offline, static TiU campus map on the website will last.

One of the unique functionalities of mobile phone applications is GPS. By providing a 'TiU map app' with connection to GPS, students and staff can see where they and their destination are actually located, which can save time, stress and uncertainty. GPS does not only offer opportunities for navigating to buildings itself, but also in indoor navigation. Currently, applications facilitating this are already on the market. Softwares like MazeMap¹ provide outdoor maps, indoor maps and wayfinding (the creation of a route pad from A to B), by which navigation processes within and between buildings can be optimized. This is a unique mobile function, which is not achievable via signposting. Trondheim University also uses Mazemap for a navigation application: this app was placed as number 1 in the list of most important app for students. ²Not only buildings and rooms within buildings can be displayed and navigated to with softwares like these, but also facilities like toilets, computers, parking places, printers and public transport stops. At the moment, Tilburg University does not provide a central overview of toilets, printers and computers available for students, and it would be hard to communicate these via signposting. Having a concrete overview of these facilities can again decrease uncertainty and time spent searching.

¹ <https://www.mazemap.com/indoor-maps> MazeMap, indoor Maps & Wayfinding software

² <https://www.mazemap.com/universities> MazeMap, indoor Maps & Wayfinding software

Proposed functions

By working with a software like Mazemap, students, staff and visitors can search for facilities or buildings and directly plan their route to their destination. The facilities that can be shown in the map can be as follows:

- Educational buildings
- Restaurants
- Lecture halls
- Meeting/group work rooms
- Employee offices
- Printers
- Parking areas
- Bike parking areas
- Water tap points
- Microwaves
- Public transport
- Toilets
- Computer workplaces
- Lockers
- Student Desk
- When clicking on restaurants, a functioning link to the belonging website (on which the menu can be found).
- When clicking on the library, library access gates
- Opening hours of buildings
- Search function, which works for facilities, buildings, lecture halls and locations of student board rooms
- Wayfinding function
- ITS quality marks (Integral Accessibility Standard)

Workplace visibility

On top of displaying all (computer) workplaces on campus, Front considers a map app as a suitable tool to involve in further developments in live overviews of available workplaces for students. Although the pilot with sensors on workplaces in Reitse Toren, Reitse Poort and Cube revealed some obstacles, Front thinks it would be efficient to monitor further developments in live overviews of workplaces and the implementation of a map app next to each other. In this way, an efficient and clear communication tool can be set up.



Continuation current app and follow up new app

In the upcoming months, the chance exists that the iStudent app will be phased out. In this case, Front is in favor of the proposal in the document to notify students and bring alternatives to their attention. The communication of alternatives entails in our view for example a notification to users via the app in which will be communicated where the 'lost' information can be found on the website . Furthermore, Front would like to see an action plan when it is decided to develop a campus map app, to be able to support students and staff in their navigation as best and soon as possible. Also, Front would appreciate the involvement of this memo in further developments and is willing to discuss the options in upcoming phases.



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