App created by Zendesk for Tech Lab aids homeless

By Jonathan Newman

Zendesk has created a mobile app for homeless and the low income to find shelter, food, medical care, a shower and public access to computers — 234 services in all, from multiplexes like Glide’s food, rehab and housing programs to a weekly food pantry for Tenderloin residents administered by Korean American Senior Service. The app even gives them distance and directions how to get to what they need from wherever they are in the city.

And they don’t need an iPhone. Any under-$50 smartphone will do.

The app — Link-SF — connects more people to more help than ever. It could even increase the cost-effectiveness of resources like shelters because the app tells which location has how many beds available, achieving a more even distribution of services. People can know where they can get a bed without trudging from place to place and to find out ahead of time how to register and apply for wait lists.

The success of the app — 2,700 site visits each month and growing — is seen in the increasing demand for St. Anthony Foundation’s Tech Lab services. Last year, 100 people a day visited the lab — 60,000 visits — and that number is expected to reach 50,000 this year, according to Jessie Brieler, the Foundation’s communications associate.

Along with increased visits, the lab is seeing changes in how people access the Internet.

The Tech Lab surveyed clients in 2011 and learned a third used a smartphone, tablet or other handheld device. Two years later, informal lab surveys pegged client hand-held use at nearly 45%, which Zendesk employees volunteering as lab tutors confirmed.

St. Anthony’s recognized that with such changes, its clients would benefit from having city agencies, nonprofits and charities’ human services online in one all-inclusive site.

Zendesk engineers stepped up. They could build a Website to do that, they said, but better yet, why not also make it mobile-friendly — an app — so people could access service information directly from their hand-helds? If the need is critical and the resources potentially life-saving, access shouldn’t be limited only to the hours when publicly owned computers are available.

Before tackling the mobile app, Zendesk software engineers, led by Kenshiro Nakagawa, canvassed the Metro PCS store at Mason and Market streets to check out the neighborhood’s hottest-selling hand-helds, not the most sophisticated and expensive.

The engineers worked a year to create the app’s underpinnings — the open source code — so that it would work with most new smartphones, the basic under-$50 models that lack elaborate bells and whistles but still provide Web access.

The opulence of The Market that opened this year in the Twitter building affords a stark contrast to the city-subsidized revamping of the Tenderloin’s newest model corner store, Daldas, at Eddy and Taylor streets, now offering a modest array of fresh fruit and veggies.

An annual budget of $60,000 to fund the program, Gloria Chan of the Mayor’s Office of Economic and Workforce Development said her department finances physical renovations with “up to $15,000” for the effort on any given store. DPH handles admin and expert consultations, the Coalition community outreach.

So the incentive to bring those mangos, ginger, tomatoes, apples, bananas, cucumbers, tomatoes, potatoes, lemons, onions, garlic, peppers, lettuce, grapes and the occasional watermelon to the front of Daldas’ busy li-
Zendesk creates mobile app, Link-SF, for homeless services

Have lemons? Make lemonade. But here’s the twist: July 25, noon to 4 p.m., the Homestead restaurant in a stylish Oakland neighborhood held a pop-up sale of $2 lemonades, iced teas and Arnold Palmers (a combo of the two) and $5 strawberry shortcakes, then donated all proceeds to the Tenderloin Safe Passage program. “The lemonade stand was a hit — people were loving it,” says Liz Sassen, who owns the Piedmont Avenue restaurant with husband Fred and plans to host more events for Bay Area nonprofits. “We made $500, and it also raised awareness about the program.” Piedmont Avenue and the TJuThe unlikeable pairing isn’t much of a stretch: Kate Robinson, Safe Passage program director, lives near the Homestead and a close friend who used to work there introduced her to the Sassen. Better yet, from 2005-09 Liz Sassen lived at Turk and Larkin, then Leavenworth off O’Farrell, while attending culinary school and then working at Farallon restaurant at Post and Powell. “The Tenderloin was always an interesting place to live,” she says. “I loved that I could get anywhere easily and I was so close to work. I’d walk from Union Square every night to my apartment and we saw such an array of people: busines models, living situations, demographics and cultures. It was amazing but often heartbreaking.” Remembering neighbors with two school-aged children and her concern about their safety made the lemonade charity event a no-brainer, she said. “I was intrigued by Safe Passage’s success — perhaps a similar idea could be applied in Oakland’s more notorious neighborhoods.”

