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Face(book)ing the Facts: A Librarian's Guide to Surviving Facebook

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Face(book)ing the Facts: A Librarian's Guide to Surviving Facebook

VLA Annual Conference
Thursday, October 29, 2009

Bettina Peacemaker
John Glover
VCU Libraries

Virginia Commonwealth University

- Large, urban public research institution
- 32,000+ students
- 18,000+ faculty, staff, administrators
- 15 schools and one college
- Maintains institutional presence on Facebook
- Some departments and programs maintain Facebook presences

VCU Libraries

- 200,000+ patrons per month at James Branch Cabell Library
- 6,400+ average daily visitors to VCU Libraries' website in the last year



Research and Instructional Services

- Staff Cabell Library Research and Reference Desk, answering directional, technology, and research questions
- Staff workshops, outreach events
- Teach information literacy sessions
- Provide personalized research consultations
- Serve VCU students, staff, faculty, and community members

Subject Librarians

- Serve as liaisons to specific schools, departments, and programs
- Develop and maintain subject-area skills
- Assess, meet, and anticipate “our” patrons’ needs



Myths of Facebook

Myth #1

Facebook is mad, bad, and dangerous to know!

- “Your information will get stolen!”
- “That’s for stalkers!”
- “Someone will hack your account!”

Myth #2

Patrons, especially young ones, don't want you on Facebook.

- “Facebook is for kids, not adults!”
- “They don’t want us in their social space, in person or online!”
- “You don’t walk up to patrons at the mall and harass them, do you?”

Myth #3

Facebook is not useful for library work.

- “All that stuff is just quizzes, photos, and wasting time!”
- “Official announcements can’t go there. Not everyone’s on it!”
- “Facebook doesn’t help fulfill any of the library’s goals.”

Myth #4

Facebook is not worth the effort.






- “We don’t have time for this!”
- “There’s no guarantee patrons will use it!”
- “MySpace, Facebook, Twitter – I just can’t keep up with every new thing that comes along!”

**Facebook is NOT mad, bad,
and dangerous to know!**

Social Networks Defined

- A **social network** is a social structure made of individuals (or organizations) called "nodes," which are tied (connected) by one or more specific types of interdependency, such as friendship, kinship, financial exchange, dislike, sexual relationships, or relationships of beliefs, knowledge or prestige.
 - Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_network)
- A **social network service** focuses on building online communities of people who share interests and/or activities, or who are interested in exploring the interests and activities of others.
 - Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_network_service)

Social Networking Sites (SNS)

- One third (35 percent) of American adults have a SNS profile. (Pew Internet Project, Dec. 2009)
 - 75 percent of online adults 18-24
 - 57 percent of online adults 25-34
- Examples include  
  
- Themed SNS -- hobby-specific, family-specific sites, and profession-specific sites

Facebook, a short history

- Launched February 2004
 - College students
 - Over 5.5 million active users by December 2005 (<http://www.facebook.com/press/info.php?statistics>)
- Expanded registration to include anyone with an e-mail address September 2006
 - Over 12 million active users by December 2006 (<http://www.facebook.com/press/info.php?statistics>)

Facebook, the phenomena

- One the top ranked sites on the Web
 - Ranked #2, only surpassed by Google (Alexa)
 - Over 4 million unique views a day (Mintel/Alexa December 2008)
- 300 million active users (September 2009)
 - 50 percent of active users log in everyday
 - 35 years and older is the fastest growing demographic
- Are you on Facebook?



Facebook, the basics

- The Profile (Status updates, Wall, Photos/Videos)
- Making “Friends”
- Groups, Pages (“fans”)
- News feed
- Other tools: chat, e-mail, events
- Applications (quizzes, etc.)

