Project or Team Name: MO Hunting Mobile Application

Nominator: Bob Ziehmer

Nominating Department: Missouri Department of Conservation

Category: Technology in Government

Executive Summary:

In late 2013, the Missouri Department of Conservation began a project to produce a mobile application that would provide hunters and anglers with a new creative technology to greatly improve their outdoor hunting and angling experience. This application would provide an ease of interaction that would be unlike any other mobile application offered by any other state. Through several meetings during the requirements gathering phase of the project, all of the requirements were documented and we began the programming effort in January 2014.

The implementation of the Conservation Department's MO Hunting mobile application presented many challenges along the way. To begin with, this was a relatively new technological endeavor for the Department's IT staff so retooling of technical expertise was needed to ensure a successful implementation. Also, this project was not originally part of the Department's portfolio of projects for the fiscal year so priorities had to be adjusted and resources were realigned to be made available. Finally, in order to allow hunters and anglers to take advantage of all the application's functionality, regulations had to be changed that would allow for a permit downloaded onto a mobile device to be used as a legal and valid permit.

By July 2014 all obstacles that stood in the way had been cleared, and the MO Hunting mobile application was successfully implemented and ready for use by hunters and anglers within the state of Missouri. Available in iOS and Android operating systems, MO Hunting provided a single tool to perform all of the necessary tasks required for hunters and anglers to enjoy many of Missouri's outdoor resources. The application provides hunters and anglers the ability to purchase certain permits directly from a mobile device and then download those permits onto a mobile device. If at any time a hunter or angler is asked to produce their permit(s) by a Conservation Agent, they can simply open the MO Hunting application, bring up the permit that is being requested, and the Conservation Agent can use the camera on their smart phone and scan the Quick Response (QR) code on their permit. They can see not only that it is a valid permit but also all of the pertinent information about the hunter or angler. The application can also be used by hunters after they harvest an animal to telecheck that harvest and receive all of their confirmation information directly onto their mobile device. In addition, it allows hunters the ability to see all of their telecheck information for the past two years right within the mobile application.

MO Hunting has been a huge success for the Department and has received a great deal of positive feedback from application users. With each season, MO Hunting sees increased usage by Missouri citizens as well as visiting hunters and anglers from outside Missouri, and we continue to look for innovative ways to make it a valuable tool for their use.

State of Missouri – 2015 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity

NOMINATION FORM

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Department: Missouri Department of Conservation

1. **Project or team name:** MO Hunting Mobile Application

2. **List the name of all team members, job titles, state agency department, and/or other organizations including public, private sector or business:** *(Please list alphabetically by last name – 2 to 20 team members maximum.)*

   1. Rob Denison - Timmons Group, Project Manager
   2. Randy Doman -- MO Department of Conservation, Protection Field Chief
   3. James Estep - Timmons Group, Mobile Developer
   4. Grant Gelly -- MO Department of Conservation, Conservation Agent
   5. Dean Harre -- MO Department of Conservation, Protection Field Chief
   6. Chris Hooe - Timmons Group, Mobile Developer
   7. Todd Houf -- MO Department of Conservation, Conservation Agent
   8. Clark Jennings - Timmons Group, Web Developer
   9. Greg Jones -- MO Department of Conservation, Permits Supervisor
   10. Joe Kirby -- MO Department of Conservation, IT Supervisor
   11. Joe Martin -- MO Department of Conservation, IT Information Management Manager
   12. Travis McLain -- MO Department of Conservation, Programs Specialist
   13. Aaron Pondrom -- MO Department of Conservation, Protection District Supervisor
   14. Jonathan Pund -- MO Department of Conservation, IT Specialist
   15. Vanessa Roberts - Timmons Group, Project Manager
   16. Vince Sunga - Timmons Group - Mobile Developer

3. **Nomination Category:** *(Check only one.)*

   ☐ INNOVATION   ☐ CUSTOMER SERVICE

   ☐ EFFICIENCY / PROCESS IMPROVEMENT   ☒ TECHNOLOGY IN GOVERNMENT

4. **Explain why you selected this category:**
The MO Hunting mobile application provides hunters and anglers with a new creative technology that greatly improves services already provided through less efficient methods. By law, anyone hunting or fishing within the state of Missouri are required to purchase hunting and fishing, deer, and turkey permits in order to enjoy these wildlife resources in Missouri. Prior to MO Hunting, this was a manual process by which a user had to either visit a vendor to purchase their permit or go online at home to purchase and then print off their permit. This application not only provides a "one stop shop" for the purchase of these permits, but also enables them to download their permit to their mobile device, telecheck their harvest, see their telecheck history, and eliminates the need to print out any of their hunting or fishing permits.

