Leap Solution Team
Business Plan
COUGAR – TONES

T-Train
O-Orientation
N-Network
E-Enhance, Empower, and Educate
S-Support

CanyonsM App Future Upgrades & Enhancement Strategic Planning Proposal

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Executive Summary

In the Spring of 2020, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the College of the Canyons community of over 33,000 students and 2,000 employees transitioned to a remote modality in approximately one week.

As a result of the new and evolving remote learning modality, there has been an increased reliance upon the ability to access and use information remotely through the use of mobile applications. At COC, CanyonsM provides convenient access to important information and personalized services on your desktop and via our smartphone app.

Canyons students and staff can access:
- Real-time information and frequently accessed services
- Personalized content such as email, schedules of classes and Canvas
- Campus maps with details of buildings, libraries, parking and more
- Information about campus facilities and services
- Important notifications in real time
- The latest news, events and campus activities

A Guest profile allows external users to explore available services, and register for access to future enhancements.

The CanyonsM app supports:
- iOS
- Android
- Mac OS
- Windows

Reliance on access to college information and service through the use of the CanyonsM mobile app has increased significantly – Even with a return to in-person learning. Students and staff depend upon remote access for timely and relevant college information and services. The ***Cougar T.O.N.E.S project*** team sees an opportunity within the community to further enhance and expand the CanyonsM app which will in turn support the college's mission of embracing diversity, fostering technical competencies, supporting the development of global responsibility, and engaging students and the community in scholarly inquiry, creative partnerships, and the application of knowledge.

Project Mission & Key Objectives

Vision & Mission Statement

*The **Cougar T.O.N.E.S project*** is committed to maintaining College of the Canyons' professional public image as well as creating ease in student engagement and resource awareness by encouraging interactive and timely content with brand uniformity throughout the College's CanyonsM mobile application. Our vision is to help the mobile application website better communicate with our student users and help them to better navigate through the numerous pages provided on CanyonsM. In addition, recommendations for improvement will assist College of the Canyons in providing increased and ease of access to many college student services, resources, and events. The mission of the *Cougar T.O.N.E.S project* is to provide an advisory and strategic plan to upgrade and expand the visibility and usefulness of the CanyonsM mobile app.

Our plan will expand the current campus app and improve the format and organization of content: course and class information, daily projects, homework questions and health, wellness, and life resources. Mobile app will be provided in an interactive mode to improve student engagement and to facilitate connection with fellow peers. Upgrading the CanyonsM mobile application to incorporate an interactive modality, will increase equitable access to student information and resources, increase participation in student support services, increase student morale and improve ease of use.

Institutionally, retention rates have remained constant, at 88%, over the last three fall terms (2019, 2020, and 2021). This means that over 4,600 enrollments were lost between census and the end of the term. Similarly, success rates have held at 74-75% during this same timeframe. This equates to over 10,000 course attempts that did not result in success (success is defined as a student receiving a passing grade of A, B, C, or P). Improving retention and success rates through ease of access to campus resources and timeliness of information could, even in small percentages, have a significant impact on student outcomes.

Values
- Strong campus community
- Accuracy, Timeliness, and Accessibility of Information
- Professionalism and Currency
- Ease of navigation and 24/7 Access to Resources
- Consistency

Project Objectives/ Evaluation
- To gather data from current CanyonsM mobile app vendor regarding the use and availability of additional functions and presentation.
- To represent student needs, concerns, and ideas to the template designers to consider incorporating feasible new features.
- To assist the College with rolling out an improved CanyonsM template design.
- To respond to student surveys regarding the importance of remote access to information and mobile application usage to enhance clarity, uniformity and ease in navigation.

- To promote the maintenance, currency, and functionality of the CanyonsM mobile application.

Market Dimensions & Analysis

The CanyonsM app currently has four different interface options that are tailored to College of the Canyons students, staff, faculty, and guests. Users of the CanyonsM app cover a wide range of generational, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Research Summary. "Smartphone and cellphone use is at an all-time high in the United States. Across the nation, more and more people depend on their smartphones to communicate, stay connected, and be informed daily. After extensive research, our data analysis team concluded:"

- There are **294.15 million smartphone users** in the United States.

- **85% of American adults** use smartphones.