BOEDEKER PARK

Since its opening in December after its $9.3 million renovation, the 30-year-old park continues as THEgoto place — for kids’ summer activities, all ages playing days in the celebration in the Tenderloin. Magic in the Park coming this fall, a mural in the works for the park facing Windsor Hotel and much more. Park users now also have bragging rights about its visual beauty: It was one of two city parks honored with the prestigious American Institute of Architecture San Francisco’s 2015 design award. “This new landmark park and clubhouse,” said the ADA press release, “serves as a model of civic engagement, inspiration, resource conservation and adaptability.” Rec & Park collaborated with the Trust for Public Land in Boedeker’s transformation. “We believe every person deserves a quality, safe park to play within 10 minutes of where they live, no matter what neighborhood they live in,” said Will Rogers, Trust for Public Land president. “We design parks hand-in-hand with the community and city council members for the parks for the people.”

Sprint Tribute, Nokia X3-02 and BlackBerry Passport, then donated all proceeds to San Francisco, CA 94102

On 11th Street, John, 45 and homeless, pounces on Digiland tablet searching for Link-SF, the Zendesk-designed mobile app that connects people to social services citywide.

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Daldas is the second Tenderloin store to get public help converting to healthy fare. Right, an employee at The Market pauses over the store's cider display.

Harper's Right, an employee at The Market pauses over the store's cider display. "Friendly place" in Arabic.

The store, staffed by him and his wife and two a.m., seven days a week, Satwinder Multani says that crime isn't much of a issue for him, and that he can usually shame the occasional shoplifter with reminders that his is a community store and should be treated respectfully.

Multani says that crime isn't much of an issue for him, and that he can usually shame the occasional shoplifter with reminders that his is a community store and should be treated respectfully.

There's a butcher, then as TL Community Benefit District executive director from 2006 to mid-2014, and, for the last year, as executive director of Safe Passage. She helped found Safe Passage in 2008 and narrated the all-volunteer operation until it finally got funding for staff in 2014. At the end of August, Illinois native Hilliard heads back to a Chicago suburb with her husband and toddler daughter. Her successor hasn't been named.

"The richness and depth of my time here with you all will make this transition very difficult for me," Hilliard wrote colleagues in a July email announcing her departure. "You've taught me a great deal about compassion, tenacity, collaboration, love and celebration. I am so grateful for the work we've done together.

Good luck, Dina.

Dina Hilliard shares a spot with Humboldtian "in key legislation for the day as a corner captain."

The jobs pay San Francisco's minimum wage, except for one or two line cooks or lead line cook spots, where the pay ranges from $15-$17 per hour, according to OED, D. Data.

That might be enough for them to afford The Market's grass-fed ground beef at $5.99 a pound or one of its pound-size mangsos at $1.49 each — they cost 50¢ more at Daldas — but maybe not the organic tomatoes that run up to $5.49 per pound.

The Market, whose owners plan to open two more such stores in the city next year, is of a scale and location to be the neighborhood's longest-for super-market. But it's not.

The city's meager subsidy of the Tenderloin corner stores' transformation to healthier fare may, according to other City Hall policy on the TL/tech interface, Twitter and related businesses mov- ing into mid-Market got a tax break worth tens of millions. If the bottom line is your target, Mayor Lee and Supervisor Kim hit a bull's-eye and the Tenderloin way of life is simply collateral damage.

Tenderloin stores have no fresh produce for sale, although all but eight, mainly the halal markets, carried alcohol and ciga- rettes.