The screenshot shows the Facebook News Feed interface. At the top is a blue navigation bar with the Facebook logo and links for Home, Profile, Friends, and Inbox (with a notification badge). The user's name, John Glover, is on the right. Below the navigation bar is a left sidebar with a 'News Feed' button and links to Richmond, VA, AUG, Status Updates, Photos, and Links. The main content area is titled 'News Feed' with a 'View Live Feed' link. It features a text input field for a status update. Below this are several posts: 1. Gail Carriger's post about Selkies with a link to a blog. 2. Christine Woodman's text post about writing prompts. 3. Ken Irwin's text post about a daikon popsicle. 4. Em Hurford's text post about wacky flavors. 5. Brian Cuocci's text post about seeing a doctor. 6. Kate Ervin's text post. 7. Angie Frederickson's text post about Gym Starz. 8. Kellye Ingraham's text post about Gym Starz. Each post includes a profile picture, the user's name, the text of the post, the time it was posted, and links to comment or like. There are also 'Write a comment...' input fields for some posts.

facebook Home Profile Friends Inbox 1 John Glover

News Feed View Live Feed

What's on your mind?

Gail Carriger Top Five Reasons Selkies are Hotter than Vampires
<http://bit.ly/5ghM>
4 hours ago · Comment · Like

Rachel Young likes this.

Write a comment...

Christine Woodman is writing from the easiest prompt. Yes, I know and I am disappointed in me as well.
57 minutes ago · Comment · Like

Ken Irwin has a daikon popsicle
22 minutes ago · Comment · Like

Em Hurford Wow, they'll try all kinds of wacky flavors on a test market, won't they? :p
10 minutes ago

Brian Cuocci That sounds serious! You'd better see a doctor right away, especially if it lasted for more than 4 hours.
3 minutes ago

Kate Ervin umm...no.
3 minutes ago

Write a comment...

Angie Frederickson is getting ready for a fun morning at Gym Starz with Zack.
4 hours ago · Comment · Like

Kellye Ingraham We need Gym Starz!!!
4 hours ago

Angie Frederickson It was fun!
about an hour ago

Write a comment...

**SOME patrons, especially
young ones, DO want
you on Facebook.**

Yes, No, and Maybe

- Growing dissatisfaction with e-mail? (Carnevale, 2006)
 - E-mail losing ground with teens (Pew Internet Project, 2009)
- Facebook use is primarily social (Pempek, Yermolayeva, & Calvert, 2009)
- 67 percent of respondents use SNS to discuss school and professors, but not necessarily to communicate directly with them (Chu & Meulemanis, 2008).
 - 89 students (California State University San Marcos)
- Authority figures were generally seen as intruders, but a majority of survey participant did express willingness to communicate with librarians through Facebook (Bietila, Bloechl, & Edwards).
 - 105 students (The George Washington University)

Yes, No, and Maybe

- 23 percent of respondents said “yes” or “maybe” when asked if they would be interested in contacting a librarian via Facebook or MySpace. (Chapman, 2007)
 - 330 students (University of Michigan)
- 17.2 percent of students would “friend” the library, and 57.7 percent would accept the library as a “friend” (Connell, 2009).
 - 42.6 percent would be receptive to communication from the library (36 percent wouldn’t mind, but wouldn’t pay attention)
 - 336 students (Valparaiso University)

