

Mission College helps students find their way with indoor Google Maps



About Mission College

Mission College is a public community college that was founded in 1976 in the heart of Silicon Valley, in Santa Clara, California. The campus sits on 160 acres and instruction for 9000 students is held in nine permanent buildings and four portable buildings.

- www.missioncollege.edu
- Santa Clara, California, US

Challenge

As is true with any school campus, the start of a new academic term means that students will have to learn their respective routes to new classes. Every term, Mission College enlists the help of volunteers for the first couple of weeks of instruction to help students find their way around campus. As an added approach, a map is printed in the Schedule of Classes and students regularly tear out the map and discard the remaining publication, resulting in a waste of thousands of dollars per term.

The medium sized campus sits on 160 acres and instruction is spread among thirteen buildings. Mission College's campus is centered around a large main building--appropriately named "Main Building"--which is three-stories and accounts for a substantial number of classrooms on campus. This building has proved to be challenging for many students to navigate. "While the room numbering system is completely logical, it is so complex that most people never figure it out. We have students texting each other on the first couple of days of school saying, 'I'm completely lost,'" says Peter Anning, the director of marketing and public relations at Mission College.

"The advantages to working with Google are that they know what they're doing. And as they are going through the world and mapping everything it makes sense to get on board."

--Peter Anning, director of marketing and public relations, Mission College.



Interior view of the Main Building. Photo by Bobak Ha'eri

"It's going to save us money, because we're not going to have to print as many maps. Any visitor, not just a student, has a greater sense of knowing where they need to go because they'll have that in their hand--that should reduce confusion considerably as people learn about [indoor Google Maps] and make use of it."

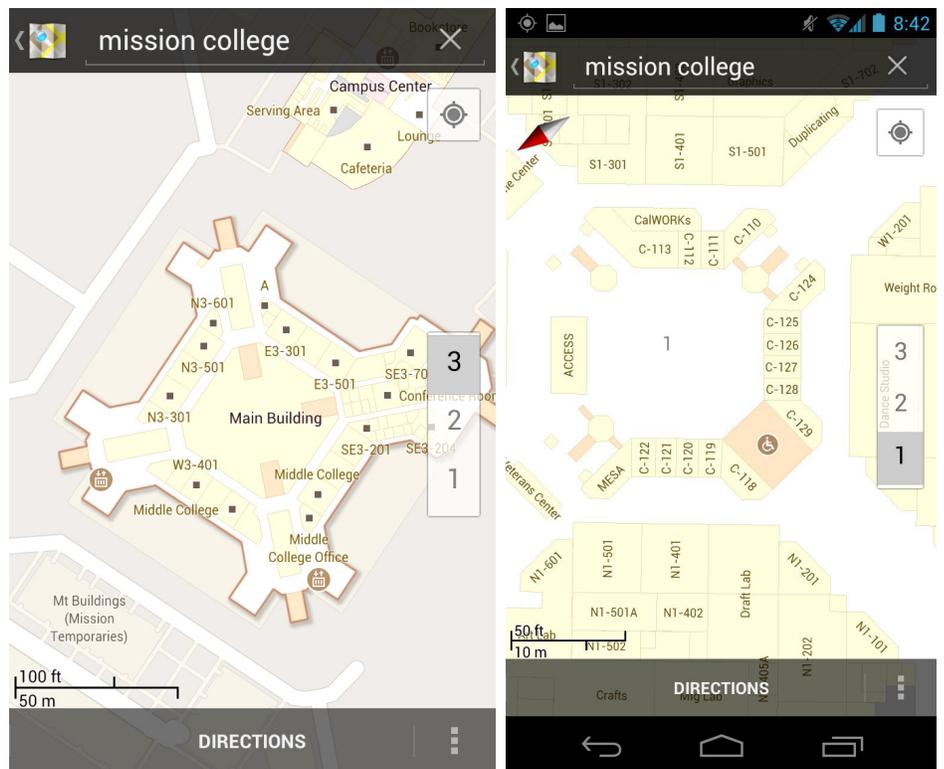
--Peter Anning, the director of marketing, and public relations, Mission College.

Solution

Mission College decided it was in their best interest to align with Google Maps to map their indoor space. By creating indoor Google Maps for their campus buildings, they could potentially reduce the budget for printing the Schedule of Classes and reallocate volunteer efforts.

There are currently ten indoor Google Maps for the campus; nine of these indoor maps are for each individual permanent building, and there is one indoor map that includes all four temporary buildings. Indoor Google Maps allows students and visitors to see the floor plans, get indoor walking directions, as well as switch between floors within a building to see the respective layouts. For a more complete indoor Google Map experience, students can opt-in to the My Location feature to turn on the "blue dot" icon to get a live reading of where they are on the map, within a few meters.

Anning states, "This gives students a level of independence. Because it adjusts in real-time to actual locations, people can always find where they are. Not only between any particular building or floor, but also within the entire campus. That will be a tremendous help not only to our students ... but it will also save us the expense of printing maps; we won't need as many, because eventually any student with a smartphone should be able to access indoor Google Maps."



Mission College's Main Building on indoor Google Maps: Zoomed out view of the third-floor(left). Zoomed in view of the first-floor(right).