- Approximately **47% of web traffic** in the U.S. originated from mobile devices.

- Apple is the top smartphone in the U.S., with more than **113 million iPhone users**.

U.S. SMARTPHONE OWNERSHIP 2011-2021
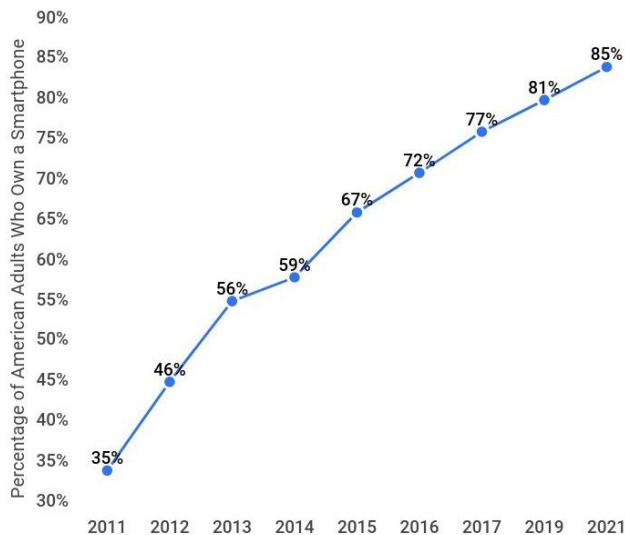
General U.S. Smartphone Industry Statistics

- **Apple is the top smartphone brand in the United States.**

  According to numbers from the most recent quarter, Apple represents the largest smartphone market share at 53%. Behind Apple, Samsung has 26% of the smartphone market, Lenovo has 12% of the smartphone market, and LG has 3% of the smartphone

market.

U.S. SMARTPHONE OWNERSHIP BY BRAND
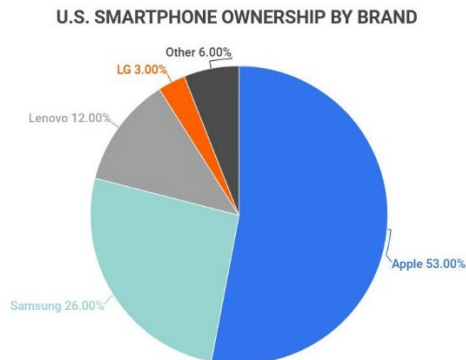
- **12% of Americans own non-smart mobile phones.**

  About 12% of Americans have a non-smart mobile phone, while 85% of Americans have a smartphone. The number of Americans who own a smartphone has increased by 50% since 2011, when just 35% of Americans were smartphone owners.

- **The annual global revenue of the smartphone industry sits at approximately $409.1 billion.**

  China holds the largest section of the global smartphone market, generating more than $130 billion in sales each year. The United States is the second-largest segment of the global smartphone market, generating approximately $55.6 billion in annual revenue.

- **More than 1.5 billion smartphones are sold around the world every year.**

  In 2019, over 1.5 billion smartphones were sold and distributed worldwide, as reported by Statista. That same year, more than 40% of people in the world had access to a smartphone.

- **The global smartphone industry is expanding at a compound annual growth rate of 16.4%.**

  The international smartphone industry is growing at a CAGR of 16.4%. In 2018 the market was valued at $520.3 billion. Now, current projections predict that the industry will reach $2,297.8 billion by 2022.

U.S. Smartphone Industry Statistics by Demographics

- An estimated 96% of people aged 18 to 29 own a smartphone in the United States compared to 61% of people 65 years old and over.

Source:
U.S. Smartphone Industry Statistics [2022]: Facts, Growth, Trends, And Forecasts – Zippia
https://www.zippia.com/advice/us-smartphone-industry-statistics/ Last accesed: May 24th 2022.

Through the app, students are able to access several essential services, including application admission, unofficial transcripts, student billing, MAP, Canvas, and student email. Staff and faculty are able to access many features including campus email, leaves, and Self-Service. Guests are also able to use the app to find campus maps, campus directory information, and search for classes.

