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IMMEDIATE

AT&T and MTA Open Public Voting on Best Apps Designed to Improve Commutes for New Yorkers

New Apps Developed As Part of App Quest 3.0 Competition Utilize New Data Sets

Public Voting Open Now Through February 25 – To Help Select Winners, Visit: <http://2014mtaappquest.challengepost.com/submissions>

AT&T and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority today opened public voting in the App Quest 3.0 virtual challenge for New Yorkers to select their new favorite transit tool to win the \$5,000 Popular Choice prize. The 43 new apps were designed to help improve commutes for millions of subway, bus and rail riders using real time MTA data. The competition also incorporated the use of experimental wireless PROMObacons that were set up at the Grand Central-42nd Street subway station and allow enabled apps to know the precise location of an app user within a subway station in an effort to create solutions to help riders with disabilities or people unfamiliar with New York's transit system navigate safely.

In addition to the homegrown talent evidenced by these submissions, the competition sparked interest from developers across the world, including Australia, Morocco, France, Hungary, the United Kingdom and Switzerland. The apps function in a variety of ways, from providing real-time date on elevator functionality to bus schedules to transit re-routes to voice directives to help commuters navigate the subway system. One fourth of the submissions are solutions designed to help improve accessibility for riders.

Public voting on the submitted apps is open now through February 25 and winners of all prizes, including the Popular Choice, will be announced on March 19. In addition to the MTA and AT&T, App Quest is also sponsored by Transit Wireless, the NYU Center for Urban Science and Progress (CUSP) and powered by ChallengePost. In an effort to increase MTA transparency, the MTA released four new sets of raw data for app developers to work with including departure times, current on-time status and track information for the LIRR and Metro-North historical bus location information for the last three months and historical train arrival estimates on several subway lines as well as more user-friendly information on turnstile counts at each subway station. App developers were able to use the new data and merge it with existing data to create apps that have never been seen before.

"Each year of the App Quest Challenge has brought forth new and innovative ideas that have helped connect New Yorkers and visitors to the information they need as they make their way around the city," said Marissa Shorenstein, New York State President, AT&T. "With innovation and accessibility to mobile technology at the core of our partnership with the MTA, we are thrilled with the response to this year's challenge and look forward to hearing from New Yorkers as they vote for their favorite app."

"Everyone who rides a subway, railroad train or bus has a stake in this and now has the chance to have input," said MTA Chairman and CEO Thomas F. Prendergast. "More than 40 app developers have put in time, energy and resources toward making products they hope and expect will benefit the public. Now it's the public's turn to offer input on which ones are the most useful. So if you ride a train or a bus, log on and vote!"

"The developer community loves working with MTA data to improve the transit experience," said Brandon Kessler, CEO of ChallengePost, the developer platform and community that powered the competition. "Every year, the apps get smarter, more intuitive, and more valuable for riders."

"Transit Wireless is excited to join AT&T and the MTA in supporting App Quest 3.0 by deploying advanced beacon technology for the first time ever in an underground public transportation system," said William Bayne, CEO of Transit Wireless. "We've been inspired by the range of creative new apps developed to use beacons to enhance the commuting experience for subway riders, and look forward to seeing which app generates the most public interest."

Participants in the App Quest virtual challenge are competing for \$50,000 in prize money to support the development of the apps that best help riders access the MTA's subway, railroads, buses, bridges and tunnels. All of the prize money is provided by AT&T.

For the other prizes, the apps will be judged by a panel of experts in technology and customer service:

- Barbara Cohn, Chief Data Officer, NYS Office of Information Technology Services
- Rachel Haot, New York State Chief Digital Officer & Deputy Secretary for Technology
- Brad Hargreaves, Co-Founder of General Assembly
- Todd Haselton, Executive Director of Mobile, TechnoBuffalo
- Scott Heiferman, CEO and a Co-Founder of Meetup
- Andrew Nicklin, New York State Director of #OpenNY

- Michael Salvato, Program Manager, Enterprise Asset Management, MTA
- Marissa Shorenstein, President of AT&T New York
- Omar Usmani, Executive Partner at Aeon Nexus Corp.

The MTA first launched App Quest in 2012 and received 42 app submissions. Since then, Transit Wireless has activated wireless service at 76 subway stations in Manhattan and Queens.

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.

About ChallengePost

At ChallengePost, software developers share their latest projects, explore new technologies, and compete in software competitions. Our global community has participated in over 650 online and in-person hackathons. Past competition sponsors include government agencies, universities, corporations, and non-profits.

About Transit Wireless

Transit Wireless has implemented a high quality, highly resilient network that enables secure private networks and public Wi-Fi. Transit Wireless was formed specifically to meet the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (MTA) requirement to provide a shared wireless infrastructure to enable commercial wireless services provided by AT&T, T-Mobile, Sprint and Verizon for New York City Transit customers within the underground subway stations and related opportunities.

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