**Facebook CAN be useful
for librarians, if they have
goals that match
Facebook's capabilities.**

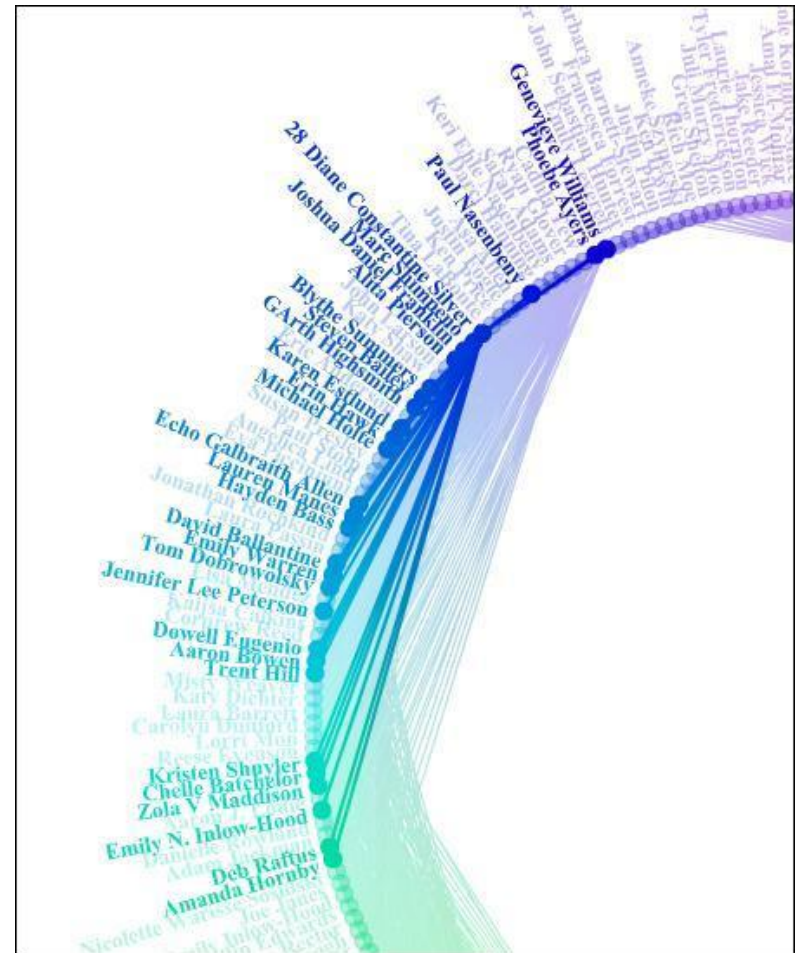
Outreach to Patrons

- Not everything gets seen on Facebook.
- Patron outreach by phone, mail, e-mail, or in person also has limitations.



Outreach to Patrons

- Social networks composed of nodes and connections
- People with more connections than others
- Gatekeepers online and in person



Profile vs. Group vs. Page

- Different aspects of Facebook are useful for different things.
- What kind of interaction do you want?

Profile-only

- Highly personal
- Can fade in trail of updates
- Less official
- Already there

Groups

- Interactive, with discussion boards, etc.
- Members must join
- Allows pushing content
- Creates “community”
- Ignorable



Pages

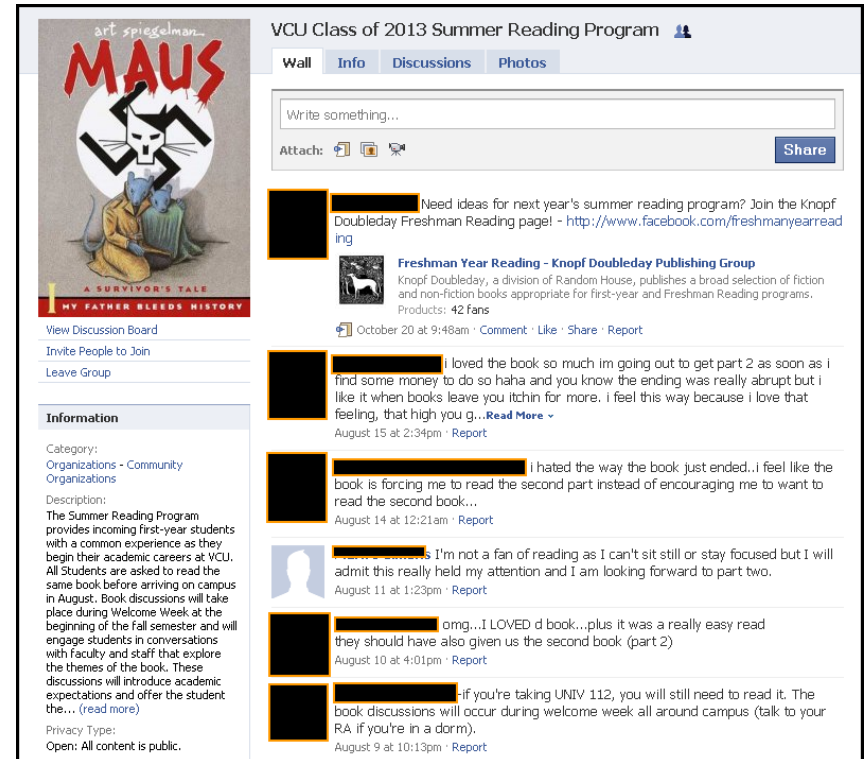
- Pushing information
- Easy to “become a Fan”
- Less information sharing by users