While the CampusM app has been in existence for 4 years, recently, the app was redesigned and transitioned to become a captive portal requiring all students, staff, and faculty to utilize the app beginning in Fall 2021. As a result, the utilization rate is 100% with most users accessing the app. New user registrations, including both students and employees, were recorded as the following:

- August 2021: 20,597
- September 2021: 4,486
- October 2021: 3,443
- November 2021: 3,296
- December 2021: 2,548
- January 2022: 3,695
- February 2022: 2,937
- March 2022: 1,802

Further analysis demonstrated that the following features that users of the app were accessing:

Menu:	Menu Clicks:
Campus Email	33,753
Canvas	31,580
My Registration	20,200
Covid Check-in	7,424
My Academic Plan (MAP)	7,373
My Profile	6,431
My Billing	4,819
My Grades	4,351
My Financial Aid	4,271
Admissions & Records	4,082
Submit Vaccine Status	3,552
My Messages	1,186
Directory	848
Grand Total	134,889

SWOT Analysis

Strengths
- Meets strategic goals of the College by providing Access, Engagement and Success for current and prospective students
- Helps maintain a professional image for the College
- Provide uniformity and consistency in design
- Assists in providing cutting edge visibility and interactive usage of mobile application
- Facilitates the maintenance and update of information

Weaknesses
- College does not currently have a process for monitoring mobile app usage and ease of access
- Content Information is not interactive and live (current, accurate, and linked in places)
- Guidelines have not been established for mobile app content, or links to external sources
- College does not have process for annual reviews of mobile apps or ability to link mobile app to SMART phone access

Opportunities
- Provides an opportunity for improved student access and usability of resources on CanyonsM
- College can establish guidelines for content, and continuity in design
- Increased information and improved accuracy
- Increased use by internal and external users
- Improved ease of navigation to find information

Threats
- No current funding available to hire or assign a dedicated staff to work with Vendor to update and expand mobile app features
- Misunderstanding or misconceptions about student needs and most current and popular applications

Stakeholders for the Project
- Students and Potential Students
- Parents
- Faculty/Staff/Administrators
- Business Partners
- Community Users

Proposed Strategy & Implementation

Competition

Internal
One dilemma that a community college must face when considering a technology solution is the proliferation of student facing technology tools. While many software solutions exist to serve niche functions that meet the needs of the modern online student population, too much technology can make it difficult for students to successfully navigate the institution. Currently, the college utilizes Canvas, Self-Service, Canyons Connects, CanyonsM, student email, and other software for employees.

External
Not only does the CanyonsM app face competition within COC's software platforms, it competes with other high-profile social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, TikTok, etc. However, where there's competition, there can be collaboration and there are several examples of *our findings:*

		Self-Service	Canvas	Canyons Connects	CanyonsM	Student Email	Other
Student Facing Functionality	Appointment Check-In			A			X
	Assessment						X
	Billing/Fee Payment	X					
	Calendar/Scheduling			A	A	X	X
	Campus Clubs and Organizations			A	A		X
	Checklists/To-Do Items	X		A			
	Demographic Updates	X					
	Directory				X		X
	Educational Plans	X					
	Financial Aid	X					
	Financial Wellness Module				A		
	Grades	X		X			
	ID Cards				A		
	Internships						X
	Knowledge Base (Searchable)/AI Chat				A		
	Messages/Announcements	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Online Course Content		X				
	Online Tests, Quizes, & Assignments		X				
	Orientation						X
	Registration	X					
	Services & Connections			X	A		X
	Single Sign-On (SSO)				X		
	Student Employment				X		X
	Surveys				A		
	Tutoring		X				X
	Vaccination Records				X		
	X = Service is currently being provided via this platform						
	A = Service is available and could be provided via this platform						

According to Karp and Fletcher of the Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University, there are two key factors to meaningful technology reform. "*First, the technologies must be used to restructure the student experience, not merely to improve administrative efficiency. Second, end-users must adopt these tools in their daily practice; merely getting a product up and running will not lead to transformative change…*

Implementation is the process of deploying a new technology and making it available to end-users. Adoption, in contrast, is the process by which end-users incorporate a new technology into their daily work processes. (Karp and Fletcher 2014)."

