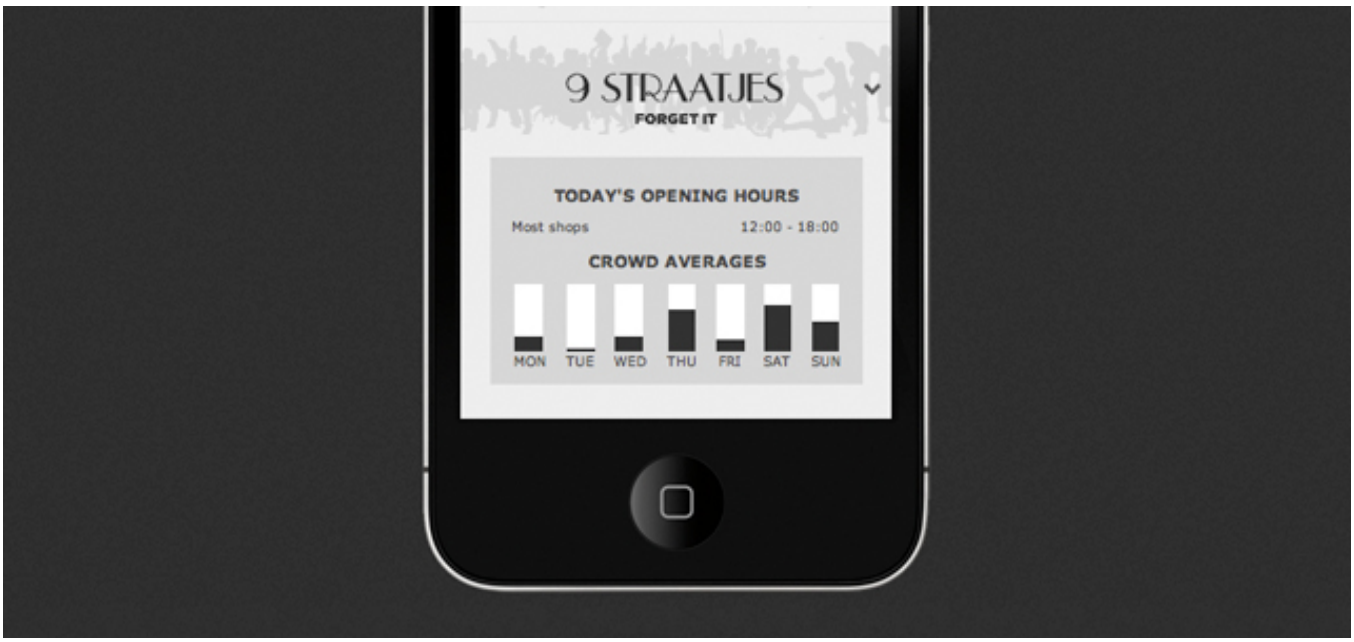
App uses social media to determine how crowded shops are in real-time



In a world where an increasing number of people are posting real-time updates about what they're doing through their smartphones, it's no wonder we've seen apps harnessing this data to provide a bigger picture. We recently saw Moovit enable commuters to determine accurate arrival times and levels of commuter crowding, and now Avoid The Shopping Crowds is advising consumers whether they should avoid certain retail stores based on the number of shoppers.

Useful for busy periods, such as weekends or festive seasons, the app currently offers data for four stores in the Netherlands – Centrum, 9 Straatjes, Zuid and ArenA. By analyzing social media check-ins, photo uploads, location-based tweets and live webcam activity, the developers are able to display accurate information regarding how crowded each store is, in real-time. Users can easily see for themselves how busy the locations are with a simple bar graph detailing the average crowdedness on each day of the week, although the app also gives advice such as 'Forget it' if queues are likely. They, the creative agency behind the app, hopes to develop similar utilities for museums, the beach and ski resorts in the near future. The following video explains more about how the app works:

How else can the constant stream of social media data be leveraged for more useful solutions?

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