Friends, Facebook Etiquette, and the Real World

- Friends, Facebook Friends, and “friending”
 - Lapachet and Rubin, 2009
- What do you share with friends? In which settings?
- Etiquette is nuanced and evolving

Book Clubs




- VCU Summer Reading
- Facebook Application
 - <http://bit.ly/42jjOe>
 - *School Library Journal*, June 2009





VCU Class of 2013 Summer Reading Program


Wall Info Discussions Photos


Write something...

Attach:    [Share](#)


 Need ideas for next year's summer reading program? Join the Knopf Doubleday Freshman Reading page! - <http://www.facebook.com/freshmanyearreading>

 **Freshman Year Reading - Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group**
Knopf Doubleday, a division of Random House, publishes a broad selection of fiction and non-fiction books appropriate for first-year and Freshman Reading programs.
Products: 42 fans


 October 20 at 9:48am · [Comment](#) · [Like](#) · [Share](#) · [Report](#)

 I loved the book so much im going out to get part 2 as soon as i find some money to do so haha and you know the ending was really abrupt but i like it when books leave you itchin for more. i feel this way because i love that feeling, that high you g...[Read More](#)


August 15 at 2:34pm · [Report](#)

 I hated the way the book just ended..i feel like the book is forcing me to read the second part instead of encouraging me to want to read the second book...


August 14 at 12:21am · [Report](#)

 I'm not a fan of reading as I can't sit still or stay focused but I will admit this really held my attention and I am looking forward to part two.

August 11 at 1:23pm · [Report](#)

 omg...I LOVED d book...plus it was a really easy read they should have also given us the second book (part 2)

August 10 at 4:01pm · [Report](#)

 if you're taking UNIV 112, you will still need to read it. The book discussions will occur during welcome week all around campus (talk to your RA if you're in a dorm).

August 9 at 10:13pm · [Report](#)

Information

Category:
Organizations · Community Organizations

Description:
The Summer Reading Program provides incoming first-year students with a common experience as they begin their academic careers at VCU. All Students are asked to read the same book before arriving on campus in August. Book discussions will take place during Welcome Week at the beginning of the fall semester and will engage students in conversations with faculty and staff that explore the themes of the book. These discussions will introduce academic expectations and offer the student the... ([read more](#))

Privacy Type:
Open: All content is public.

Organizing & Promoting Events

- Cut & paste or cross-post events
 - VCU events
 - VCU Libraries events
 - Liaison program or department events

Library Applications

- JSTOR
- WorldCat
- Library-specific apps
- ...but do patrons use them?

Would Socrates Approve?

- Not designed for instruction
 - Facebook ≠ BlackBoard, WebCT, etc.
- ...but instruction-related uses
 - Office hours (Li and Pitts, Columbus State)
 - Advising (Esposito, VCU)
 - Connection & familiarization (Esposito, etc.)



Polls and Quizzes

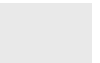
- Ubiquitous throughout Facebook
- Untapped potential?
 - Surveys
 - Marketing
 - Micro-tutorials

Official Facebook Presence

- Basic library pages ubiquitous
- VCU Libraries
 - Modest following
 - Communication breakthroughs with campus stakeholders

Security

- Common sense with private data
- Facebook ≠ Facebook applications
- Applications require special attention
 - E.g. Facebook user faces in advertisements, July 2009
- Incendiary Comments
 - Moderation or free-for-all?

