



Whitehaven Appsolutely Town App

An Introduction about the App

Buzy Bee Software Services is a local software services business based in Whitehaven. The business is ran by Keith and Trish McWhan who happen to be husband and wife. Trish was born and has spent most of her life in Whitehaven which is why they wanted to help promote the town and the surrounding towns/villages/hamlets. They wanted to provide local people, visitors and people considering moving here an easy accessible way of finding information about the area. As more and more people use mobile devices these days they wanted to create a mobile pocket guide for the town and surrounding area so funded and developed Whitehaven Appsolutely.

Whitehaven Appsolutely provides information about the town and surrounding area in a handy mobile pocket guide that works even when there is no internet connection. This is beneficial to local people, would attract more visitors to the town and encourage them to stay longer in the area plus would showcase Whitehaven to those who are considering moving to the area.

What the App does?

- The App is FREE to download and provides information about see & do, where to eat, where to stay, what's on, local charities, local history, towns, villages & hamlets around whitehaven plus so much more.
- The interactive walks on the App can be accessed without internet connection. They include points of interest along the route showing important and relevant historical landmarks to encourage people to explore Whitehaven and the surrounding area. When a user selects a landmark a pop-up window opens to show a more detailed description of the landmark including more detailed information about its history. A blue location marker is also present on the map to show where you currently are on your walk along the route. The marker updates its location as you progress. We will be adding more to this section during the year.
- We have a section for the history of Whitehaven including folklore and customs. The section has a picture gallery to add photographs with text and these have a pinch & zoom feature to see the image close up. People in our community are sending us information to include in this section and are given full credit. This section is in the early stages and we are adding to this on a regular basis.
- There is a search feature on the App so if a user is looking to find a place that has baby changing facilities or has disabled access the App will list all establishments who provide these facilities.

- Every section and listing on the App has an option for the user to add them to their favourites. This allows quick access to the users selected items without having to continually search for them in their respective section.

For example if someone was planning a night out they could look for where to grab lunch, get hair and nails done, find a musical event, book a taxi home and add these places to their favourites. All the information is in one place making it easy to find. People can plan what to do with the kids during half-term, plan a weekend shopping trip with the girls, visitors can plan activities during a weeks holiday, the list is endless.

- The App has a direct call feature and users can find location of, send a direct email, visit website and social media pages etc of people listed on the App.
- There is also a link to the latest weather in Whitehaven.

What it can do for local businesses/establishments/Charities etc

The app provides a platform for businesses/establishments/Charities etc to showcase what they do. Basic listings are free and there is an option to have an upgraded listing which are like a mini version of a website only they work without internet connection. These are free for charities/support groups/not for profit/CIC/sports/health/education and non private establishments etc. We also want to give all private businesses in our area a chance to get onto the App and see how it can benefit them so we are offering a free trial for an upgraded listing until 2020 which includes unlimited push notifications.

Every six months 15% of all revenue is given to a local Charity/support group who are registered on the App.

Our upgraded listings include the following:

- Main image
- Image gallery with a pinch and zoom option plus optional scrollable text.
- Location details, contact details including direct call, email address, website link, any social media links and add to favourites
- Text about the establishment
- Latest News Feature
- Upcoming events feature
- Menu feature where your menu can be downloaded or added as a text document.
- Services feature to show what you offer ie venue hire etc
- Products feature to show what you have ie books, clothing etc
- Opening hours

- Unlimited Push notifications

A push notification is a message that pops up on a mobile phone/tablets screen to alert a person about a variety of topics. People on the App can send out notifications to users letting them know about important information, draw attention to fund-raising events, special offers, meetings, dish of the day, discounts etc. The message is only delivered to people that have installed the App but the App doesn't need to be running for the message to be received. If the phone/tablet is not currently connected to the internet or has been switched off then the message would be delivered as soon as the phone/tablet connects or is switched on. There is a section on the portal for creating and sending these messages which can be scheduled to either be sent straight away or has the option to send at a later date.

One advantage of using a push notification is that it engages users. Many smartphone users download apps and eventually forget about them, but push technology has the potential to really engage them via real-time updates on upcoming events, latest news, and special deals etc.

On 10th June 2019 a push notification was sent out asking people to check the 'What's On' section and within just 5 minutes there were 117 people engaging with the App from all around the country including Newcastle, Whitehaven, Carlisle, Workington, Windermere, Kendal, Liverpool, Nottingham, London, Manchester, Glasgow There are even people in Istanbul and the USA using the App.

The App has a search feature so text/facilities on the listing would be picked up. Adding facilities such as conference room hire or that you are pet friendly would be picked up by the search feature.

We are also in the process of adding advertisement space on the App for local establishments and adding a translation feature which will be available soon.

Benefits to the local community?

There are many ways the App is and will benefit the local community:

- Whitehaven Appsolutely is a hub where information about the town and surrounding area is in one place.
- People in and around Whitehaven have instant access to what's on, what to see, where to go, what to do and they don't need to be connected to the internet to do this. This comes in handy especially in an area like ours where signal connections can be poor or non existent. Although social media is a good way to find information you do have to be connected to the internet and know what you are looking for. Being on the App means people can find information whenever and wherever plus an event may come through via a push notification that they didn't know was on.
- People are notified instantly about new events, latest news, latest offers and any alerts via the Apps push notification service.

- Local businesses/establishments/Charities etc can get on to the App and showcase their products/services.
- We use local businesses for anything required for the App such as flyers, pop up banner etc and will continue to do this.
- We also want to get local schools/colleges/universities and volunteers involved in sections of the App such as developing augmented reality trails and games relevant to the area plus photography, researching history, researching local wildlife etc. In the near future we want to provide work placements/apprentices with a view to employment thus helping to create more diverse employment opportunities encouraging young people to stay in the area. We want the App to be a valuable asset to the town where the community of all ages, gender, abilities are fully involved.
- By encouraging visitors to stay longer in Whitehaven the App can also encourage local economic growth as more money will be spent in the area. As people spend more time and money in the area it could help encourage local people to open businesses benefiting the whole community.

How we are promoting the App

At present all marketing materials comes out of our own pocket. Up to date we have been promoting the App via flyers, have purchased a pop up banner and have taken it to several exhibitions, use social media, contacting people directly, speaking about the App at networking events plus good old fashioned word of mouth.

Future aims of the App

Our aims are to promote the App further afield. We are looking into pricing for advertising on public transport, in national travel magazines and local TV/radio/newspapers. We want to create animated video's to promote the App as well as purchasing Beacons.

Beacons are small devices that send Bluetooth Low Energy signals (BLE) to smartphones and tablets nearby. They could be placed at various places around the town such as the train station, centre of town and by the C2C walk and would alert people that a town app for Whitehaven is available to download.

As technology expands we endeavour to ensure it constantly evolves using the latest technology and is always up to date.

In the near future we hope to have an office/unit where we can take on work placements and apprentices.

As a small business our resources are limited so we are in the process of looking for investors/sponsorship/financial grant support etc to help with the future growth of the App.

Further details about the App.

More details about the App can be found at www.whitehavenappsolutely.co.uk where

you can also download a brochure. We are currently in the process of creating a new look for both but you can still access the information via this link.

Whitehaven Appsolutely is also on Facebook and Twitter.

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