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Whither Web 2.0?

Presentation to CCAE-O
November 13, 2009



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Overview of presentation

- **What worked: Web 2.0 and the Carleton Café**
- **What changed**
- **What's next**

What is – or what was – web 2.0?

“...applications which facilitate **interactive** information sharing, interoperability, **user-centered** design and **collaboration** on the World Wide Web.”

-- **Wikipedia**

Why was it interesting?

- Getting to know our graduates is a challenge
- Provides a space to interact with alumni
- Creates connection

The online community solution

- Exclusive access
- Shared affinity; part of the discussion
- Boost research and data acquisition
- Voluntary relationships: good ROI

What worked: Web 2.0 at Carleton



The Carleton Café: the history

- Private online community: a virtual hangout just for Carleton grads
- Custom-built product
- Created in 1998, revised in 2005, renovations throughout

The Carleton Café: the concept



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The Carleton Café: the objectives

- Create/support affinity
- Service provision
- Data acquisition

Café highlights: affinity

- Interactive: bulletin boards, comments
- User-centered: status updates
- Collaboration: alumni chapters

Café highlights: services

- Perks of Membership
- Alumni ID cards
- @alumni (email for life)
- Career Connections (mentoring)

Café highlights: data

- Address update mechanism
- Business card directory

Offline promotion

- Identity: principal call to action for alumni
- Directed marketing strategies: boost new grads and international alumni enrolment
- Contests and networking reflect affinity


It worked: Café metrics

- 19,000 + members: 24% of reachable alumni
- User-generated content
- More than 300 mentors: student/alumni interaction
- Multiple peer awards

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What changed?



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The Facebook problem: back to square one

- Better access
- Self-driven affinity
- No acquisition mechanism
- What's THEIR ROI?

Why the instant success?

- More interactive: APIs, real-time updates
- More user-driven: new users beget new users
- More collaborative: content begets content
- Simple fact: it's their business

Not just Facebook's fault


- Linked-In: Facebook for professionals
- Twitter: instant connection
- Aggregates: why go out, when it can come to you?

The other problem?

- Use/effectiveness is already on the decline
- Too many passwords
- Spammers are in the game

The other other problem?

- Use of aggregates—more push, less pull
- Apps and mobile technology
- Web 3.0
- Web 2.0 – not dead yet!

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What's next?

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Can we compete?

- Technology can't keep up
- User pool is shallow
- Is there true interaction?
- Simple fact: it's not our business

Hard questions for your strategy

- What's your objective?
- What's your UVP?
- Where is the web going?

The answer: leverage, don't compete

- Use existing technology
- Focus on what you offer that no one else can
- Invest in compelling content
- Go where they are

What's next for Carleton?

- Using affinity, not creating it
- Better use of data
- Leverage UVP: content and services
- Use existing technology, not recreating it

In practical terms...

- A new Carleton Café
- Focused networking strategy
- Enhanced magazine website
- Data informing the strategy


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The new Carleton Café formula

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Broadcast Yourself

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Thank you!

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