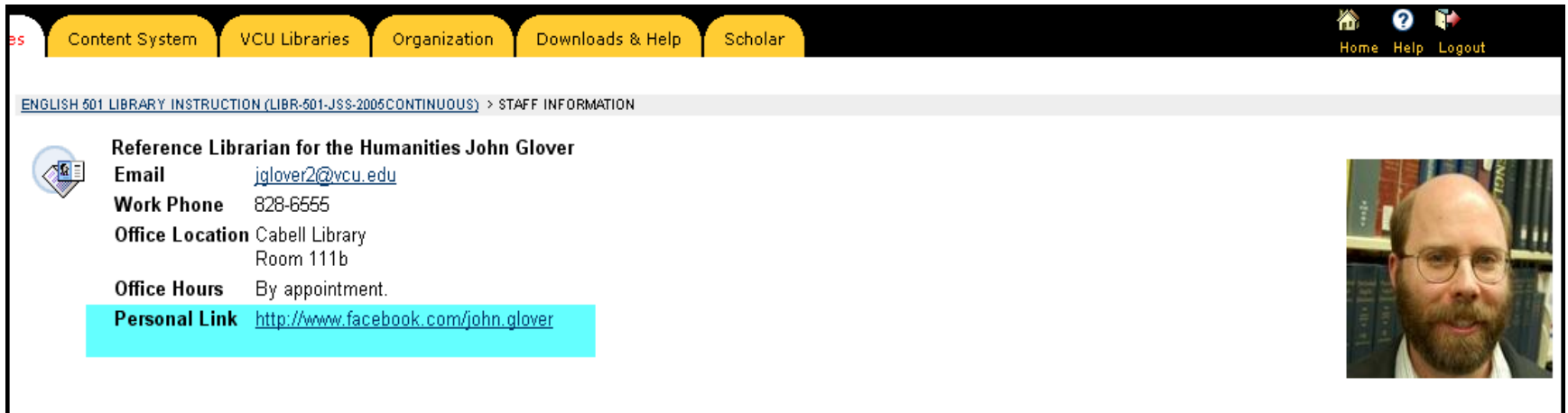


Stability

- Constant change
 - October 23, 2009: news feed
- Who owns your Facebook account, content, or material you post there?
 - Images: Facebook vs. Flickr vs. self-hosted

Promotion


- People have to be able to find you.
 - Connect profile/group to your library and/or to parent institution
 - Connect to colleagues
 - Link outside of Facebook



The screenshot shows a library website with a navigation bar at the top containing links: Content System, VCU Libraries, Organization, Downloads & Help, and Scholar. On the right side of the navigation bar are icons for Home, Help, and Logout. Below the navigation bar is a breadcrumb trail: ENGLISH 501 LIBRARY INSTRUCTION (LIBR-501-JSS-2005CONTINUOUS) > STAFF INFORMATION. The main content area displays information for John Glover, the Reference Librarian for the Humanities. To the left of the text is a small icon of a book with a magnifying glass. The information includes: Email (jglover2@vcu.edu), Work Phone (828-6555), Office Location (Cabell Library Room 111b), Office Hours (By appointment), and a Personal Link (<http://www.facebook.com/john.glover>) highlighted in a light blue box. To the right of the text is a headshot of John Glover, a man with a beard and glasses, standing in front of bookshelves.

es Content System VCU Libraries Organization Downloads & Help Scholar Home Help Logout

ENGLISH 501 LIBRARY INSTRUCTION (LIBR-501-JSS-2005CONTINUOUS) > STAFF INFORMATION

 **Reference Librarian for the Humanities John Glover**


Email jglover2@vcu.edu

Work Phone 828-6555

Office Location Cabell Library
Room 111b

Office Hours By appointment.

Personal Link <http://www.facebook.com/john.glover>



**Facebook CAN be
worth the effort!**

Why it was worth our effort

- Unexpected results
 - Faculty/Staff
 - Inter-library communication
 - Professional development
- Network effect—“friends of friends”, comfort level, “People you may know”
- E-mail overlap
- Preparing for the future

Any Questions?

Presentation:

www.people.vcu.edu/~bjpeacemaker/facebook/presentation

Handout:

www.people.vcu.edu/~bjpeacemaker/facebook/handout

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