The Coalition arose out of commu- nity frustrations over the inability to attract a full-scale supermarket into the neighborhood despite years of ad- vocacy, and the survey work sprang from the Vietnamese Youth Develop- ment Center's interest in documenting the prevalence of tobacco retailers in the hood. The Coalition began working with TL merchants to provide what the mayor's office touts as the "site of what the mayor's office touts as the top opening opulent Dirty Water bar, is the rest of The Market opens dai- ly at 8 a.m. and closes at 10 p.m.

Visit your neighborhood market, said its Website. Read the absence of park- ing makes the store inherently locally oriented, Trierweiler said.

A survey conducted by the Tender- loin Healthy Corner Store Coalition in 2015 found that the majority of the TL's corner stores had no fresh produce for sale, although all but eight, mainly the halal markets, carried alcohol and ciga- rettes.

"Friendly place" in Arabic.

The store, staffed by him and his wife and two a.m., seven days a week, Satwinder Multani says that crime isn't much of an issue for him, and that he can usually shame the occasional shoplifter with reminders that his is a community store and should be treated respectfully.

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Dina Hilliard shares a spot with Humboldtian "in key legislation for the day as a corner captain."

"Anything for the community," says Satwinder "Bill" Multani, the always smiling, turbaned owner, who bought the place eight years ago.

A "friendly place" in Arabic.

"Friendly place" in Arabic.

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Good luck, Dina.
That's not the answer
that's the perennial question

By Joan Bowers

DO NOT ACT CHRISTINA Angelico, artistic director and San Francisco Fringe Festival codirector, to predict the highlights of this year’s Fringe Festival, which opens Sept. 11. She’s only guessing, same as she has since the festival’s inception, 24 years ago.

The fun part for Christina is studying the synopses of the 35 productions to be staged to discern which will be the biggest hits. She’s got the want to catch that performance first.

There’s always one that teases my imagination. Always one in particular that I’m really looking forward to it.

Which raises two questions 1) How can it be that the Fringe Festival’s head honcho has no more idea what to expect than the author of this story? And 2) When she finally does decide which shows look most promising, is she ever disappointed?

Angelico mentions a local theater artist who has made a career of finding the Fringe Festival because of this “life” perception. Which she finds diabolical. “I mean, we all know what we like. You like clowns, we’ve got clowns. Serious introspection, we’ve got that. Magicians, yes. Musical shows, you name it.”

“Do you decide which genre appeals to you and take it from there?”

“Fringe as well.

“We all know what we like, You like clowns, we’ve got that, Magicians, yes, Musical shows. You name it. So you decide which genre appeals to you and take it from there.”

Christina Angelico
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, SAN FRANCISCO FRINGE FESTIVAL

“Tell me what’s up”

Fringe is born in 1947, in Edinburgh, Scotland. Today, the Edinburgh International Arts Festival in the world, “a claim hard to dispute, considering that last year’s Fringe was attended by 11,000 who committed to setting up their tents, stringing tons of instruments and gear, doing soundchecks, setting up the bilions and laying out the smacks so when it’s time to go home, the musicians can concentrate on just that without distractions.

Likewise S.F. Fringe. “We try to create a setting where all the companies have to do is perform — well, that and they need to be able to set up their shows in 15 minutes and take them down in 15 minutes. That’s mandatory so we can keep a tight schedule.”

Fringe gives all performers to the performances. 100% of the box office. The organization offers this by pursuing arts grants and donations, plus income from S.F. Teatro Productions.

It’s all about the Fringe performers, not about us,” says Christina with a smile. “We’re glad to help because we’re passionate about theater and we’re just here to support the artists, but the writers, the musicians, the artists, that’s the whole audience.

Fringe is just one of Angelico’s responsibilities. She’s been EBT’s artistic director since founding the company with Managing Director Richard Livingston in 1983. Fourteen years ago she created Fringe, an offshoot to support female theater artists who’ve accomplished a lot on their own, and Fringe gave it a place to shine.

