



ReadyKey



How the University of North Texas increased the feeling of safety on campus with a mobile app to help prepare and plan for emergencies



CHALLENGE

Preparing for campus emergencies is crucial and the University of North Texas (UNT) has provided quality emergency preparedness materials on its website for years, but only a handful of people actually went online to see the content. Plus, emergency materials on site were broad and lacked a connection to the day-to-day life of students. UNT needed a way to share this critical information that was easy to access and engaging.



SOLUTION

The university's Emergency Management and Safety Services built and developed a user-friendly mobile app that made it even easier to find and review emergency information. Emergency floor plans and the option to create personalized emergency plans are two features that allow any app user to connect the knowledge from the resources to their experience on campus.



RESULTS

Students, faculty, and staff like the app and express that it helps them feel more prepared for emergencies and more aware of available resources. Since its launch in 2016, the app has been downloaded over 4000 times. The most frequently launched guide menu item in the last two years is the emergency floor plan page, with over 2500 launches. In the same period, the UNT campus map was launched 1523 times.



The University of North Texas (UNT) is a public research university in Denton, Texas. It was founded as a nonsectarian, coeducational, private teacher's college in 1890 and was formally adopted by the state 11 years later.

Emergency Management & Safety Services is the primary department on campus for emergency preparedness information and resources. The team is responsible for implementing programs that enhance the university's ability to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from large-scale incidents. The team includes emergency preparedness, business continuity, fire safety, and international travel risk management.

In 2016 leaders in Emergency Management and Safety Services began to question if their online resources were enough. Going beyond the website and creating a mobile-friendly option could be the best way to increase views and help people on campus feel prepared for emergency situations.

Surveys show that 93% of American college students have smartphones and 67% of American college students are even using their mobile devices to complete assignments in class.

"Everyone on campus is always on their phones," said Scott Dunkle, Executive Director, Risk Management.

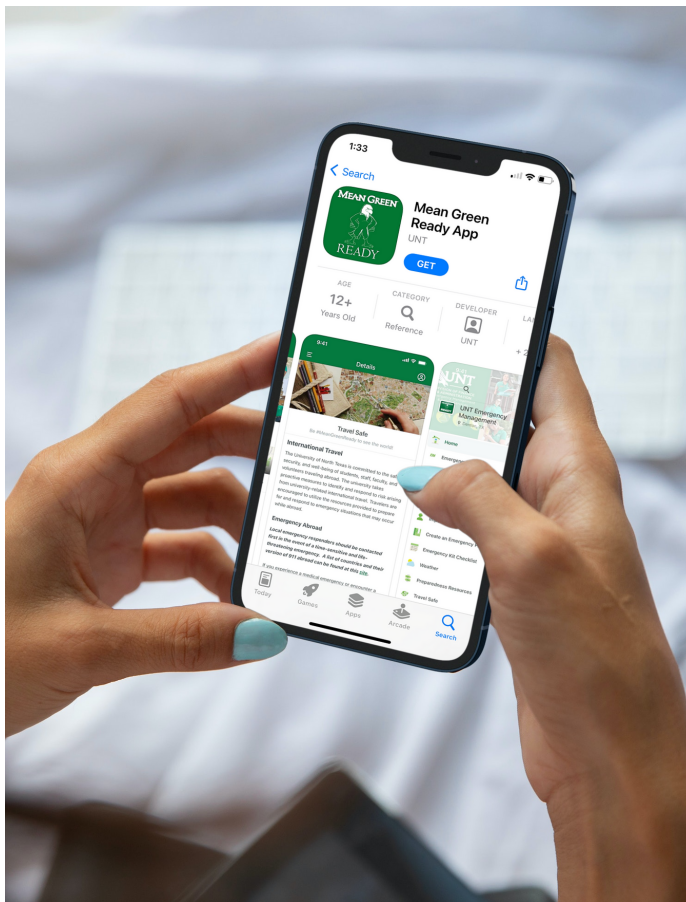
"We wanted a resource that was convenient for mobile viewing, so that anyone anywhere on campus, day or night can easily access emergency materials." The team decided to focus on finding the best way to capture mobile users. They asked other universities how they shared emergency materials and Sam Houston State University (SHSU) explained how they created a successful branded app with Guidebook.





Creating an easy-to-use platform

The UNT Emergency Management and Safety Services took the recommendation from SHSU and began building their app with minimal assistance.



It was easy for any team member to replicate the content that already existed on the emergency management website within the new app. After six to eight weeks of building and organizing content, the Mean Green Ready app was ready to launch in 2016.

Students, faculty, staff, and anyone on campus can now access a wealth of information in one place including:

- Emergency guidelines
- Emergency floor plans for campus buildings
- Automated External Defibrillator (AED) locations
- Important contacts on campus and in the community
- The weather forecast

