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Press Release

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[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

'Embark NYC,' Multi-Purpose Navigation App, Wins MTA App Quest

'Free NYC Subway Locator,' 'Notify Me NYC,' Win Second and Third; 'CityMaps' Wins Top Popular Choice Award

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today announced that **Embark NYC** had won the grand prize in MTA App Quest, the MTA's competition seeking the best app to help MTA customers. Embark NYC, built by Taylor Malloy and David Hodge of **Embark**, is an all-purpose transit navigation app for Androids and Apple iOS devices, offering trip planning, service advisories, interactive maps, schedules and more. It was one of 42 apps that were submitted as part of the competition, which began last July.

The second prize was awarded to **Free NYC Subway Locator** by Jordan Hill of **Flatiron Factory**. The app, available for Apple iOS devices, automatically calculates the nearest subway entrances to your current location and lists them by direction, in order of proximity by feet. The app also shows the individual station entrance locations, service alerts, and elevator and escalator outages, all using data provided by the MTA. Third prize was awarded to **Notify Me NYC** by Emma Assin and Felipe Flores of the **Cortelyou Collective**. This app, for Android, notifies you if your subway, Metro-North or LIRR train is experiencing service problems, based on the times of day and days of week you ride.

A panel of nine expert judges evaluated all 42 apps in terms of quality of the idea (including creativity and originality), implementation of the idea (including design), and potential impact on MTA riders. MTA App Quest was powered and co-sponsored by ChallengePost, a global marketplace for challenges and community-driven innovation.

The contest also featured two Popular Choice Awards that were determined based on 42 days of public voting. The Popular Choice Award Grand Prize was awarded to the **CityMaps** app at **CityMaps.com** developed by Christopher Winfield, which combines real-time information about local businesses with subway information about how to reach them. Popular Choice Award Second Prize was awarded to **Right Track: Metro North** by David Waring, which allows Android users to get quick access to Metro-North schedules, real-time status updates and track assignments.

MTA App Quest also offered a special Large Organization Award, presented to bigger corporations working on apps, to Slalom Consulting for **NYC Station Finder**, which allows iPhone users to find station entrances with an augmented reality station finder.

"They say competition brings out the best in people, and there's no doubt that's what happened in this contest," said MTA Chairman Joseph J. Lhota. "I want to congratulate all of the winners and all of the entrants, because the quality of all apps we've seen has been fantastic. In fact, when you think about this contest for a second, it's pretty clear who the real winners are: all of us—the riding public—the 8.5 million people who use our system every single day and now have more tools to make those trips easier and more rewarding."

Five apps won honorable mentions.

- **Annadale: Staten Island Train & Ferry** by Mike Raney, which bridges the gap between Staten Island and transit in the rest of the city by presenting Staten Island Railway and Staten Island Ferry schedules so that they become one seamless entity.
- **Art by Subway NYC** by Matthew Vincent, a pocket reference guide for iPhone or iPod Touch for discovering the commissioned artworks within the subway.
- **NYC Travel** by Fernando Garza and Chevon Christie, a multi-purpose travel app for Windows Phone 7 with full system and individual line maps, service updates, and a subway locator.
- **OnBoard** by Reed Martin. This app serves as your on-bus dashboard, following along with you to show you upcoming stops, estimated arrival times, and where to transfer, how long you'd wait for a transfer, and even cool stuff along the way like food, clothes and your friends.
- **Right Track: Metro-North** by David Waring, which also won the popular choice second prize as noted above

All award winners received cash prizes ranging from \$500 for honorable mention to \$5,000 for the grand prize winner. All also received in-kind contributions of MTA officially licensed merchandise that was contributed by MTA licensees. The prizes included a 5-foot subway sign by Underground Signs valued at \$325, iMac and iPad Cases by NYC Subway Line valued at \$60 to \$70, a subway map umbrella by Futai valued at \$26, and more. The MTA did not contribute financially to the prize pool. The full list of prizes is available at <http://www.mtaappquest.com/>

To begin stimulating the creation of apps by outside app developers, the MTA began making machine-readable data available to the public via its website in January 2010, with significant increases to available data in May 2010 and July 2011. As a result, apart from the App Quest competition, the MTA currently hosts an App Center on mta.info, currently linking to 47 apps for a range of devices: Androids, iPhones & other Apple devices, Blackberries, Windows Phones, and more.

The judges for the MTA App Quest were:

- Jen Chung, Executive Editor, Gothamist, and Co-Founder, Gothamist LLC
- Jeff Ferzoco, Creative and Technology Director, Regional Plan Association

- Mark Gorton, Founder and Chairman, OpenPlans and Founder, Tower Research Capital LLC, represented at the awards ceremony by Jeff Maki, Director of OpenPlans
- Wael Hibri, Chief Enterprise Information Officer, Metropolitan Transportation Authority
- Noel Hidalgo, Director of Engagement Technologies, World Economic Forum
- Cas Holloway, Deputy Mayor for Operations, City of New York
- Ben Kabak, Blogger and Founder, Second Avenue Sagas
- Lawrence Levy, Executive Dean, National Center for Suburban Studies at Hofstra University, represented at the awards ceremony by Christopher Niedt, Academic Director of Hofstra University's National Center for Suburban Studies
- Rachel Sterne, Chief Digital Officer, City of New York

About ChallengePost

[ChallengePost](#) is a web platform that enables government agencies, corporations, non-profits, and individuals to challenge the public to solve problems. Challenge sponsors receive innovative solutions and increased awareness around important initiatives. Members of the public receive recognition and rewards. ChallengePost has powered over 200 challenges on behalf of some of the world's largest organizations.