ONLINE ACTIVISM, TECH LESSONS

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SPRING 2014 WICS LIGHTNING TALK
BACKGROUND

• July 2013: $66 million budget cut passed by NC General Assembly
  • Next year another 5% cut across UNC is expected (but outside the scope of this talk)

• NCSU Libraries slated to receive $1.3 million cut as a result
  • $750,000 approx. in Journal cuts
  • Loss of overnight hours to libraries (i.e., no 24 hour service)
BACKGROUND - HISTORY

• In 2001: $125 million in cuts
  • 500 sat-in at midnight when they were cutting 24 hour service
  • Those students marched to the Chancellor’s residence that same night
  • That same Spring, 5,000 students marched to the Capital to protest

• Can we do this today?
ONLINE AWARENESS

• Educate

• Gather Anecdotes

• Show Care

• Provide an outlet / “Petition”
CHOICES & COMPUTER SCIENCE SIDE OF THINGS

• Decisions:
  • Do we require a sign-in? Do we require ANYTHING?

• Simplicity vs Dense Information?
  • I.e., MOBILE FRIENDLY?
AND THEN, LESSON #1

• Where... did this come from?
**TIMELINE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>GA Cuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>Spr Break</td>
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<td>Mar 20</td>
<td>LAUNCH</td>
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Due to budget cuts, NCSU is considering permanently shutting down night time access to Hunt Library--as soon as the end of Spring 2014.

Your support can ensure that we keep our new state of the art library.
WEBSITE LEAKED EARLY

• Lesson #1 thus: Be prepared to launch ASAP. Take advantage of a situation.

• Lesson #2 came the same day....

We got attacked. Twice! Our first day...

Lesson #2: React: Be prepared to evolve.
Lesson #3: You Can’t Do It Yourself

- Lesson #3: Automate as much as possible, as quick as possible.
  - Ps: isn’t that why we invented computers?

- Identifying uniqueness without a sign-in
  - Remember: we did NOT want a CAPTCHA.
  - IP addresses (not foolproof)
  - Cookies (not foolproof)
  - False information given to attackers (*Makes them fools!*)

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Total: 5889
Last Hour: 0 (excluding bans)
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<th>IP</th>
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<th>Ban</th>
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redacted for web release
TIMELINE

July
GA Cuts

Oct

Jan
Spr Break

Mar 20
LAUNCH

March 27

April 2

Students petition to prevent cuts to Hunt Library’s hours

Due to budget cuts, NCSU is considering permanently shutting down right of access to Hunt Library as well by end of Spring 2014.

Hunt Library’s hours, N.C. Lit Fest and class struggle

James B. Hunt Jr., Library is the scene of some interesting happenings these days. This weekend, it will host the North Carolina Literary Festival. The theme of this year’s conference is “The Future of Reading.” Along with engaging with traditional forms of reading and literature, the festival will also “explore the new, often technology-based ways readers are encountering, experiencing and interacting with literature.”

On the festival’s website, Hunt Library has been described as having “generated international attention for its stunning modern architecture, its ubiquitous technologies and its many simulation and large-scale visualization rooms.” The library is meant to be a centerpiece of the festival by “inspiring conversations about the future of reading and reading-based technologies.”

Ironically, these same days, on entering this lauded library, one can see a donation box reading “Help Support Hunt.” A student campaign (www.savehunlibrary.com) is currently underway to prevent Hunt Library’s hours from being cut, due to the $1.3 million (5 percent) budget cuts this year to the NCSU Libraries. As of March 27, more than 300 students, equivalent to about 16 percent of N.C. State’s entire student body, had signed the petition to
STUDENT SUPPORT

• Thousands of visits per day.

• Unique student support:
  • March 20: Launch
  • March 25: An entire 10% of the entire student population.
  • March 27: 16% of the entire student population.

• Lesson #3: “Ballot stuffers will stuff.”
  • Who knows why...
POLITICAL REACTIONS

• March 31: University Graduate Student Association Passes Resolution

• April 2: Student Senate Unanimously Passes Resolution

• April 4: Faculty Senate concurs, drafts Council Resolution (vote forthcoming)
CONCLUSION

• One site brought awareness to an entire university, in a few days time.
  • (vs. 9 months of inaction before this campaign)

• Only old people read the paper. Sadly. --- BUT, swift, targeted social media works.

• Running a campaign without “signing in” is possible, but techy tricks are a MUST.

• Did we help save the Journals and Library hours? We’ll see soon...