II. BACKGROUND

1. **When did the team begin its work?**
The requirements gathering and business analysis phase of the MO Hunting application began in December of 2013.

2. What date did the team initiate the implementation phase of the project?

The implementation phase of the MO Hunting application began January 27, 2014.

3. Is the project:

☐ Time Limited   ☒ Completed   ☐ Ongoing

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Why was the project necessary?

The Department wanted to make it quicker, easier, and more convenient for existing hunters and anglers to interact with the Department for permit purchases and for the checking of hunter harvests. In addition, the Department desires to attract and retain new users of Missouri's fish, forest, and wildlife resources and recognizes we must leverage the technologies that have become commonplace in our society in order to do so. Specifically, as mobile technology has evolved over the past several years more and more Missouri citizens are leveraging mobile devices such as smart phones and tablets to conduct business and assist in their daily lives. Since these devices are being relied upon by Missouri citizens, it is imperative that we engage them through mobile applications on their devices. By doing so we make services that are already available to them today easier to use and more efficient to access.

2. What were the primary goals of the project? *(150 words or less.)*

MO Hunting's four primary goals:

A. Provide hunters/anglers in Missouri the ability to purchase their hunting and fishing permits via a mobile device and view a list of their recently purchased permits.

B. Enable hunters/anglers in Missouri with the ability to download their purchased hunting and fishing permits to a mobile device and allow for these downloaded permits to be used as valid permits in the same way paper permits are currently used.

C. Provide the same process to check a deer or turkey harvest via a mobile device as opposed to the manual paper permit process currently in use. This functionality includes the notching of the downloaded electronic permit once a deer or turkey has been harvested as well as the telecheck process, all through the MO Hunting application on a mobile device.

D. Allow hunters to view their telecheck history for the past two years via a mobile device.

3. Describe the project: *(200 words or less.)*

The MO Hunting project developed a mobile application to be used by hunters/anglers when hunting or fishing in the state of Missouri. It provided hunters/anglers the ability to perform functions such as purchase and download their permits, telecheck their harvest, and view their permit and telecheck history from their mobile device.

In the past, obtaining these services would have necessitated either visiting a vendor to purchase and print their permit or purchase their permit via the internet and print it at home. Also, it would have required them to call in their harvested animal, document all confirmation information, and retain that information for possible future needs.

With the new MO Hunting application all of the previously mentioned functionality is provided through a free application on a mobile device. The permit is purchased from and then downloaded directly to the device and can be shown to a Conservation agent as a valid permit. When an animal is harvested, the telecheck process for the animal is done through the mobile device and the confirmation information is downloaded directly to the mobile device. In addition, the application provides all telecheck information for the past two years, eliminating the need to retain the paper copies as in years past.

4. **Explain how the accomplishment of the team exceeds its regular duties and responsibilities.** *(150 words or less.)*

The development of mobile applications is something that is relatively new within the Conservation Department. In order to successfully develop the MO Hunting application, employees had to learn new technologies and new methods for creating applications. All of this was done while still supporting the existing applications that the Department depends upon to conduct its business.

In addition, the deadline that the team was required to meet was extremely tight given when the application was requested and when it was required to be complete. The team was able to meet the required deadline while staying within budget while at the same time meeting the demands of previously approved projects.

