REConnect: Improving your Rec Center experience

We have a beautiful Recreation Center here at the University of Arizona. It is a state of the art, multi-story facility that has been recently remodeled. It is a huge asset to students and Tucson residents alike, attracting people from all over the city. Our goal is to make it even better. One of the things we have noticed is that the Rec is sometimes way too crowded, and other times, mostly empty. We want to balance these two extremes, and allow everyone to quickly and efficiently access the resources they need.

We are proposing an addition to the U of A’s Arizona Mobile Application to include information about the Recreation Center. Our addition will have several features including:

- Occupancy Monitor
- Equipment Availability
- Room Availability
- Schedule of Events
- Schedule of IM/Club Games
- Notification Banner
- Sample Workout Plans

Our goal is to make it easier for students to keep track of what is currently going on at the Rec, and to make their workout experience as quick and efficient as possible.
1. **Occupancy Monitor:** This will allow us to monitor the number of people inside the Rec at all times. We will show users how many people are currently there, and the average occupancy for other days and times. This allows users to plan their workout times during the more open times of day, and will help to clear up some of the more congested times. Our addition will also include an easy to read Red-Yellow-Green indicator to quickly show current occupancy.

2. **Equipment Availability:** A major issue with using the Rec Center is that it is impossible to predict what kind of equipment is will be available before you go. REConnect will allow students to view exactly what equipment has already been rented out at the rental station in the Rec Center. This will prevent the unnecessary waiting times students presently have to endure. It also allows students to wait until their desired equipment is available before coming to the Rec.

3. **Room Availability:** This feature allows students to see which rooms are taken by scheduled classes or reserved by other users. This will include the workout rooms upstairs as well as any other courts or sports fields. Using this function, student will not have to go all the way to these rooms to see if they are open. This system saves time and helps the Rec to more efficiently accommodate large groups of students.

4. **Schedule of Events:** In this section, students will be able to see the upcoming events hosted at the Rec. It will include news about things like upcoming tournaments, classes, and promotions. Students will be able to plan their days and weeks around our schedule, and stay up-to-date on Rec events.

5. **Schedule of IM/Club Games:** The schedule of games allows users to see a full schedule of upcoming games. It will also include up-to-date brackets so teams can view their
standings. It is perfect for students who want to scout out other teams in their brackets for entertainment or for their strategic planning.

6. **Notification Banner:** The scrolling banner at the bottom of the user’s screen will provide quick information about the goings-on of the Rec. This includes calendar events such as classes and games, as well as less common occurrences such as store promotions and broken equipment. This will keep events present in students’ minds and, hopefully, boost attendance.

7. **Workout Plans:** This section of our app will have free sample workout plans for inexperienced students and staff. With so much money spent on this facility, it is important for people to understand how to use it to its full potential. The app will include a basic workout plan that any user can follow without the need for any previous weight-lifting training.

Once again, REConnect is an addition to the Arizona Mobile app. Our goal is to make a trip to the Rec a faster and more enjoyable experience. Our addition will lead to shorter wait times, increased student awareness, and a more productive Rec. We believe that this improvement is worthwhile because it will help clear out congestion, and allow people to get on with their days.

**Value Proposition**

REConnect seeks to help resolve the largest problem currently plaguing the U of A Rec Center: capacity issues. Despite being a high quality gym, the Rec has a problem with congestion. Depending on the day of the week and the time of day, the Rec will either be almost
empty or full to the point it’s a hindrance. The services REConnect provides, namely the utilization and distribution of capacity data, were designed to mitigate this problem.

Those who attend the Rec are very aware of the crowding problem, and wish something would be done about it. As we were creating REConnect, we decided to do a quick survey to find out whether or not such a thing would be useful. We stood outside the Rec and asked people just two simple questions: First, “If you could add something to make going to the Rec a better experience, what would you add?” 83% of the people who answered this question named something that had to do with crowding or capacity issues (“more benches,” “more equipment,” etc) and could thus be rectified through the use of REConnect:

![Pie chart showing survey results]

**IF YOU COULD ADD SOMETHING TO MAKE GOING TO THE REC A BETTER EXPERIENCE, WHAT WOULD YOU ADD?**

- **Issue Not Solved by REConnect, 7**
- **Issue Solved by REConnect, 53**
It is clear from these results that students do notice this problem at the Rec, and wish there was some way for it to be solved. As opposed to solving this problem with large additions of equipment and space to the Rec, REConnect would solve it with very little infrastructure changes; a lot of value can be added with little cost.

