

SHARING SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION PRACTICES THAT WORK ARRIVAL ADVISOR

PeaceGeeks Society
Vancouver, BC

Area of Practice:
Information and Orientation

A Pathways to
Prosperity Project

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**PATHWAYS TO
PROSPERITY**
Promoting Welcoming Communities in Canada



**VOIES VERS LA
PROSPÉRITÉ**
Promouvoir des communautés accueillantes au Canada

BACKGROUND ON THE ORGANIZATION AND IMPETUS FOR THE PROGRAM

PeaceGeeks Society is a tech non-profit organization that builds technology and tools to help promote peace, human rights, and humanitarian action around the world.

The number of immigrants living in Metro Vancouver has risen by 34% since 2001, reaching a total of 989,540 immigrants in 2016. At the same time, research from the Vancouver Immigration Partnership (VIP) shows that one in three immigrants do not access settlement services, mostly because they are not aware of the services available to them. Access to information has been highlighted as a major concern by every British Columbia Local Immigration Partnership (LIP).

In March 2019, PeaceGeeks launched Arrival Advisor, a free, multilingual app that helps immigrants and refugees in British Columbia to find information and services to plan their settlement journey. The goal is to provide accessible, trusted, and reliable information to newcomers in a timely manner. The need for the app has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, a time when many physical offices had to close or were only partially open.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

Name:

Arrival Advisor

Description:

Arrival Advisor is a free mobile app that helps immigrants and refugees in British Columbia to find information and services to plan their settlement journey. Importantly, Arrival Advisor provides information based on newcomers' needs. The app is currently available in eight languages including English, French, Arabic, Chinese Simplified, Chinese Traditional, Korean, Punjabi, and Tagalog. PeaceGeeks has travelled across British Columbia, providing demonstration and information sessions, and soliciting feedback from service provider organizations (SPOs) and newcomers.

Goal(s):

Arrival Advisor aims to help immigrants and refugees in British Columbia to find reliable, accurate, and up-to-date information and services so that they can plan their settlement journey.

Target Client Group(s):

The target client group consists of immigrants and refugees.

Delivery Partners:

Delivery partners include: bc211, WelcomeBC, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), Vancouver Immigration Partnership, Burnaby Intercultural Planning Table, Surrey Local Immigration Partnership, SFU International, Burnaby Family Life, Mosaic, S.U.C.C.E.S.S., ISSofBc, Immigrant Employment Council of BC, Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC (AMSSA), Programme d'immigration francophone de la Colombie-Britannique (BC Francophone Immigration Program), Pacific Immigrant Resources Society, Vancouver Association for the Survivors of Torture

(VAST), OpenDataBC, Association of Neighborhood Houses BC, City of Surrey, City of Vancouver, and AffinityBridge.

Human Resources:

Arrival Advisor was created by a lead software developer, a junior software developer, a design lead and a project manager. Also, the CEO of PeaceGeeks was responsible for project oversight and the Chief Development Officer of PeaceGeeks was responsible for fundraising.

Funding:

Arrival Advisor is funded by Google.org, Leap Pecaut Centre for Social Impact, the Province of British Columbia, Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), and individual donors.

KEY FEATURES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THIS BEING A PROMISING PRACTICE

Effective:

One of the features of Arrival Advisor that contributes to its effectiveness is that it provides information about topics and services based on newcomers' needs. In other words, it has a client-centered approach. Furthermore, Arrival Advisor is constantly updated based on user data, client feedback, and research. In particular, PeaceGeeks uses Google Analytics to track user acquisition and engagement, such as the number of active users and what topics are the most popular. In addition, PeaceGeeks collects user stories through reviews and interviews with the newcomers that use Arrival Advisor. PeaceGeeks also regularly invites newcomers and frontline workers to conduct user interviews or tests of new and existing features to discover opportunities to improve the app, understand users' pain points, and how well the new features are used.

Efficient:

Arrival Advisor is a tool that immigrants and refugees can turn to during their settlement journey to access relevant and up-to-date information on a variety of topics such as healthcare, education, and family planning. That is, with the touch of a button newcomers can easily search for the information they need. Furthermore, PeaceGeeks uses app store analytics and Google Analytics to track performance data in an efficient way (see also the description of the performance measurement and evaluation strategy below).

