



 WHITE PAPER

5 Tips for Enhanced Visitor Experience

UTILIZING DIGITAL WAYFINDING FOR
ENGAGING ON-CAMPUS VISITS



A group of five diverse young people are gathered together, smiling and looking at their smartphones. They appear to be in a casual setting, possibly a school hallway or common area. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent grey filter.

Creating a positive visitor experience on campus is a key component of the administrative health of a school, and it conveys its essential unique character.



Digital Wayfinding takes familiar mobile mapping technology and applies it to your school, creating an easy-to-use, attractive, interactive tool for your visitors.

OVERVIEW

Prospective students who have an engaging and informative on-campus visit are more likely to apply and enroll.

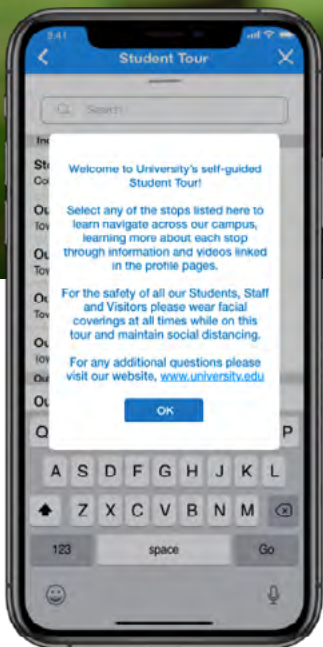
Parents unfazed by parking and navigating student housing to locate their kids, as well as alumni who enjoy returning to their alma mater for visits, events, and homecomings are more likely to donate. The movement of people through campus, and their participation in what it has to offer, adds dynamism and energy that can be felt by the entire community.

Yet despite advances in technology, campus visits have remained mostly formulaic. Guided in-person campus tours for prospective students are still done in groups of up to 30. Visitors rely on static maps, signage, or asking passersby to navigate the campus, which can be stressful and time consuming. Even as Covid-19 restrictions are eased, engaging self-guided campus tours using technology in lieu of following around a large group with a tour guide will be more appealing to many people. Need to add something about how this just doesn't work in a COVID-19 world and may not be the best approach moving forward.

Schools can leverage Digital Wayfinding technology to enhance the entire campus experience for everyone. Digital Wayfinding takes familiar mobile mapping technology and applies it to your school, creating an easy-to-use, attractive, interactive tool for your visitors. Digital Wayfinding can:

- + Allow visitors to engage with your campus at their own pace and according to their own priorities
- + Automate the display of engaging, powerful content that corresponds with the physical location of visitors
- + Reduce confusion for first-time visitors, letting them focus on qualities your campus has to offer rather than concern for locating parking or landmarks.
- + Allow administrators to easily update the app to add new attractions or route away from construction and weather-related hazards
- + Can we add something about being able to convey the personality of a school through this virtual visit or something to that effect since this is a key component to selecting a school

Following are 5 tips on how you can utilize Digital Wayfinding to enhance your Visitor Experience.



Visitors with health and safety concerns about being part of a crowd during campus tours might also appreciate the self-guided tour option.

1. Facilitate Self-guided Tours and Other Self-servicing Visits

We live in an on-demand society. We stream movies and television shows according to our schedule rather than a network's. We purchase online at our leisure rather than plan trips to the store. Yet campus tours require visitors to show up at a specific time, for a set amount of time, with the amount of time spent exploring landmarks set to a standard formula.

Digital Wayfinding can act as an interactive guide that visitors can access whenever they choose. Following a format familiar to users of directional mapping applications, a Digital Wayfinding app can empower users to explore your campus at their own pace. A suggested order of landmarks provides structure to the tour while providing more freedom of movement. Schools may even provide customized tour options for students according to their interest, such as showing academic buildings that focus on their major or fields and stadiums for prospective student athletes.

