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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Problem Statement

Under current conditions, Temple University students encounter a multitude of issues in searching for off-campus housing while having no access to resources that could greatly enhance a student’s search process, tenancy, and overall student experience. Students typically seek to rent strictly based on proximity to the university’s main campus and are therefore presented with limited living space options and a high concentration of various property owners/managers. Even if a house tour is conducted, students cannot reasonably know key housing factors such as the nature of interactions with a landlord/manager, maintenance standards, outside noise, neighbors, convenience, etc. In the opinion of our organization, the most essential housing factor that Temple students have low awareness of is safety and security of a unit’s location. Without a comprehensive approach to securing student housing, the University faces the financial threat of losing money from prospective and current students who can’t find a safe and secure living situation.

1.2 Possible Outcomes

The possible outcome will provide a valuable solution for potential students that will be using the application. The application will have a one time fee for usage of $2.99. This will include all comments on housing and landlords. Ad revenues will also be brought in through partnerships with businesses that are associated on campus with Temple University.

1.3 Justification

Due to being a start-up associated with Temple, we plan to initially minimize costs and have users pay a one time fee for access to optimize profits. We plan to have a similar IT architecture that mainly includes a data library and a basic information database. We expect the largest portion of revenues to be from ad revenue and students purchasing access to our application. Our low-cost approach to this project will give us the best chance to make profits in the short term.

We expect to:

* Have 150 reviews by the end of year 1
* Reach 100 subscriptions by the end of year 1
* Take in $12,000 of ad revenue by the end of year 1
* Have 350 total reviews by the end of year 2
* Reach 2000 total app-purchases by the end of year 2
* Expand our apartments by 20% on the platform by the end of year 2

2. Team

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Role** |
| Sean Doyle | Design Manager |
| Nick Napolitan | Prototype Manager |
| Michael Blum | Project Manager |
| Steven Suender | Documentation Manager |

3. Project Overview

3.1 Project Description

We plan on providing a platform where students may review the feedbacks of past and current peers on total living experience, composite ratings on a unit’s different key housing factors, and aggregated scores for both housing units and prominent property owners/managers in the area. Our website aims to provide students with information essential to their decision making process that would otherwise be unavailable or difficult to find. Studies find that students who live in dorm housing (a more controlled environment) typically receive better grades. Temple University will help to provide a more controlled environment in an off-campus setting through this collaborative platform, forgoing costs in constructing new dorm buildings while still enabling a better performing student body that is also generally happier with their overall experience at Temple. Security being a large concern, the platform could also reduce negative publicity associated with criminal activity in vicinity of Temple’s main campus by raising awareness and reducing student exposure. Ultimately, we aim to reduce the threat to the University of losing current and future students without these services.

3.2. Goals/Objectives

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Goals** | **Description** |
| Simplify the decision making process when selecting an apartment | Previously unknown data and insights will be in one place for users to view. |
| Earn revenue | Place ads for local businesses and property management companies.  Provide services for property managers/owners for fees. |
| Allow students to compare multiple apartments | Allow students to side-by-side compare key housing factors and overall scores of up to three housing units. |
| Produce high rates of participation through incentive | Offer $10 Diamond Dollars or high-ticket item raffle for response to survey regarding housing conditions and overall student experience.  Offer $10 Diamond Dollars or high-ticket item raffle for participation in platform by leaving a review for their past or current off-campus living situations. |

3.3 Project Assumptions

The following assumptions will apply to the RateMyApartment app:

* All staff roles will remain constant throughout the project.
* The rate the students move will be bi-yearly and yearly.
* All information on the website will remain accessible.
* There will always be a demand for this platform.
* Local businesses will be inclined to advertise on our website.

3.4 Project Constraints

The following constraints will apply to the RateMyApartment app:

* There is a limited number of users to participate.
* There are areas surrounding Temple that will be out of geographic scope.
* There will not be an application offered on any application store.
* We cannot fully control response biases on the platform.
* RateMyApartment is a service exclusive to Temple University.

3.5 Milestones

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Milestone** | **Start Date/Expected Start Date** | **Date Completed/ Expected Completion Date** |
| Planning | 9/18/2018 | 9/25/2018 |
| Analysis | 9/25/2018 | 10/23/2018 |
| Design | 10/18/2018 | 11/9/2018 |
| Implementation: Construction | 10/20/2018 | 11/15/2018 |
| Implementation: Testing | 11/15/2018 | 11/22/2018 |
| Installation | 11/24/2018 | 11/30/2018 |