5. **Which of the following describes the intended benefits of the project?** (Check all that apply and provide an explanation. - 150 words or less)

☐ Cost Reduction   ☒ Time Savings   ☐ Increased Effectiveness
☒ Improved Process   ☐ Other: Describe

Improved Process and Time Savings:
The implementation of the MO Hunting mobile application greatly simplified a manual process of purchasing hunting and fishing permits, printing them off, and then retaining them for historical purposes if the permit was used to check a harvest. Now it is simply a purchase of the permit from a mobile device, the permit downloads to the mobile device, and then is stored there for historical purposes. In addition, a harvested animal can be telechecked via the same mobile application and the hunter's telecheck history is maintained within the application.

IV. RESULTS / MEASUREMENT

1. **Explain how the success of the project was measured and what outcomes were achieved.** (Explanation should not exceed 300-500 words.)

In order to determine the success of the implementation of the MO Hunting mobile application we used three criteria. Those criteria are number of user downloads, number of users leveraging the application to telecheck their harvest, and perhaps most importantly the overall feedback from individual users as well as feedback from various technical networking groups.

Number of Downloads:
To date, there have been 11,851 downloads of the Android version of MO Hunting and 14,793 downloads of the iOS version of the application. That brings the total number of downloads to date to 26,644. This download total exceeds our expectation because to date there has been limited marketing done for the application and it has only been in existence through one deer season and the spring turkey season. If the current trend continues, we anticipate increased downloads of the application with upcoming seasons based on increased marketing that is planned.

Number of Users Leveraging the Application to Telecheck:
During the 2014 firearms season, which was the first season that MO Hunting was in existence, a total of 4,939 hunters telechecked their deer using the MO Hunting application. During the spring turkey season which has far few hunters than the fall deer season, 1,161 hunters telechecked their turkeys using the MO Hunting application. Although the number is less, it was actually an increase in the overall percentage (28.4%) of hunters using the application to telecheck their harvest. Again, we anticipate these numbers and percentages to continue to rise with upcoming seasons and increased marketing of the application.

Application Feedback:

The MO Hunting mobile application has received a tremendous amount of feedback from individual users as well as technical networking sites. Some examples of feedback gathered from users through the feedback button within the application are; "Love it, great app!" and "This application makes checking an animal easy and convenient. One great feature is the ability to see your past telechecks and the dates you previously harvested your animals."

In addition to individual feedback, it has gotten positive attention from technical networking groups as well. In late 2014, the MO Hunting application was the winner of the Innovation Award by the Organization of Fish and Wildlife Information Managers (OFWIM). Additionally, in March 2015, govloop.com named the MO Hunting application one of the 19 coolest government mobile applications.

2. Are the benefits derived from this project: (Check only one.)

☒ Recurring   ☐ One-time

3. If recurring, how will the benefits be sustained? (Explain in 150 words or less.)

Marketing of the MO Hunting application will continue through the various outreach efforts that the Department currently uses, including media releases, e-blasts, and news mentions in the Missouri Conservationist. As marketing continues, the number of Missouri citizens and visitors to Missouri leveraging the MO Hunting application will continue to increase.

V. RECOGNITION / AWARDS

1. Has this project previously been nominated for the Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity? If yes, when?

No

2. If yes, for which category was it nominated?

3. Has this project received any other awards or recognition? If yes, describe.

The MO Hunting application was the 2014 Organization of Fish and Wildlife Information Managers (OFWIM) Innovation Award winner. Additionally, in March of 2015, govloop.com named the MO Hunting application one of the 19 coolest government mobile applications https://www.govloop.com/community/blog/cool-gov-mobile-apps/.

VI. NOMINATOR'S INFORMATION

Nominating Department: Missouri Department of Conservation

Name: Bob Ziehmer

Signature: _[signature]_

Telephone Number: (573) 522-4115 x 3212

E-Mail Address: Bob.Ziehmer@mdc.mo.gov

VII. DEPARTMENT COORDINATOR'S INFORMATION

Name: Michelle Dobbins

Signature:

Telephone Number: (573) 522-4115 x3688

E-Mail Address: Michelle.Dobbins@mdc.mo.gov

VIII. DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR APPROVAL

Department Director's Name: Bob Ziehmer

Signature: _[signature]_

Nomination must be signed ONLY by the Department Director to be eligible for consideration. Nominations not signed by the Department Director will be returned to the agency coordinator.