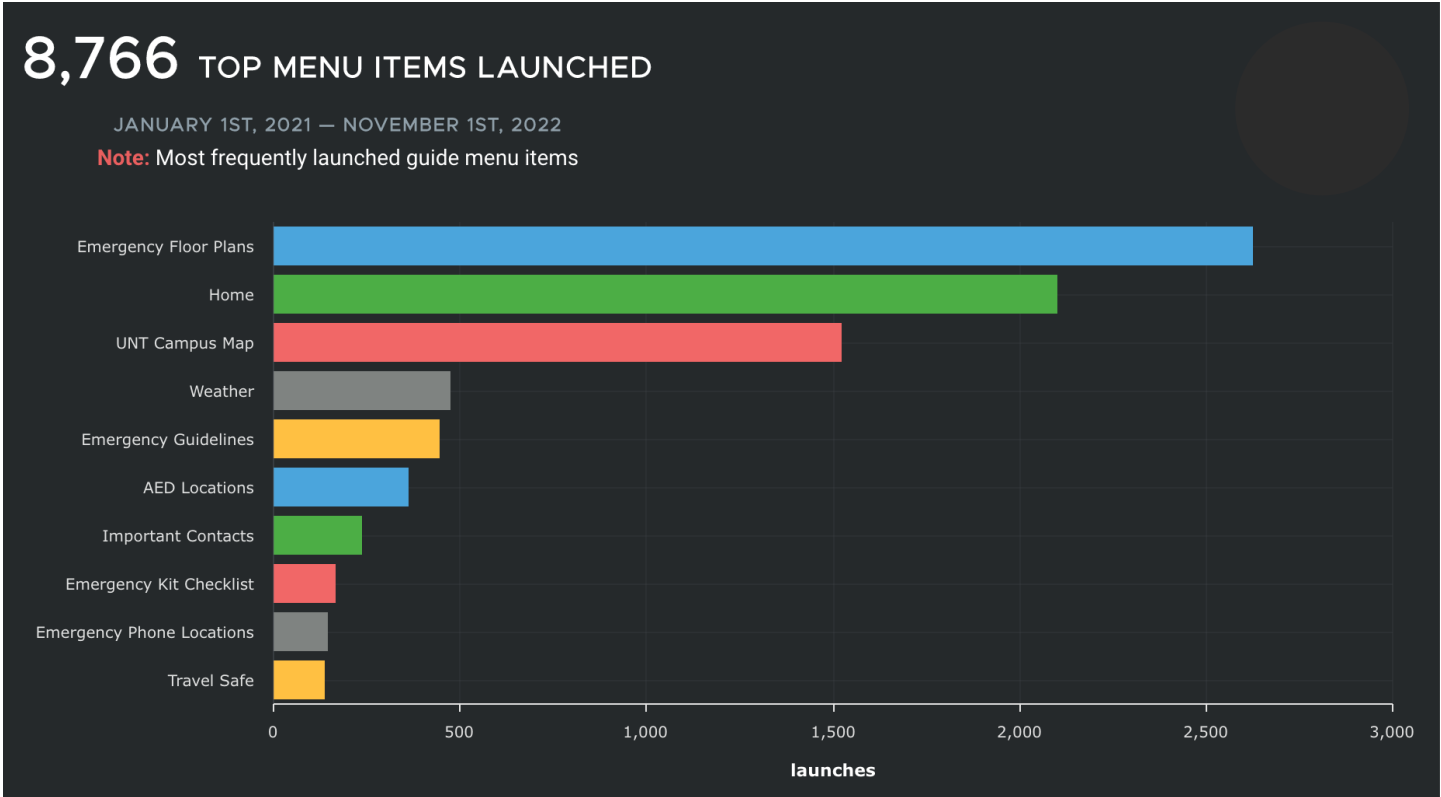
The app enhances training by educating participants on information specific to their buildings. For example, rather than merely emphasizing the importance of taking shelter in their designated area during a tornado warning, students can look up their building and find specifically where their area is located.



The app is branded for UNT with the trusted logo and green theme, making it easy to find in the App Store or Google Play store. Aside from the homepage, the most popular pages within the app are emergency floor plans, the campus map, and the weather.

The feedback has been clear and positive with students, faculty, and staff expressing that the app is helpful and easy to use. The ability to report safety concerns and to create your own unique emergency plan are two standout features.

“The app is for anyone on campus, but we want to know more about how students are using it,” said Scotie Selman, Director, Emergency Management and Safety Services. “We plan to have some student focus groups in the future, so we can survey students and find out how the app can be updated to support their campus experience.” Faculty and staff will be surveyed in the future as well to get direct feedback about their experience using the app and gather any suggestions for improvements.





About UNT

As one of the nation's largest universities, the University of North Texas offers 113 bachelor's, 94 master's, and 37 doctoral degree programs. By providing access, welcoming diversity, and strengthening collaborations with many educational, business, and community partners, as well as building new partnerships across the globe, UNT's faculty and staff work each day to prepare students for the challenges they will meet in our changing world.

Emergency Management and Safety Services offer a wide range of services to the UNT campus including 24/7 weather monitoring; business continuity planning; oversight of international travel risk; inspecting buildings for fire/life safety, fire code, and general safety; providing safety guidelines; creating and distributing emergency preparedness resources; coordinating drills and exercises; designing and maintaining building emergency floor plans; and providing emergency preparedness training.

About ReadyKey

ReadyKey, powered by Guidebook, empowers organizations to create beautiful feature-rich, custom mobile applications without any coding. Organizations around the globe choose ReadyKey to provide access to critical information – anytime, anywhere.

More than 100,000 organizations, including industry-leading brands such as Coca-Cola, Amazon, YouTube, Google, and Samsung, and the world's top universities, have utilized the underlying technology that powers ReadyKey.

ReadyKey was launched in 2021, aiming to significantly enhance what EHS and Compliance teams expect from their mobile solutions - with a world-class native mobile app, supported by team members on the East and West Coast of the USA, as well as in Europe and Asia.

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