



Service Priorities and Programmes Electronic Presentations

Convention ID: 701

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Post title: Health Informatician, Finance Division, HO

Key to the new world with Public and Staff engagement – Hospital Authority Mobile App Challenge

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Keywords:

Public engagement

Staff engagement

Mobile app

Introduction

Being the region of highest “smart device” penetration rate in the Asia Pacific, 87% of Hong Kong population owns a smartphone or tablet. Computational capabilities, so as the instant access to information, had been moving from computers in server rooms to the smart device in your hand. Younger generations grow up with smart devices. Teenagers, juveniles, or even toddlers are playing with smart devices every day. Adult and senior generations are also seeing smart devices as an indispensable tool. Engagement of staff and public is never an easy job. With the emergence of smart devices and mobile applications (apps), engaging staffs and public from different age segments seems to be more possible. The Hospital Authority (HA) Information Technology Division (ITD) organized a corporate-wide Mobile App Challenge in 2013 which aim to engage staffs and public, especially the younger generation, and to help HA in moving to the new world.

Objectives

This competition was organized with the aim to foster staff and public engagement especially the younger generation, and to attract ideas of mobile apps that staff would really hope.

Methodology

The competition was open to all HA staffs for submission of ideas from December 2013 to Feb 2014. There were 4 categories which colleagues can submit to: (i) Mobile health, (ii) Staff engagement and communication, (iii) Public engagement and (iv) Other application areas. Judging criteria were set to benefit (30%), feasibility (30%), innovation (20%) and sustainability (20%).

Result

37 submissions were received, in which 23 entries (62%) to the public engagement category while 11 entries (30%) to staff engagement and communication category. 6 finalists were identified after the first-round judging in May 2013. The final judging panel, chaired by Chief Executive of HA, selected a staff engagement initiative namely

“HA Buddy” as the ultimate winner which will be turned into a real app in near future. It was found that the ultimate winner came from staff engagement category while the first and second runner-ups came from public engagement category. The importance of staff and public engagement was well acknowledged. As a follow-up, a new taskforce namely “Mobile App (Public and Staff Engagement) Taskforce” was formulated in order to facilitate Mobile App development in HA in the future.