In their Readiness for Technology Adoption (RTA) framework, Karp and Fletcher identify four quadrants for consideration prior to moving forward with a technology adoption:

READINESS FOR TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION FRAMEWORK		
	Technology	**Culture**
Institution Level	**Technological Readiness** • IT system maturity • IT system stability • Compatibility of new and existing IT • Current patterns of IT use • Past experience with IT implementation	**Organizational Readiness** • Clarity of mission • Communication • Decision-making process • Openness to change
Project Level	**Project Readiness** • Administrative and technical resources • Training • Ongoing support • Incentives	**Motivational Readiness** • Need for reform • Vision of benefits • Perception of functioning

Technology Planning & Implementation

The CanyonsM application has the potential to help the college organize and display the various tools essential to student success in a student friendly manner. Accomplishing this will require careful consideration of a few key elements. First, the college will need to identify and consolidate any redundant software solutions and ensure that a stable technology foundation is present. Second, the college will need to carefully map the desired student experience paying close attention to the tools and the time frames in which successful students would access these tools. Third, the college would identify functional and technical experts to facilitate implementation and adoption.

This would include a robust marketing and communications campaign and any requisite training for end users. Finally, using student, faculty, staff, and administrator feedback, as well as best practice information, the college would create a roadmap with clear objectives and prioritized tasks for reimplementation and redesign of the CanyonsM app.

Recommendations:
- Create a stakeholder committee whose responsibilities include:
  - Develop and execute at least one annual survey for all stakeholders to collect their app
  - Conduct one-on-one interviews to gather in-depth feedback and collaboration with stakeholders
  - Meet quarterly to compile, plan and execute upgrades and enhancements

List of Recommended Upgrades & Enhancements

The following list of upgrades & enhancements were created by the LEAP team through first person experience and interviews with the college's IT team. Our team highly recommends conducting surveys & interviews with more stakeholders before implementing. It's also recommended to keep an eye on the CampusM developer's annual roadmap of releases.

New Features
- Access to Digital Student ID cards
- Expanded Resources
    - One click option or single sign-on (SSO) to services
        - See this report from the CanyonsM developer regarding Toi Ohomai's use of polls and SSO to increase student engagement
    - Health & Wellness Resource Information & Contact Access
        - Provide an interactive and fun support network with training, inspiration quotes, resources on campus and the ability to connect with others for reassurance – *"Even if it's step by step and day by day. Execute and Empower!"*
        - See this report from the CanyonsM developer regarding Middlesex University's Wellbeing Check-ins using Surveys
- Upgrades/ Improvements
    - Ask Canyons
        - Design and implement Interactive avatar that uses search options like Apple's Siri or Amazon's Alexa to increase ease of search
    - Campus Life
        - Increase student engagement in campus culture by creating peer-to-peer communication and support
        - Integrate social media apps like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, TikTok, etc.
    - Calendars
        - Combine student course schedules with optional additions from the college's campus calendar
        - Integrate Google, Apple, Microsoft calendars for ease of user access
    - My Messages
        - Enable notifications features to provide alerts for important dates and deadlines
        - Enable the survey function to administer student surveys & employees surveys
        - Daily bulletins/ alerts sent directly to users
    - My Financial Aid
        - Rename to "Financial Resources & Aid"
        - Include assistance and resource information
    - Employee
        - Software training and employee onboarding portal

Design Strategy

Our team is recommending an enhanced design to further engage users. The *Cougar T.O.N.E.S project* aims to provide an interactive, enjoyable and supportive experience that encourages engagement and collaboration.

Our recommendation is to further explore the design possibilities within the app and survey users to find what will be preferred while keeping Section 508 compliance at the top of mind.

We also encourage the use of the [CampusM Creative Studio templates](#) to give ownership to individual departments who may have an interest in designing and managing their own space within the CanyonsM app but may not feel comfortable with traditional software designing and coding.

