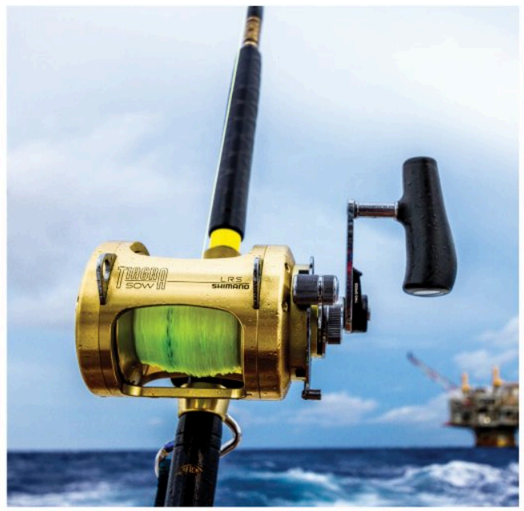
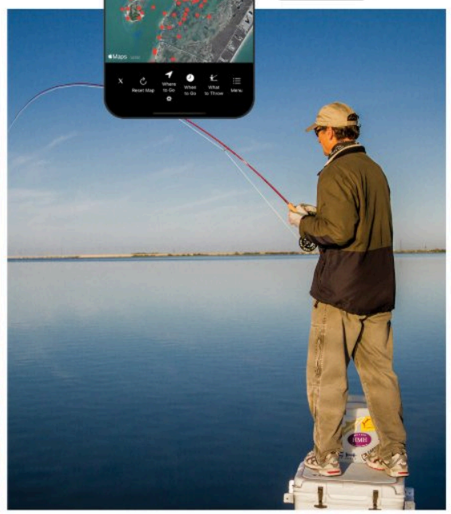
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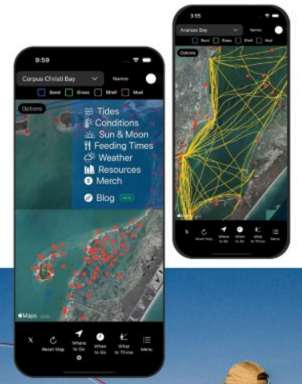
A Rockport programmer's 361 Fishing app uses data to point anglers in the right direction

By Mark Travis Photos courtesy of Visit Corpus Christi









In the age of dating apps and social media, it's frighteningly easy for our phones, packed with the power to connect us to every corner of the world, to make us feel isolated. This modern paradox suggests that we have been asking technology to solve the wrong problems. What if, instead of looking for singles in your area, you could use your phone to find a hover of trout or a school of redfish? Why yearn for matrimony when you can search for mackerel?

Regardless of one's romantic status, ask any angler, and they might tell you that discovering the perfect fishing spot is a tougher task than finding true love. Dave Moore, a lifelong software engineer based in Rockport, is doing his best to assist fishers who have too often returned home with an empty bucket (or one full of unused bait, a different kind of failed pick-up line). In developing the 361 Fishing app, which provides users with fishing "hotspots" based on real-time data, Moore is offering guidance for anyone seeking a match on the mercurial waters of the Coastal Bend.

Moore's passion for saltwater fishing is relatively recent. Growing up in North Carolina, fishing for him meant sitting on a pier in Myrtle Beach and not catching anything. But in 2016, after he and his wife Kelly had relocated to the Coastal Bend, Moore went on a guided fishing trip around Rockport, where an introduction to angling's coalescence of art and science reeled him in.

"When you are sitting out on the water, you feel so connected with nature," Moore said. "And then you learn about artificial lures, angling on the fly. There's no limit to the different things you can do. It's just a whole different world. I was hooked."

Download the 361 Fishing App from the Apple App Store for just $5.

There was only one problem: Pinpointing the confluence of variables that determined whether a particular day or location was apt for angling proved an even greater challenge than getting a fish on the line. Water temperature, wind direction, feeding times, moon phases, rain forecast, high and low tides, bathymetry and so on. "I was looking at all the factors and thinking, 'Even Stephen Hawking couldn't figure this out,'" Moore said.

Luckily, Moore had made a career constructing lucid worlds out of granular data. While working for the video game behemoth Electronic Arts, Moore helped develop triple-A titles like "Star Wars: The Old Republic" and "Mass Effect," grandiose open-world role-playing games set across fictional galaxies. With 361 Fishing, he has shifted his gaze from the stars to the sea, his focus from his imagination to his backyard. A marriage between his professional proficiencies and burgeoning passion. "That's the beauty of the project," Moore said. "There's a fulfillment I get from connecting it all."

The result is a user-friendly application that takes myriad data points from a vast array of official sources, feeds them through a proprietary algorithm and provides anglers with a list of suggested fishing locations. The app is highly customizable, allowing users to adjust which factors are most important to them (e.g., target species), while also offering anecdotal advice from local experts on more intuitive elements, such as which bait is most effective at the time.

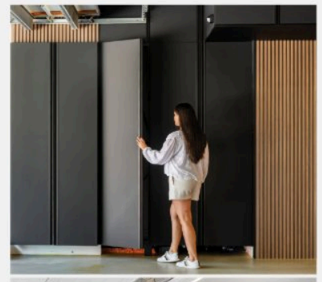
The 361 Fishing App costs $5 to download from the Apple App Store, and a $5 monthly subscription will provide ad-free access and tailored recommendations. As the name suggests, the app covers much of the coastline within the 361 area code, from the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge down to Corpus Christi Bay.

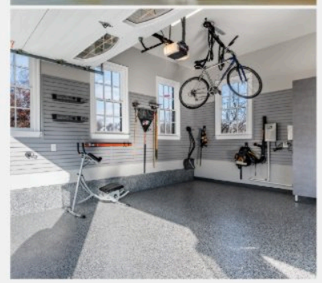
As it turns out, there are plenty of fish in the sea. You just need to know where to hook.

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361fishing.com

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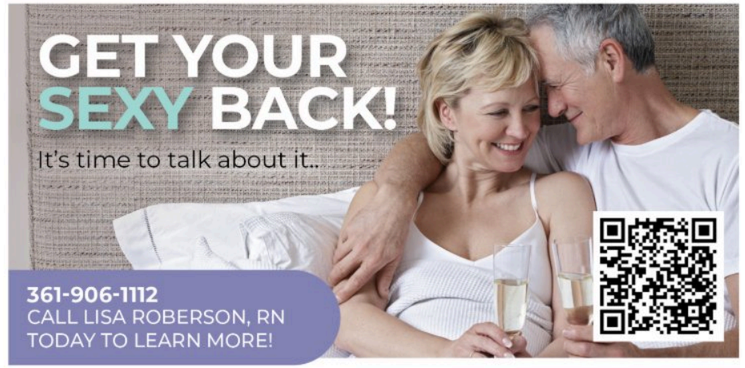
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