Fringe as well.
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*(4th Thursday) 3rd Thursday of each month 4:00-7:00pm

- 4:00-4:15 Registration and administrative
- 4:15-6:30 Content
- 6:30-7:00 Networking with Tech Companies and each other

Visit our website or go to http://bit.ly/1HFbkXQ for more information.

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- Wix
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- Twitter
- Vertical Response
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### October Pay Processing & Inventory
- Square
- Bento

### November Small Business in the Cloud
- Google for Small Business
- Office 360
- Drop Box
- Evernote

### January Accounting
- Xero
- QuickBook

### February Building Customers
- Yelp
- Salesforce
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### March Access to Capital
- Kiva
- Indie Go Go
- Urban Solutions

### April Closing Ceremony
- Urban Solutions

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HERMAN DUNBAR  Well-remembered

The gathering was small, the sense of loss large at the memorial service July 2 for Canon Kop resident Herman Dunbar who died in his room five days before. He was 70.

“We’ve got him in a lot, a social worker said, fighting tears. She described Mr. Dunbar as “a very sweet, nice guy,” and recalled him laughing and joking at morning coffee. He was just “a very nice person,” she said. “He looked great on Fri- day.”

“I was holding his hand as he took his last breath,” neighbor Sandra Bacon told The Extra afterward as she scrolled through her iPad, calling up photos of the man she’d taken trips and gone to ballgames with, watched TV, sang together and teared each other as they passed out. “When he died he had some good old days,” she said.

“Death,” another friend said, “comes like a thief in the night. You don’t even expect him, he just shows up on your bed. Either that or it shows up with bright lights. Next day, bam! I hope I go like that.

“He called me the guardian angel,” said a friend, who called her “Lucy,” Bacon said. We used to just go back and forth. We were opposite. He liked different music. I’d put on gospel and he’d put on the blues. And he was a scholar, so intelligent, al-

ways teaching me. I loved it. Last night I actually phoned him. She told the gathering how she’d long tried to get him to church, and was grateful that he finally accomplished her two weeks before his death. Anoth-

er Canon Kop resident interrupted say-

ing he’d never seen them argue.

“Oh quit playing, we argued every day!” Bacon said.

“It was always fun to say hi to Her-
man because he was so crazy. I don’t mean crazy, I just mean funny,” said a woman who arrived late and left early.

“I couldn’t stop crying when I heard,” said Tammy, who called Mr. Dunbar his oldest friend. “I’ve known him ever since I was 21. I’m 68 now. You do the math. We’ve known each other and all every day,” and was “very intelligent.”

Mr. Dunbar died 50 years to the day after he enlisted in the Air Force. Bacon pointed out, as she passed his military ID card around the room, along with her iPad showing a video of Mr. Dunbar in his room and stills of him in the Warriors T-shirt she’d bought him.

Mr. Dunbar had served in Vietnam, Bacon said, arriving at Travis Air Force Base from Arkansas to begin a four-year enlistment. “After he got out, he never wanted to go back,” Bacon said. “I was gone when he got home — fami-

ly creed,” she said; “but I can’t find it in my heart to do that.” She was planning another me-

morial service.

“We’re not really ever finished,” Rev. Kathryn Benton said, concluding the service by reading a “Joy and Sorrow” poem from Kahil Gibran’s “The Prophet.” It described how those emotions are ir-

rested. The depth of one’s grief is pro-

portional to the joy that preceded it, she said, and joy runs as high as the sorrow was low.

Bacon lingered as the gathering dis-

persed and softly broke into song, sing-

ing snippets of the “Little Heart of Mine” and “He Touched Me” — Mark Health.

THOMAS ‘TOMMY’ GALIATA A good neighbor

I remember going home with a partner after Tommy took his first place in the 100-yard dash at the track meet at our university. I knew then that he was a gifted athlete.

When I had his funeral, I knew that I would be able to make a difference in his life. I stayed in touch with him and his family until the end.

