



MTA Press Releases

[Select Language](#) ▼

Press Release

May 6, 2013

[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

App Quest Hackathon, Sponsored by AT&T, NYU-Poly & MTA, Results in Creation of 17 App Concepts; Three Winning Teams Announced

After unleashing their creativity during an intensive 30-hour overnight work session this past weekend, 17 teams of app developers presented concepts for apps that could help improve New Yorkers' commutes. The app developers were working in a weekend-long "hackathon," a dynamic group setting where interplay of ideas spurs creativity and innovation.

The hackathon was held as part of App Quest, a best apps competition that will run through August, and is being sponsored by AT&T, the Polytechnic Institute of New York University (NYU-Poly), and the MTA, and is being powered by ChallengePost.

"It was inspiring to see so many talented teams turn out for this weekend's hackathon and put forth ideas that have the potential to transform the transit experience for millions of riders every day," said Marissa Shorenstein, President of AT&T New York. "AT&T congratulates Subculture.FM for their winning idea. We can't wait to see how they and other developers build on their ideas over the summer as we continue to search for the next great transit apps during the MTA and AT&T AppQuest Challenge."

These teams were awarded three prizes for generating the hackathon's "Best Overall App." Click on the app names for screen shots and additional descriptions.

- **Grand Prize (\$5,000)** was awarded to [SubCulture.FM](#), which would allow MTA customers to identify their favorite subway musicians that perform in the NYC subway area, locate them, and buy their singles. Featured subway performers can sign up and be assigned a unique QR code that will be linked to downloadable links to their music.
- **Second Prize (\$3,000)** was awarded to [MTA Sheriff](#), an app that would allow subway riders to submit and view reports about current subway conditions and concerns.
- **Third Prize (\$2,000)** was awarded to [Accessway](#), a mobile way-finding app that would help visually-impaired or wheelchair-assisted individuals navigate the subway. The app incorporates text-to-speech technology and pulls real-time service status updates from MTA timetables.

The winners – as well as all of the hackathon participants – can take their initial concepts forward to the overall App Quest global challenge, which is open to app developers from around the world, and will award a total of \$40,000 in prizes.

To view all of 17 hackathon app submissions, go to this link: <http://2013mtaappquest.challengepost.com/submissions>

These judges selected the hackathon winners:

- **Matt Brimer**, General Assembly Co-Founder
- **Rachael Haot**, Chief Digital Officer, City of New York
- **Todd Haselton**, Executive Director of Mobile, TechnoBuffalo
- **Brian Malkerson**, NYC Seed, Principle
- **Marissa Shorenstein**, President of AT&T New York
- **Sree Sreenivasan**, Chief Digital Officer, Columbia University
- **Craig Stewart**, Senior Corporate Management Officer, MTA New York City Transit

[General Assembly](#), a network of campuses that transforms thinkers into creators through our classes, workshops, and long-form courses in technology, business, and design, has agreed to send instructors to provide support and technical assistance to the teams as they make their final presentations.

NYU-Poly's Department of Technology, Culture and Society and its Integrated Digital Media program are providing event support.

App development is being stimulated by a number of technological innovations that have expanded the availability of digital data:

- On April 25, Transit Wireless activated wireless service at 30 underground subway stations in Manhattan and announced that the next 40 stations to receive wireless service, in Midtown and Queens, are expected online in the first quarter of 2014.
- In December 2012, the MTA released real-time data showing train arrival estimates at the 156 stations served by the 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 subway lines and S 42nd Street Shuttle. This dynamic data, which is held in the MTA's cloud-hosted GTFS-Real Time Feed, essentially make "countdown clock" information available via app.
- In November 2012, MTA Bus Time™ expanded to the Bronx, bringing real-time bus location data to 54 bus routes and 3,355 stops. The data will be coming to Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens this year and next.
- On March 27, Google added MTA real-time data to Google maps.

About AT&T

AT&T Inc. (NYSE:T) is a premier communications holding company and one of the most honored companies in the world. Its subsidiaries and affiliates – AT&T operating companies – are the providers of AT&T services in the United States and around the world. With a powerful array of network resources that includes the nation's fastest mobile broadband network, AT&T is a leading provider of wireless, Wi-Fi, high speed Internet, voice and cloud-based services. A leader in mobile broadband and emerging 4G capabilities, AT&T also offers the best wireless coverage worldwide of any U.S. carrier, offering the most wireless phones that work in the most countries. It also offers advanced TV services under the AT&T U-verse® and AT&T | DIRECTV brands. The company's suite of IP-based business communications services is one of the most advanced in the world. In domestic markets, AT&T Advertising Solutions and AT&T Interactive are known for their leadership in local search and advertising.

Additional information about AT&T Inc. and the products and services provided by AT&T subsidiaries and affiliates is available at <http://www.att.com>. This AT&T news release and other announcements are available at <http://www.att.com/newsroom> and as part of an RSS feed at <http://www.att.com/rss>. Or follow our news on Twitter at @ATT.

About Polytechnic Institute of New York University

The Polytechnic Institute of New York University (formerly the Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute and the Polytechnic University, now widely known as NYU-Poly) is an affiliated institute of New York University, soon to be its School of Engineering. NYU-Poly, founded in 1854, is the nation's second-oldest private engineering school. It is presently a comprehensive school of education and research in engineering and applied sciences, rooted in a 159-year tradition of invention, innovation and entrepreneurship. It remains on the cutting edge of technology, innovatively extending the benefits of science, engineering, management and liberal studies to critical real-world opportunities and challenges, especially those linked to urban systems, health and wellness, and the global information economy. In addition to its programs on the main campus in New York City at MetroTech Center in downtown Brooklyn, it offers programs around the globe remotely through NYUe-Poly. NYU-Poly is closely connected to engineering in NYU Abu Dhabi and NYU Shanghai and to the NYU Center for Urban Science and Progress (CUSP) also at MetroTech, while operating two incubators in downtown Manhattan and Brooklyn. For more information, visit www.poly.edu.

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.

About the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA)

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority is North America's largest public transportation network, serving a population of 14.9 million people in the 5,000-square-mile area fanning out from New York City through Long Island, the Hudson Valley, and southwestern Connecticut. MTA subways, buses, and railroads provide 2.63 billion trips each year to New Yorkers – the equivalent of about one in every three users of mass transit in the United States and two-thirds of the nation's rail riders. MTA Bridges and Tunnels carry nearly 300 million vehicles a year – more than any other toll agency in the nation.