Relevant:

Arrival Advisor provides information about the different types of services available to newcomers based on their needs. Newcomers are able to search through different services in their area, save resources to their phone as offline data, see hours of operation/location of services, and gain information on a variety of topics.

Sustainable:

Arrival Advisor is being developed using continuous integration. There is a dedicated development team behind the application. Once a feature is released, the necessary usability research and user testing is done to make sure it addresses the needs of newcomers. PeaceGeeks conducts regular demonstration sessions to different communities, settlement organisations and universities to

increase engagement as well as marketing campaigns to acquire more users. Since the app is updated regularly, it is sustainable in the long-term. The expansion to other provinces is on the roadmap.

Transferable:

PeaceGeeks' vision for Arrival Advisor is to expand its use across Canada to help newcomers plan their settlement journey and gain access to reliable information. With the success of Arrival Advisor in British Columbia, PeaceGeeks has partnered with other local organizations, such as Manitoba 211 and Manitoba Start, to expand Arrival Advisor into other provinces. PeaceGeeks hopes to continue this expansion, which would not be possible without the help and collaboration of local partner organizations.

Innovative and Forward Thinking:

Arrival Advisor is a resource that provides trustworthy and reliable information to newcomers in a timely manner. Within the touch of a button, newcomers can search and locate services in their area and gain information on a variety of topics. This feature has been especially relevant during the pandemic, a time when many offices have been closed or only partially open. Also, the app relies heavily on user feedback from newcomers and frontline workers that is regularly integrated into the app. In this way, Arrival Advisor is able to quickly adapt to the needs of newcomers and the sector.

Differs in Definable Ways from Other Similar Practices:

Arrival Advisor is a unique application. The only similar apps that PeaceGeeks is aware of are 'Welcome to Alberta' and 'Arrive'. A difference between these apps and Arrival Advisor is that Arrival Advisor is based in British Columbia, and utilizes the B.C. Newcomers guide and bc211 data in order to constantly keep the information up-to-date. Another difference is that Arrival Advisor is available in more (eight) languages.

High Client Uptake:

Arrival Advisor is available on Google Play and the Apple App stores for free. It is recommended to newcomers by settlement organizations and their settlement workers as well as the Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs).

High Client Retention:

Given that the goal of Arrival Advisor is to help newcomers to find information and services to plan their settlement journey, it is expected that the necessity of the app decreases over time as newcomers gain more knowledge and feel more comfortable in their new home.

Strong Evidence of Successful Outcomes:

Arrival Advisor has a high uptake of users and engagement from newcomers, SPOs and the settlement sector. Since its launch in March 2019, the user base of Arrival Advisor has constantly been increasing, reaching 7900 newcomers. Also, since March 2019, Arrival Advisor has had more than 9,600 impressions (as of March 2021), which means that newcomers are using the app to learn more about settlement practices. Overall data include 20,320 sessions and 217,371 screen views. Furthermore, reviews and interviews with newcomers and SPOs show great support for the app. The app has also received strong interest for expansion in additional provinces.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION STRATEGY

PeaceGeeks uses information from different sources to determine if Arrival Advisor is growing and successful. It uses Google Analytics to track user acquisition and engagement, such as the number of active users, the topics that are the most popular and the number of pages users access on a daily basis. It also tracks the conversion rate, that is, the percentage of views of the app on the App store that result in a first-time download. PeaceGeeks also relies on marketing campaigns to track the level of outreach, who the users are and where they are coming from. In addition, PeaceGeeks conducts regular research with newcomers, settlement workers, and other individuals in the sector to assess the usability and the performance of the Arrival Advisor app. These assessments help define the necessary changes in the app. As the settlement sector changes, the needs of clients may change as well, which can shift the program's intended outcomes. The goal is to keep clients' needs at the forefront and to ensure that Arrival Advisor provides reliable and accurate information to help newcomers.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

PeaceGeeks Website

<https://peacegeeks.org/>

Arrival Advisor Website

<https://peacegeeks.org/arrival-advisor>

PeaceGeeks Social Media

<https://www.facebook.com/peacegeeks>

<https://twitter.com/peacegeeks>

<https://www.instagram.com/peacegeeks>