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MANHATTAN'S HIGHEST DAILY CIRCULATION NEWSPAPER



APP WISH LIST

NYers tell us the transit downloads they want invented

PAGE 3



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NYers' dream rail apps

BY TIM HERRERA
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The MTA is among the most tech-savvy public transit agencies in the country, having held a hackathon this week to develop apps with its data, but some New Yorkers still want more.

There are dozens of smartphone and Web apps that use the vast amount of data the MTA releases, and the agency actively tries to expand that ecosystem.

But insatiable straphangers still want more, whether those apps would make commutes easier or simply more entertaining.

"The continuing enhancement of smartphone applications is helping New Yorkers travel easier via mass transit," City Council Transportation Committee chairman James Vacca said.

We caught up with some New Yorkers and asked what their dream smartphone transit app would be, and this is what they said:

● **Peter Vallone**, chair of the council's public safety committee: Vallone has pushed for a so-called "wall of shame" in subway stations, which would post photos of convicted sex offenders.

"Since they won't do that yet, I think they should have an app where you can look for convicted subway offenders, so you can look out for them," he said.

● **Amy Yakuboff**, who runs the MTA parody Twitter account @WeHateTheMTA: "Live subway times: The MTA is taking forever in installing those count-



The MTA hopes technology will improve commutes.

NANCY BORONICK

down clocks, so something that could work underground to alert us as to when a train is coming would be ideal."

● **Josh Oswald and Reed Jackson**, who run the MTA Twitter parody account @FakeMTA:

"My dream app would be a voice-changing app that makes everything you say sound like the Stand Clear of The Closing Doors Guy," Oswald said.

"It would of course have no practical use, but it would be great to walk around the city, ordering slices in that guy's voice."

Reed added: "My dream app would be something along the lines of a delay explainer: You type in the train or bus, and it gives you an explanation of why it's so late. 'A jacka — with a green messenger bag blocked the doors of the fifth car three times in succession.'"

● **Ben Widdicombe**, editor-in-chief of Gilt City: "I want an app that can reserve the seat closest to the door on an empty bench of three seats, like Open Table."

● **Cate Contino** of the Straphangers Campaign: "We want them to put new

I want an app 'showing which stations have bathrooms.'

Straphanger Peter Gallina

databases online, and the ones we're predominantly interested in are lost and found incidents that happen . . . as well as their Passenger Environment Survey [and] make their fiscal budget documents more user-friendly."

Other suggestions included new approaches to transit alerts, complaints and incidents, countdown clocks and rider opinion polls.

● **Peter Gallina**, 31, of Bushwick: I want an app "showing which stations have bathrooms."

● **Bianca Augustin**, 35, of Park Slope: "I would like the bus Real Time to be at more stops, that's usually more accurate than the time table."

● **Derek Flanzraich**, the founder and CEO of Greatist.com: "My ideal app is one that simply shares the balance on your MetroCard with a smart notification system to, you know, avoid those mornings when you get on a bus, have no money on your card, and you're blocks away from the nearest subway station kiosk."

(WITH PETE CATAPANO, ANNA SANDERS AND IVAN PEREIRA)



Oyungerel Tsedevdamba, a Mongolian official, with part of the Tyrannosaurus bataar fossil yesterday.

GETTY

Stolen dino bones will return home

The skeleton of a 70-million-year-old Tyrannosaurus came to the United States as smuggled contraband, but will return to its origins in Mongolia for its people to enjoy.

U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara and Homeland Security officials yesterday returned the dinosaur's nearly complete skeleton to Mongolia at a ceremony near the United Nations.

The Tyrannosaurus bataar, a smaller cousin

to North America's T-Rex, was looted from the Gobi Desert from 1995 to 2005, then shipped out of Mongolia illegally between 2005 and 2012, according to officials.

Mongolian officials contacted the U.S. attorney's office to halt the sale of the fossils, which drew a \$1.05-million bid at a Manhattan auction house last May.

The skeleton was forfeited to U.S. officials.

(DAN RIVOLI)

App to follow subway musicians wins the MTA's hackathon

BY TIM HERRERA
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An app for following your favorite subway musicians won the MTA's weekend-long hackathon, taking home the \$5,000 grand prize.

SubCulture.FM, which has both desktop and mobile components, took the top honors, beating out 16 other entries from teams and individuals.

The hackathon is part of the MTA's App Quest competition that will run through August. The winner will be decided through a popular vote later this year. All 17 entrants into the hackathon can enter their apps into the contest.

Here are the three winners of this weekend's hackathon:

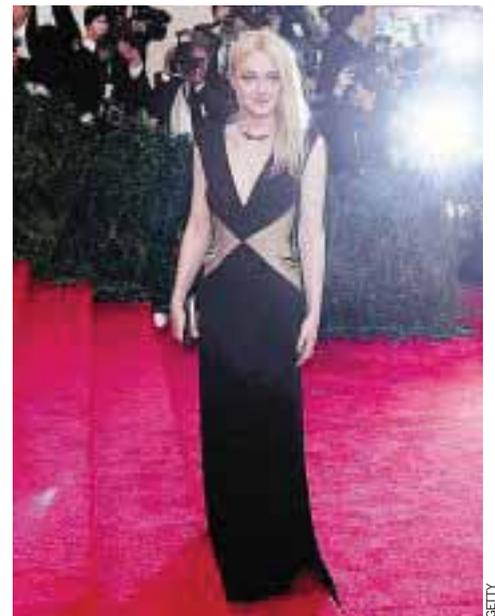
● **Grand prize** (\$5,000): **SubCulture.FM**: Subway musicians can sign up to get a

unique QR code, which straphangers can then scan and use to follow their favorite musicians. Riders can also look up the typical schedule of musicians and where they perform most, and share the music with friends.

● **Second prize** (\$3,000): **MTA Sheriff**: This smartphone app allows users to submit and view reports about current subway conditions and

concerns.

● **Third prize** (\$2,000): **Accessway**: An app designed for visually impaired and wheelchair-assisted commuters, it offers assistance for navigating the subway system by incorporating text-to-speech technology. It pulls real-time service status updates from the MTA, and gives information about stations that have elevators.



Dakota dazzles

Dakota Fanning looks stunning yesterday at the Met's Costume Institute Gala benefit in honor of the museum's "Punk: Chaos to Couture" exhibit.

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