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Completely Optional: Rethinking Synchronous Graduate Workshops as Asynchronous YouTube Videos

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Completely Optional: Rethinking Synchronous Graduate Workshops as Asynchronous YouTube Videos

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https://guides.library.vcu.edu/engineeryourlibrary

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Context

- Pre-pandemic, moderately successful "Lunch with Your Librarian" workshop series at the College of Engineering
    - 50-minute session, including time for introductions, lunch, group discussion
- Low attendance at online workshops when campus was 100% online during height of COVID-19
- Continued low attendance as on-campus activities restarted, regardless of whether workshops were in-person or online
- University interest in developing more online degree programs [1]
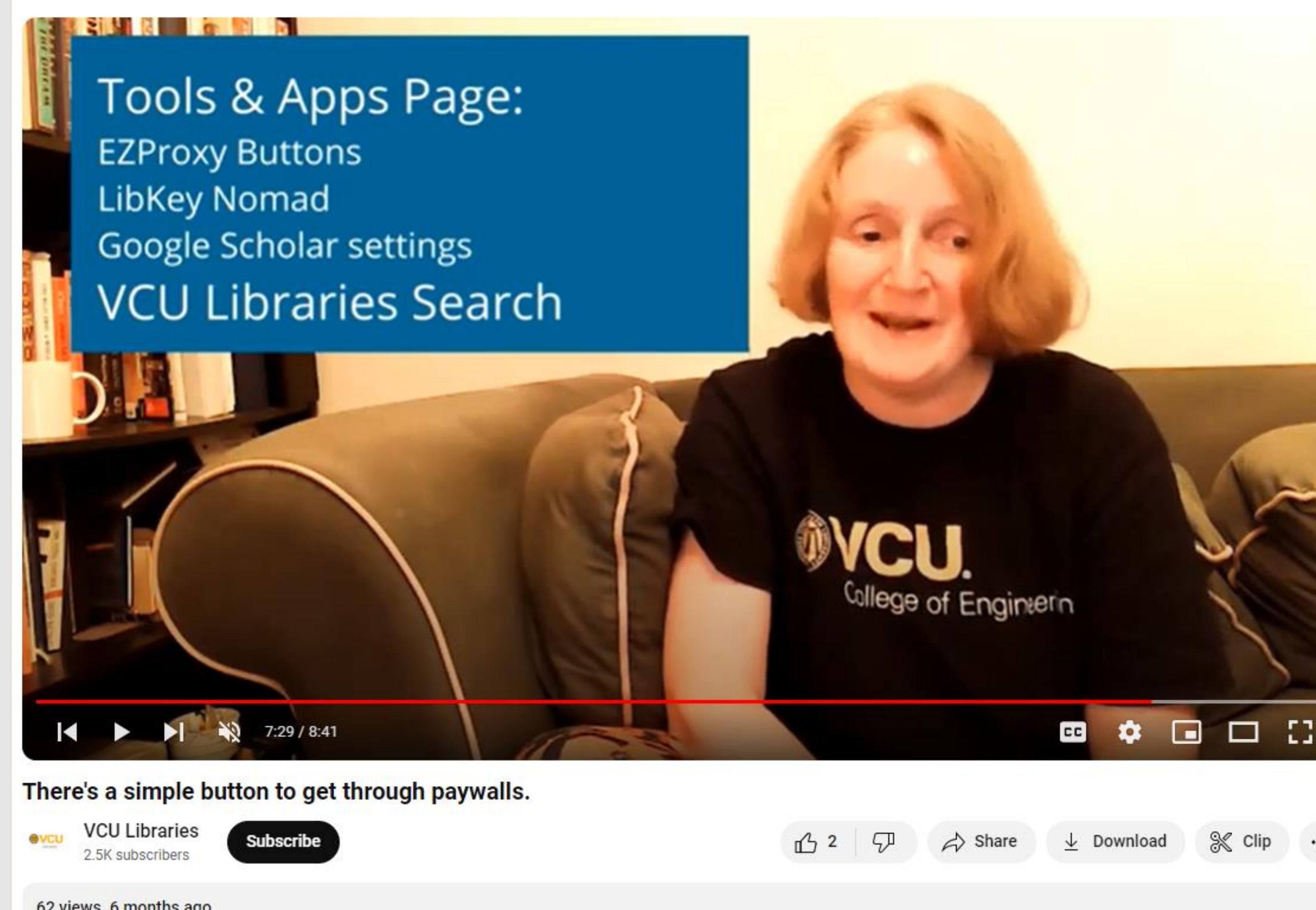- Pivot to asynchronous videos

Sources of Information

- Survey of engineering graduate students on which library topics would interest them
- Watching the "best" educational videos [2] to observe how they do it
    - When am I bored?
- Reading articles about library videos
- Talking with colleagues
- Meeting with Cabell Library Student Advisory Council (CLSAC) for in-depth information from students

But…

- Small response rate from engineering graduate survey, so helpful information but not firm guidance
- CLSAC is almost all undergraduates across majors, heavy library users

Engineer Your Library Videos

Tools & Apps Page:
EZProxy Buttons
LibKey Nomad
Google Scholar settings
VCU Libraries Search

There's a simple button to get through paywalls.

VCU Libraries
2.5K subscribers

62 views 6 months ago

Suggestions Used

Video Production and Distribution

- Produce popular topics first
- Script before filming
- Include a human face and personality in the videos
- Use YouTube playlist for easy sharing [3]
- Have catchy, "clickbait" titles
- Insert call-out text and images to emphasize key points
- Keep it short and lively by editing a lot!

Marketing

- Email to engineering graduate students
- Announcements at orientation and guest lectures
- Handout business card with URL on the back
- Electronic library newsletter to faculty, including some faculty outside engineering for specific videos
- Instagram
    - One-minute Reels on librarian's Instagram
    - Some Reels shared on Library Instagram

Results & Next Steps

Success

- Bigger audience than the workshop series
    - In-person lunch workshops rarely had more than 9 attendees

But…

- It's unclear if it's reaching the target of graduate students in engineering
- Editing takes at least as much time as scripting and recording

For the Next Iteration

- Try different approaches to reach engineering graduate students – both to advertise and to discover their preferences
- Reduce editing time, to increase the production volume – balancing quantity and quality depending on content

References

[1] *VCU Quest 2028 One VCU: Together We Transform* [presentation for Board of Visitors], n.d., p. 15
https://uploads.provost.vcu.edu/quest2028/bovpresentation.pdf

[2] A. W. Tadbier and A. Shoufan, "Ranking educational channels on YouTube: Aspects and issues," *Education and Information Technologies*, vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 3077–3096, May 2021, doi: 10.1007/s10639-020-10414-x

[3] J. Arendt and VCU Libraries, "Engineer Your Library"
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZUTmRRIgCW8wErojGimZvvAdLjebtWhC