

Verivo Software Customer Success: Indiana State University

A mobile application that keeps students engaged, informed, and connected

Indiana State University (ISU) is a public school offering more than 100 different majors, including education, business, criminology, finance, nursing, athletic training, and construction technology. Nearly 11,500 students are enrolled in ISU's undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs, and the Princeton Review consistently ranks the school as one of the "Best in the Midwest."

As the first public university in Indiana requiring freshmen to carry a laptop, ISU has a well-deserved reputation for leveraging technology, but realized that to stay ahead it would need to embrace mobility. "We knew that over time many (colleges) would be developing mobile applications," says Tara Singer, ISU's Assistant Vice President of Communication and Marketing. "Schools are always competing to enroll students and to keep the ones they have,"

THE NEED FOR SPEED

ISU's mobile strategy team knew it had to move quickly to capture the attention of fickle college students, but realized that a successful ISU-branded mobile application would need to run on three different platforms: iPhone, Android, and BlackBerry. With limited IT resources and an aggressive timeline, the prospect of coding, testing, and managing three distinct applications felt overwhelming, and the school began evaluating mobile enterprise application platforms (MEAPs), which allow organizations to build smartphone applications that run on multiple device types.

The Indiana State team looked at a range of different vendors and solutions before choosing AT&T UpperClass powered by Verivo Software. "Its multi-platform capabilities were critical for us," says Singer of the factors that influenced the school's decision. "Without them, we would have needed to build a separate application for each platform."

The AT&T UpperClass solution offers a range of other capabilities that align with ISU's mobility plans. "In the final analysis, Verivo was selected based on the quick prototyping options, rapid deployment, tool set, and functionality," says Ed Kinley, Associate Vice President and Chief Technology Officer at ISU. "No other product or approach (that we) explored offered those features in combination."

CODE FREE AND CROSS-PLATFORM

Because Verivo's platform is designed with a configure once, run anywhere, change anytime architecture, ISU was able to design and deploy a single mobile application that runs natively on BlackBerry, iPhone, and Android devices, all without coding or scripting. "Without that, we'd have to build an entirely different app for each of the three targeted platforms," says Stacy Bocard, ISU's Senior Programmer Analyst.

Verivo's code free, multi-platform environment also allowed ISU to move fast. According to Singer, the entire development process, from kickoff to availability in the three major app stores, took approximately three months.

Indiana State's ISU Mobile application offers users a range of rich features, including sports information, a course catalog, news, an events calendar, and a MyInfo portal that provides students with personalized administrative information. One particularly popular feature is Places, which leverages the mapping and GPS functionality native to different device types. "It's a useful tool for new and prospective students searching for buildings and locations," Singer says.



- Industry: Higher education
- Challenge: Rapidly build and deploy a mobile application that integrates data from multiple sources and can be updated in real time
- Solution: AT&T Upper Class powered by Verivo
- Results: Three month development cycle, complete control over every aspect of application management and modification, over 2,500 downloads in four months

Verivo Software
1000 Winter St.
Waltham, MA 02451
781.795.8200
sales@verivo.com

Verivo's development environment allows ISU to build and manage every part of its application with a single, intuitive WYSIWYG interface. Screens, workflows and features can be developed quickly and deployed instantly, without coding or recompilation. This ability to dynamically update ISU Mobile and push changes out in real time is key to its success. "Students want things now, and you have to respond quickly," says Bocard. "That's how they find value in the application, and how you keep them connected."

Because application changes are made without coding, administrators without extensive technical skills can manage updates. "We've hired students to make modifications," says Singer. "With training and assistance from Verivo, they quickly became comfortable with the application."

Keeping ISU Mobile relevant requires feeding it constantly updated information from multiple data sources. Verivo's platform comes packaged with a wide range of pre-built plugins and can integrate with any internal or external system, giving ISU the flexibility to add and modify data sources in minutes. Today, the application draws information from RSS feeds, the ISU website, and the school's SunGard Banner ERP system.

LOOKING FORWARD

The ISU team is already thinking about the future. "As new students enter the school, they will demand new features," says Yancy Phillips, Director of User Services. Planned enhancements include access to grades, a feedback section, a streamlined course catalog, parent- and alumni-focused capabilities, and of course, a downloadable version of the school's fight song. "If we had built this without Verivo's enterprise mobility software, every modification would need to be made on multiple platforms," Singer says. "Take too long, and you lose students' interest."

Perhaps most importantly, students are embracing ISU Mobile, with over 2,500 of them downloading the application in its first four months of release. "You feel pride in your school when you're able to say that you have a constantly updated mobile app with lots of different features," says Lana Schrock, an ISU senior.

"It's something that sets us apart," adds sophomore Britany Dean. "It proves that the school is dedicated to its students, and that it isn't afraid to change."

"Students want things now, and you have to respond quickly... that's how you keep them connected."

