Tutor Matching Service

What is it?

Tutor Matching Service is a Facebook application which connects tutors with those needing tutoring. It is available to any student with a Facebook account. TMS simplifies the process of finding smart, reliable and capable tutors by letting students use Facebook to 'try before you buy' and see tutors' ratings, videos and other important information. The communication between the student and tutor happens within facebook.

Useful Features

- Students can search for tutors by specific class, subject area, or name
- Students can pay online with a credit card. Parents can buy tutoring packages which students can use throughout the year.
- 100% refund guarantee – so risk free for students to try
- Tutors can set their own pay rate per hour, hours of availability.
- Tutors do not need to collect money after session is over.
- TMS collects a small administrative fee (.25 per session) to pay for the transaction support.

Why use it?

To supplement the services offered by the Tutoring Center. The Tutoring Center does not have the resources to tutor in every subject area, or to be open long enough to meet a wide range of schedules. Will provide additional part-time jobs for students. Will impact retention as more students receive more help outside the classroom and pass their classes.

Who is behind this?

TMS was started by the University of Florida, and as demand has increased, they decided to spin off to a separate business (highlighted in the chronicle of higher ed), and also to make it available to other schools. Participating universities include: Kent State University, Indiana University, University of Central Florida, Snead State Community College.

Possible Concerns

- Location of Tutoring? We can give tutors recommendations on approved locations (i.e. not in their dorm rooms).
- What about Pedophiles? Tutors must pass a screening process by TMS, and although they may slip through, the program is self-monitoring (like E-Bay). The good tutors will rise to the surface and the bad tutors will stop getting business.
- What about community members or high school kids using this service? There is a strong demand for tutoring in the community and in high schools. We should not discourage them from taking advantage of this service. Possible outreach opportunities. Already happening on Craigslist. Could help establish order by channeling tutoring requests through this service.
Students at U. of Florida Use Facebook to Find Tutors

By Mary Helen Miller

At the University of Florida, a Facebook application lets students be choosy when looking for tutors.

The application, Tutor Matching Service, lets students search for tutors by subject, class, or tutor name. They can see ratings and comments on tutors, when tutors are available, and how much they charge. Tutors can also post pictures and videos of themselves.

A little more than a year ago, the student-government president at the time created the application with Group Interactive Networks, a technology company, to supplement the university’s on-campus tutoring center. Though the center offers free tutoring to students, it has limited hours, does not have tutors for every class, and offers no information on the quality of tutors.

More than 120 students have registered as tutors on the application, and when class is in session, 50 to 100 hours of tutoring are arranged through it each week. While all the tutors attend the University of Florida, customers include students from the university, a nearby community college, and local high schools.

Tutors set their own rates, from anywhere between $0 and $50 per hour.

"That $0 is really important because students can volunteer if they like" or tutor for free to "get their feet wet," said Rajiv Asnani, a rising senior at the university and a developer and director of Tutor Matching Service.

Tutees pre-pay online with credit cards, and Tutor Matching Service takes 5 percent of charges and mails checks to the tutors. Parents may also purchase credit for a student to use throughout the semester.

Only the University of Florida offers the application, but it is open for business to anyone. Mr. Asnani said that the University of Central Florida would offer the service soon, and several other large universities have expressed serious interest. A college must pay an annual fee of $250 for the application. Mr. Asnani said that while the University of Florida allowed any student to register as a tutor, colleges would have the option to screen tutors if they like.