

**Client:** SUNY Oswego and the surrounding community

**Project Title:** Tap In

**Duration:** 8 weeks in 2016 (Feb 7th, 2016 – April 2nd, 2016); further development planned.

**Team Members:**

**Design Mentor:** Paul Mazzucca

**Faculty Sponsors:** Jamie Adams, Michael Lotito

**Community Outreach:** Brielle Jodeit, Peterly Jean Baptiste

**Social Media Outreach:** Emily Hinckley, Nick Ransbury

**Principals/Creative Direction:** Thomas Pickett, Lydia Thayer

**Additional Team Members:** Alex Monachino

**Project Brief:**

The Office of Sustainability is a student group on the SUNY Oswego Campus that is dedicated to making SUNY Oswego a more livable and sustainable campus by integrating sustainability into the campus community by continuously developing, promoting, and sharing best practices.

Every year, the average college student throws out approximately 167 disposable plastic water bottles. This doesn't seem like much, but multiply that by approximately 8200 faculty, staff, and students at SUNY Oswego and you get over 1.35 million bottles per year. That doesn't even include soda bottles, energy drinks, or bottled juices. To break that down further, that's the equivalent of 696 barrels of crude oil, or enough to fill the average car over 1200 times with regular unleaded gas. With a renewed focus, we aimed to eliminate this source of waste.

**Tap In** was conceived to address the issue by informing the college community about the scale of the problem and offer a solution that included their empowerment and participation. With an interdisciplinary team of designers, sustainability advocates, and community outreach specialists, we decided to partner with Cupanion and their "Fill It Forward" campaign to not only better engage with the student community, but to utilize the analytics infrastructure they have set up with their Cupanion Rewards app.

**Research:**

Our team administered a brief survey of 62 SUNY Oswego students that was conducted to assess its reception level and determine the best implementation process. Over 75% had a positive response to the program, citing it as a good alternative to other poorly designed, expensive bottles that didn't provide the tangible, positive feedback that the combination of a custom unit and instant data that the proposed system would.

**Challenges:**

Distribution and student involvement were our two biggest challenges. We purchased 2500 custom plastic sports bottles and 1000 individual bar code stickers from Cupanion to provide to students. To solve both the engagement and distribution challenges simultaneously, a plan was developed to actively handout the bottles & stickers one-on-one every week at tabling events, department visits, and student programming functions in the residence halls.

To further increase awareness and involvement among students, our social media outreach team sent updates via Facebook and Instagram as well as our our campus digital signage system and traditional e-mail. We gained further recognition through the university newspaper and e-magazine. Handing out things for free was easy but to keep participants engaged, we needed to go a step further. Commitment to download the app and use the bottle was garnered by asking each recipient to sign a "pledge" that was individually created from repurposed printer cover pages (next year's waste reduction target!) and a hand-stamped woodblock **Tap In** graphic; all were put on display and covered the campus' Office Of Sustainability wall - all 60 feet of it - for everyone to see.

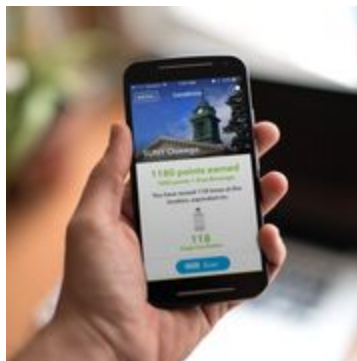


## Design Solution:

**Tap In** was initiated to reduce plastic waste, give students the tools to affect positive change in the campus culture, and lay the foundation for it to become a seamless and integral behavior in future years. In partnering with Cupanion and their usage analytics, we were able provide students with either a high quality, otherwise more expensive **reusable** plastic bottle for free, or a scannable sticker for their own bottle (to reward those already using non-disposables). A key educational component was integrated within each bottle's graphics design to inform students about the positive impact of their choice to use it.

To ensure good data for our analytics and to encourage students to download and use the smartphone app to scan the bottles whenever they refilled, weekly prizes were awarded to random users and those who achieved 100 scans.

To participate and register a refill, the student need only open the app on their phone and aim their camera at the barcode on the provided bottle (or sticker on their own bottle). In alignment with the campaign, our Fill Scan Win graphic was installed within the app to better unify the project



## Effectiveness:

As of the writing of this case study, the SUNY Oswego Campus community has saved over **21,500** disposable water bottles from being wasted throughout the eight week campaign (started 2/7/2016; ending 4/2/2016) with an average scan rate of **over 2,500 per week**. The success has already led to additional funding for new bottle filling stations and another round of promotion that will include a bottle for every new student in the fall and expanded outreach activities; all carrying the graphic identity of the program.

The campaign has increased awareness and visibility of the Office of Sustainability considerably. It is now a destination for students who were always interested in environmental and social justice issues but were not sure where to go to get involved. With the aid of the campaign, students are now empowered to address and fix sustainable issues around campus and the community.