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For immediate release

WGTD Launches App

UW-Parkside App Factory student-faculty team designed iOS and Android versions

Fans of Gateway Technical College's WGTD public radio stations have a new way to connect. In collaboration with the App Factory at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, WGTD listeners can now download the WGTD app for Android and iOS devices. There is even a version for Apple TV.

UW-Parkside Computer Science Lecturer Tim Knautz says WGTD approached the App Factory after hearing about an app developed for Kenosha Area Transit.

"As part of rebranding our website, we wanted to give our listeners in Southeastern Wisconsin and, literally, around the world, another option for accessing the station," said David Cole, WGTD station manager. "Prior to launching the app in late January, listeners were able to access our services via the web. The app makes connecting much faster and easier."

While WGTD is available over the air at 91.1 in Kenosha; 101.7 in Elkhorn, and 103.3 in Lake Geneva, the WGTD jazz station, 24/7 Jazz HD2, was only available prior to January via the web and, in the Kenosha-Racine area, via HD radio. "The app gives everyone with a smart phone, internet connection and ear buds a chance to enjoy jazz, big band and the blues around the clock," Cole said.

Sportsweb – an internet-only station now available on the app – features primarily local high school sports.

The Gateway Radio Reading Service, designed for visually-impaired listeners who want to enjoy articles and other items from the Kenosha News and Racine Journal Times read by volunteers – had only been available via a specially equipped radio that was provided by the station. While those radios are still available on loan, the service is another feature of the WGTD app.

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For Cole, another access point to WGTD content is consumer driven. “Those who connect to us with a phone have a different expectation of the experience than those who connect with a desktop or laptop computer,” he said.

Knautz said App Factory clients often come to the student-faculty innovation center with the belief that an app will be the answer to a certain problem or challenge. “We want to better understand what they need and what they want the app to do,” Knautz said. UW-Parkside students benefit by working in partnership with external clients to develop the solution. “The App Factory employs a cross section of students,” Knautz said. “Computer science students, graphic designers, market research students all get involved.”

After meeting with a potential client, the App Factory develops a work statement that specifies the amount of time the project is expected to take, the final cost, what work will be done, and a series of deliverables at various stages of the project.

Kyle Zawacki, one of the UW-Parkside students involved in creation of the WGTD app, said the benefits go beyond the listener. Zawacki can gather data for WGTD showing the number of devices on which the app has been loaded and the number of devices that are connected at a given time. That information will help WGTD provide station underwriters with estimates of the audience size.

“The bottom line, though, is the new app allows us to better serve the public,” Cole said.

To download the WGTD app for iOS devices, visit the App Store. For Android devices visit Google Play.

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