APP Visual Design-Launch Screen
Visual: The center is in the shape of the school (COC, AVC…ETC) and the "TABS/TILES" are circle tabs connecting to the school.
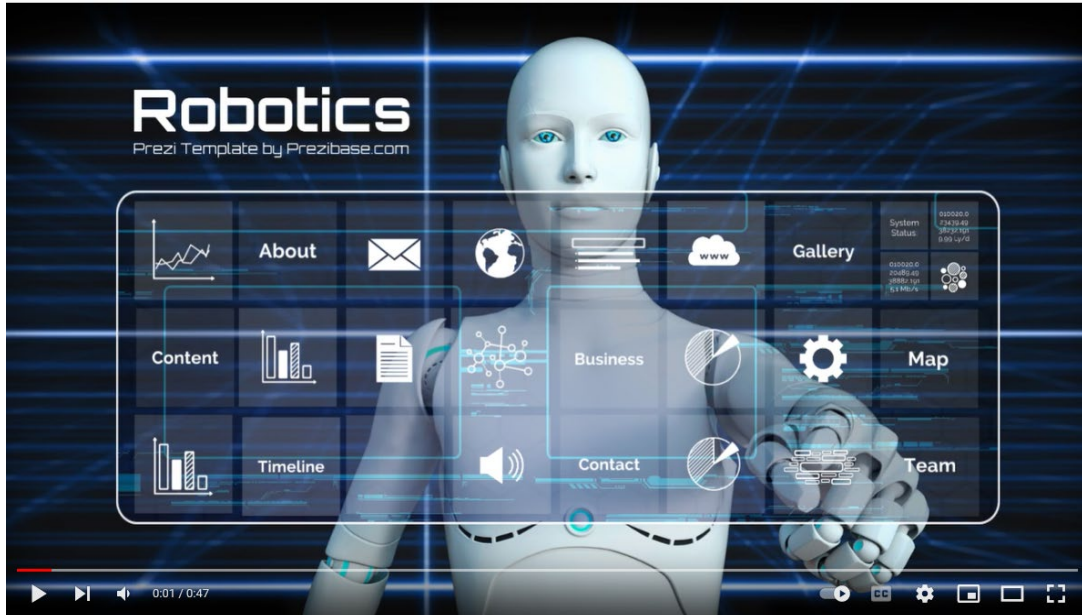
Avatar: The Avatar would resemble the one used on the SNAPCHAT platform clothed in the users school mascot or in a costume of choice. It can be easily manipulated to your individual style and will function like SIRI or Alexa taking commands and helping the student or user navigate through the app.

Market, Growth & Promotional Strategy

The market, growth and promotional strategy will rely heavily on buy-in from campus administration, employees and student leaders. Our team anticipates the correlation of stakeholders' buy-in will directly relate to their perception of its' value, and in turn, the more useful the app becomes, the more valuable it becomes and will eventually market itself.

To begin creating more awareness of the app, we're including a list of suggestions for promotional and marketing techniques, specifically to increase overall use of the CanyonsM app. Our recommendation is to begin marketing campaigns after the Technology Planning & Implementation recommendations have begun.

The following are our marketing, growth & promotional strategy recommendations:
- Nominal & Low-cost Options
  - Quarterly
    - Partnering with Canyons News to include space to promote the app
    - Publishing user testimonials
    - Encouraging user reviews & ratings
    - COC all - email to all campus distribution list
    - Have a student or employee rep attend on-campus (or event off-campus) events to promote the app
  - Monthly
    - Press releases, video & audio interviews to be published in local and regional media outlets.
    - Providing access to support with new templates – website coordinator support provided to departments and individual faculty using the campus template
  - Weekly
    - Publishing posts to COC's social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Tik Tok, Pinterest)
  - One time
    - Landing page with information about the app
      - canyons.edu
      - My Canyons - create a tab in MY CANYONS
- Paid promotions
  - Traditional
    - Commercial Advertisements, Public Service Announcements
      - Local, Regional & Student Media
    - Print (newspaper & magazine) advertisements
      - Local, Regional & Student Media
    - Printed flyers, posters, business cards and electronic ads on campus (both Valencia, Canyon Country, AOC & Castaic High School)
  - New Media
    - Social Media Ads/ Sponsored Posts
  - Incentives
    - Contests with Prizes
    - Exclusive content or events

Financial Support

- *Software*
  - No additional funding, other than this expected.
- *Personnel Salary and Benefits*

There are several options for how this project could be resourced depending on availability of funding. These include hiring a full or part-time Web Application Programmer Analyst or an independent IT contractor on a full or part-time basis. If the college chose to hire an independent consultant, functional areas would take over the responsibility for updating content at the end of the contract year, once all the desired application functionality was in place.