“TOMMY” GALIATA A good neighbor

And in the end, when he was so sick, I’d bring him smoothies. He was a good friend to me, and I’ll miss him.”

— Maryje Cusick

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cial in creating future versions of Link-SF; Trotter said.

Of Link-SF’s 2,700 visitors a month, nearly 25% are from outside San Franci-

cos, according to Trotter. More than 350 are repeat. Last January’s biennial count pegged the city’s homeless population at 6,066.

St. Anthony’s is finding that the cost to maintain Link-SF and conduct scheduled updates on its own is still significantly higher than the agency’s goal. Julie Berlin, the Lab’s manager, handles the site’s up-

grades and corrections, often brought to her attention by site users and St. Anthon-

y staff as well as the service providers themselves. She credits Zendesk with building an “extremely user-friendly data-

tabase update platform.

We can tell our clients now: Zendesk is a remarkable, constant partner I know I can call on them, if problems arise.” Berlin said.

According to Trotter, Zendesk engineers who developed Link-SF meet weekly and they’ll step in, if technical glitches pop up or that St. Anthony’s can’t handle.

HAP is updating its resource manual every two years, according to

TENDERLOIN TECH LAB turns to technology

Julie Rosenthal, director of services at the city’s Justice & Diversity Center, which oversees HAP. When major over-

haul of Link-SF is needed, St. Anthony’s will have to return to the Zendesk ex-

perts to build a bigger, faster and more com-

plete site and to make access to the information available for a new wave of hand-helds and computers.

“We’ve seen what’s possible to achieve, what can happen when people work together,” Robillard said. “When the next generation of new equipment comes into wider use, we’ll be inviting our tech partners to help us again.”

Aside from the mechanical aspects of equipment and the need for compat-

ible portals and platforms, Berlin notes the larger question lies in how society recognizes and uses tech-based responses to poverty.

“I go to community meetings and I tout Link-SF. Berlin said. “It is the default opening Website on all the Lab’s com-

puters and prominently mentioned in our Lab’s Brochure Case managers and service providers need to be aware of how the site can help people and how it can market their services. In the fu-

ture, as we all get more tech-savvy, site naviga-

tion will be more sophisticated and open referral networks and individ-

ual portals will be answering people’s needs.”
COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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If you’re being treated for a mental disorder, voluntarily or involuntarily, you have the same legal rights and needs and advocating for your legal rights.

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John 19: Contemporary News Media
CRN 76162 T R 9:40 - 10:55 AM HBC 205 Graham
76881 W 6:30 - 9:00 PM Mission / Rm 217 Graham

John 21: News Writing and Reporting
CRN 76162 M W F 10:10 - 11:00 AM HBC 203 Gonzales
76882 T R 9:40 - 10:55 AM HBC 205 Gonzales

John 22: Feature Writing
CRN 72111 R 6:30 - 9:00 PM Mission / Rm 217 Rochmis

John 23: Electronic Copy Editing
CRN 76415 W 6:30 - 9:00 PM Mission / Rm 217 Rochmis

John 24: Newspaper Laboratory
CRN 76882 M W F 12:10 - 1:30 PM BNGL 815 Gonzales

John 26: Fundamentals of Public Relations
CRN 74608 T R 11:10 - 12:25 PM HBC 205 Graham

John 29: Magazine Editing & Production
CRN 76530 T 6:30 - 8:20 PM Mission / Rm 217 Lifland

John 31: Internship Experience or Arranged
CRN 72312 T 6:30 - 9:00 PM Mission / Rm 217 Rochmis

John 35: Internet Journalism
CRN 76416 T 6:30 - 9:00 PM Mission / Rm 217 Rochmis

John 36: Advanced Reporting
CRN 75002 M 6:30 - 9:00 PM Mission / Rm 217 Rochmis

Late Start Classes
CRN 37: Intro to Photomontage
76416 T 6:30 - 9:00 PM Mission / Rm 217 Rochmis

Questions? Call Juan Gonzales at 415-239-3446
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