The main way REConnect deals with the capacity issues is by adding transparency to the Rec. Students who wants to use the Rec as it is now are essentially left in the dark. They have no real idea how crowded it will be, and thus how long they will have to wait around to do what they need to. With REConnect, however, that information will be available right at their fingertips via the Arizona Mobile app. This will be helpful in making the Rec more convenient and accessible. When potential gym-goers are made aware of peak times at the Rec they will be able to plan around them, preventing them from having to wait for machines and adding further to overcrowding issues at those times.

Another way REConnect adds transparency is by giving information about the availability of equipment and rooms. A major issue with using the Rec Center is that it is impossible to predict what equipment and which rooms will be. REConnect allows students to view exactly what has already been rented out at the rental station in the Rec as well as which rooms are in use. This will prevent the unnecessary waiting times students presently have to endure when renting equipment and reserving rooms, making going to the Rec a much quicker and more enjoyable experience.

REConnect is a cheap and simple way to add value to the Rec Center. Students at the U of A enjoy the privilege of having a state of the art gym, and REConnect would allow them to use their time there more efficiently. By providing gym-goers with information on capacity and
usage, REConnect makes a trip to the Rec more convenient, accessible, and enjoyable for all.

**Who Will Benefit**

The second question of the survey asked, “If the Arizona Mobile app were to have a Rec Center section, with things like equipment rentals, gym capacity, and schedules in it, would you use it when going to the Rec?” The results of this question are as follows:

![Pie chart showing survey results]

When we described our features, and directly asked Rec users if they would use our app, 90% of them said yes. REConnect provides a solution to a clear and evident problem. As proven by the survey, a majority of students want a way to see the current occupancy of the Recreation center. The student body and faculty will benefit from this improvement to the Rec; knowing the current and predicted occupancy will allow them to plan their schedules around it. Instead of blindly
going to the Rec center and having a slow and inefficient work out, students and faculty can go when it is not as busy and have a better workout in less time.

The easily accessible information regarding the occupancy of the Rec is useful for time management. It is hard to balance homework and physical exercise. With REConnect, students can do their homework when the Rec is busy and go when it isn’t as populated. Similarly for faculty, they can grade their papers when the Rec is busy and go when there aren’t as many people. Using this information, students and faculty can manage their days more efficiently.

REConnect is not only limited to providing the current occupancy of the Rec. REConnect is useful to students who participate in intramurals and any other sports that can be played at the Rec. For students participating in intramurals, they will have access to the schedule of games. With this schedule, students can scout their opponents while they play and make adjustments to their own team. The average student can also look at this schedule to determine which parts of the Rec are sectioned off for the intramurals. The students also have the option watch the games for their own entertainment.

Students who enjoy sports that require equipment or rooms from the Rec will also benefit from the information provided by REConnect. Take, for example, racquetball and basketball. REConnect allows students see what equipment has been already been rented out, meaning they will know whether or not they will have to wait for the equipment they need. This will prevent them from making a fruitless trip to the Rec. Similarly, REConnect gives gym-goers the ability to see which rooms, such as the yoga, dance, and weight rooms, are reserved. This also prevents unnecessarily time-wasting Rec experiences for those who use them.

Another benefit for students and faculty, especially those who do not have experience in
physical training, comes from the app’s workout plan. REConnect has a simple workout plan that is easy to follow. This is important for creating a Rec Center that is more active, organized, and efficient for all. Those without experience will be able to use their time at the Rec effectively, and those with experience will not be bogged down waiting for them. The workout plan will also make the Rec Center safer because more students will be doing certified workout plans. With such a costly facility on the campus, it is imperative that it is used correctly and efficiently.

REConnect has a mission to make the Recreation Center safer, more convenient, and productive. These conveniences lead to the betterment of the Rec and the University of Arizona community as a whole. REConnect has accessible information that improves the efficiency of the Rec substantially. As a result, people of the University of Arizona can achieve a better all-around workout. With the workout plan, those who do not already work out can be inspired to take the first step in a healthy direction. All this leads from a simple app that seeks to make the Rec better for all who use it.

**Responsible Organization**

We would like to add REConnect to the Arizona Mobile application with the help of the Arizona Tech Team. Our icon should be placed on the initial screen along with others such as UAccess and D2L. The responsible organizations would be the university’s Tech Team and the Rec Center Staff. We also would need the developer of the Arizona Mobile app to help us write the code for this addition, and integrate it into the current app. Lastly, the Rec Center Staff would need to install turnstiles at the exits, and constantly update our app with their capacity data. The rest of our data can come straight from their website. After this system is set up, the developer
would have to upload the updated version to the Apple App Store and Google Play Store.