In addition, we propose the creation of a CanyonsM Coordinator (Intern). This position which will serve as the primary point person for Mobile App coordination is essential. The current structure does not promote consistency within the app, facilitate app updates, and no one is responsible for ongoing training and coordination.

Option	Description	Job Title	Salary Range	Hours	Salary	Benefits	Total Annual Cost	Ongoing Costs
A	F/T Classified Employee	Web Application Programmer Analyst	CSEA - 56	40/wk	$ 84,168	$ 40,000	$ 124,168	124,168
B	P/T Classified Employee	Web Application Programmer Analyst	CSEA - 56	20/wk	$ 42,084	$ 20,000	$ 62,084	62,084
C	F/T Contractor	IT Contractor	N/A	40/wk	105/hr	N/A	$ 201,600	0
D	P/T Contractor	IT Contractor	N/A	20/wk	105/hr	N/A	$ 100,800	0
Option	**Description**	**Job Title**	**Salary Range**	**Hours**	**Salary**	**Benefits**	**Total Annual Cost**	**Ongoing Costs**
Required	Coordinates Mobile App	CanyonsM Coordinator (Intern)		$20	20/wk	$ 19,200	$ 5,000	$ 24,200	24,200
						Totals	**$86,284 to $225,800**	**$24,200 to $148,368**

NOTE: Additional in-kind contributions would be required from functional areas/experts.
NOTE: Cost of portal application is already funded through existing IT contract.

- *Marketing materials*
  - No funding was assigned to this function as existing in-house resources can be used for relatively low-to-no cost.
- *Training*
  - *Website application desig*n- No funding was assigned to this function. Professional development can set up the training, and the CanyonsM vendor can provide training as part of the contractual obligations.
  - *Annual Mobile App Review*- No funding was assigned to this function. The costs associated with an annual webpage review are covered through in-kind resources

Management Summary

Our ultimate goal with this project proposal is to provide the starting point for College of the Canyons to collaboratively develop a strategic plan for the CanyonsM app.

The next steps of managing this project will include building onto the LEAP team to create a stakeholder committee, administering surveys and interviews, collecting information and feedback, build a full strategic plan, and begin implementation.

We believe that by starting the process to building a roadmap for this platform, college stakeholders can expect to see increased engagement, morale and innovation on College of the Canyons' campuses.

LEAP Team

Tony Sanchez – Financial Aid Advisor, COC

> Tony has over 16 years' experience working in Financial Aid, providing individualized guidance for students, so that they may reach their educational goals. He was responsible for starting up a successful Financial Literacy/Wellness program servicing over 300+ students, which ultimately helped lower student loan debt and the federal default rate campus-wide. Tony is an expert regarding federal and state financial aid programs and is sought after to present at various departments and events.

Kelly Dapp – Director of Campus Life & Student Engagement, COC

> Kelly has over 25 years' experience working in student life and has mentored hundreds of student leaders through advisement on best practices in running student organizations, student advocacy, and expertise in event planning.

Cheryl Dettrick – Grant Writer, COC; Owner/President Resource Development Services, LLC

> Cheryl has over 25 years' experience in higher education organizational leadership with a specialization in resource development, grant writing, strategic project planning, and business organizational management. Ms. Dettrick joined College of the Canyons in December of 2022 as the new Grant Writer to the college, and is also the owner of Resource Development Services, LLC a national grant development consulting firm serving higher education and non-profit clients. She has notable expertise and success in securing federal grant funding, developing strategic partnerships and providing professional development and training in higher education grant development.

Clinton Slaughter – Dean, Counseling, COC

> Clinton has 20 years of experience in Student Services within the California Community College system. This includes positions such as Job Developer/Employment Technician, Director of Admissions and Records, Dean of Enrollment Services, and Dean of Counseling. Linking high touch services that support students and help them feel connected to campus with high tech solutions that achieve efficiencies and help focus limited staff resources on providing timely and appropriate support has been a hallmark of Clinton's career.

Jessica Boyer – Executive Director, SCVTV

Jessica Boyer is a visual storyteller whose background of over 10 years in community journalism and media has provided her the opportunity to share hundreds of stories throughout her career so far. She brings experience in nonprofit management, media outreach and problem solving.