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Tours are not the only type of visit that can be enhanced through Digital Wayfinding. Alumni weekend, commencement, and sporting events all attract crowds who may be unfamiliar with what your school has to offer and the location of important landmarks. Digital Wayfinding can provide a geospatial guide for visitors without a designated path or destination.



Interactive content such as videos, images, surveys, web pages, and audio can be associated with landmarks, allowing visitors to take a deep dive into the areas that interest them most.

2. Put Your Best Foot Forward

Digital Wayfinding is more than just a navigation service. Interactive content such as videos, images, surveys, web pages, and audio can be associated with landmarks, allowing visitors to take a deep dive into the areas that interest them most. Schools are bound only by their own creativity; visitors can experience the unique spirit of your school from their mobile phone.

Utilizing digital content in a Digital Wayfinding app extends your digital investment and helps justify content creation costs. The very fact of offering a Digital Wayfinding app messages to prospective students that your institution is forward-thinking and responsive to trends in technology.

3. Keep It In the Family

Digital experience is one aspect of the visitor experience. When offering Digital Wayfinding functionality, it is important to consider how that functionality will be accessed. Two options to consider:

- + **A stand alone app:** It is important that any dedicated Digital Wayfinding app be branded with your school colors, logo, and imagery.
- + **Integration into an existing school app:** Many colleges and universities have apps dedicated to campus life. Digital Wayfinding can be incorporated into those apps for a holistic user experience.

With either option, you will need clear instructions on your website and on-campus pamphlets and signage with instruction on where and how to access your Digital Wayfinding app.





Providing an easy-to-use navigation app that fully integrates with parking recommendations and shuttle options opens your campus for efficient use and exploration.

4. Integrate with Your Transportation Infrastructure

A typical navigation app provides directions from point A to point B, with an assumption that the user is walking, driving, biking, or utilizing public transportation. However, a Digital Wayfinding app can integrate parking and shuttle infrastructure into the visitor experience.

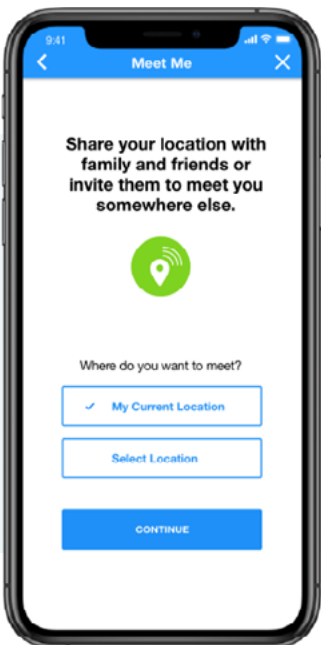
Many campuses have multiple parking options as well as strict parking restrictions. Visitors that are unfamiliar with the campus may not clearly understand the best place to park relative to their desired destination, and incurring a parking violation is an easy way to sour the visit. Digital Wayfinding can direct visitors to the best parking option for their goal. Shuttle services can also be made easy by incorporating routes, schedules and arrival times into a Digital Wayfinding app. Providing an easy-to-use navigation app that fully integrates with parking recommendations and shuttle options opens your campus for efficient use and exploration.

5. Splitting Apart and Coming Together

College is a time for independence, yet many visits involve groups of family and friends. Not everyone in a group has the same goals or prioritization; but, being in an unfamiliar setting, a person may not want to split from the group to avoid getting lost. A Digital Wayfinding app can:

- + Provide Meet Up features that share the location of an individual with a friend or family group
- + Select and communicate a meet up location

Allowing a prospect student independent time to explore a school can provide an experience more akin to what college attendance would actually feel like.



WHAT DOES YOUR VISITOR EXPERIENCE SAY ABOUT YOU?

There are many reasons why people visit your campus, but all visits should elicit a sense of the pride, joy, and accomplishment in your institution. By adding a Digital Wayfinding option to your visitor experience, you are messaging to the public that you welcome their participation in your campus life and you are doing all you can to make their visit easy, safe, and fulfilling.



Let's Talk

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