Engaging with Social Media:

The Emily Carr University of Art and Design Library Experience

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Abstract—In the spring of 2013, the Emily Carr University of Art and Design Library embarked on a year-long project to evaluate its social media efforts. The resulting case study discusses the academic art library's observations and assessment of its social media platforms, including the results of a survey sent to social media followers and how that information shapes the future goals of the library's social media campaign. Although much has been written about the use of social media in libraries, this article also contributes to the discussion surrounding the overall assessment of efforts and what determines success.

INTRODUCTION

Library marketing expert Nancy Dowd published an article in the May 2013 issue of *Library Journal* titled "Social Media: Libraries Are Posting, but Is Anyone Listening?"[1] Dowd points out that although the majority of libraries are using social media to interact with their communities, many do not keep track of their efforts or claim success in getting followers to interact. Inspired by this article, the Emily Carr University of Art and Design (ECU) Library formed a Social Media Committee to draft objectives and a strategy to increase online visibility. The committee considered why the library was using social media and what it sought to gain from an online presence. In its first meetings, the committee created a framework of posting principles, brainstormed projects, and created a plan to reach social media goals.

Working with Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, the library tried different ways to engage followers and build numbers. After six months, an evaluation of the results of

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1. Nancy Dowd, "Social Media: Libraries Are Posting, but Is Anyone Listening?" *Library Journal,* May 7, 2013, http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2013/05/marketing/social-media-libraries-are-posting-but-is-anyone-listening/.

its efforts commenced, specifically to determine whether social media is an effective way to communicate with art and design students and the library's greater community, and which platforms in particular are the most relevant for engaging with such an audience. Research indicates that for many libraries the number of followers or "likes" are the only metrics collected. The committee started to question whether increasing the number of followers actually increased the value of social media, and how that value could even be measured.

With these questions in mind, we began an assessment of our social media presence, collecting objective analytical data and anecdotal information, as well as conducting a survey among the students and community members who follow the library on its various social media channels. Through these assessment strategies, we have altered our initial goals and approaches to using social media.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The use of social media by libraries is still relatively new, but it has been generously covered in library literature. Although much has been written about best practices, planning, and tools to measure success, overall evaluations of social media strategies and their effectiveness in relation to prescribed goals are lacking, especially in art and design libraries.

BEST PRACTICES AND PLANNING

Charles Harmon and Michael Messina cover best practices for social media use in libraries through case studies of numerous types of libraries.[2] As early adopters of technology, libraries have been quick to utilize social media. However, libraries tend to rush into every possible type of social media without critical thought given as to whether they were the right platforms for the particular library.[3] An investigation by Harmon and Messina into eight different libraries and their successful use of social media demonstrates that each social media platform can be utilized for certain functions. Some examples include the use of Pinterest by Central Methodist University to promote new books and DVDs[4] and the use of Twitter by the Vancouver Public Library to create community connections, establish dialogue with patrons, and broadcast information.[5] Danielle Salomon discusses the UCLA Powell Library's creation of an Instagram account as a learning tool, engaging undergraduate students while promoting library collections and spaces.[6] Sarah K. Steiner and Ellyssa Kroski identify the need for libraries to develop a strategic plan before embarking upon the use of social media.[7] This may consist of identifying goals, tailoring a plan for one depart-

2. Charles Harmon and Michael Messina, *Using Social Media in Libraries: Best Practices* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2013).

3. Ibid., xi.

4. Ibid., 24.

5. Ibid., 68.

6. Danielle Salomon, "Moving On From Facebook: Using Instagram to Connect with Undergraduates and Engage in Teaching and Learning," *C&RL News* 74, no. 8 (September 2013): 408–12.

7. Sarah K. Steiner and Ellyssa Kroski, *Strategic Planning for Social Media in Libraries: (THE TECH SET® #15)* (Chicago: ALA Editions, 2012), http://www.alatechsource.org/strategic-planning-for-social-media-in-libraries-15.

ment or service area, adding social media goals to an already existing library strategic plan, or creating a full library social media strategic plan.[8]

MEASURING SUCCESS

According to Dowd, efforts are not being made to properly measure whether social media is an effective tool to interact with a library's target audience. Indeed, 48 percent of libraries surveyed do not track their social media efforts.[9] Consequently, there is no way to measure the success or failure of a library social media campaign. According to David Stuart, in order to implement relevant metrics libraries must first identify a specific purpose for each social media platform that is being used.[10] As soon as metrics for each platform are identified, realistic benchmarks need to be set—for example, having a manageable number of Twitter followers so that interaction is achievable.[11] A perceived value of a metric can then be used to assess return on investment (ROI) enabling library staff to measure whether the time that is being spent on a certain social media platform achieves results that are deemed acceptable.[12]

Nuria Lloret Romero further explores the measurement of return on investment of social media use in libraries and states that assessing ROI is a business intelligence task.[13] When measuring ROI, staff need to use interviews, surveys, and focus groups to determine the effects communications via social media have on users and the decisions they make when using a library service.[14] Although measuring metrics and ROI are important components of a library's social media campaign, Natalie Burclaff and Catherine Johnson point out that it is important not to get caught up collecting data for the sake of collecting data, and that measuring success comes down to what the purposes are for using social media.[15]

BACKGROUND AND ASSESSMENT

Emily Carr University of Art and Design (ECU) is a small school in the heart of Vancouver, British Columbia, the largest city on the west coast of Canada. The school is home to 1,900 full-time students, 3,500 continuing studies students, and 330 employees (including faculty, staff, and administrators). The first social media platform the university library began using was Facebook in September 2010. Activity on the platform was infrequent. A new systems librarian hired in November 2012 brought a renewed interest in building a social media presence for the library. Twitter and Instagram accounts were created, and an effort was made to post more content to Facebook.

8. Ibid., 9.

9. Dowd, "Social Media."

10. David Stuart, "Social Media Metrics," *Online* 33, no. 6 (November/December 2009): 22–24.

11. Ibid., 24.

12. Ibid.

13. Nuria Lloret Romero, "ROI. Measuring the Social Media Return on Investment in a Library," *The Bottom Line: Managing Library Finances* 24, no. 2 (May 2011): 145–51, doi:10.1108/08880451111169223.

14. Ibid., 146.

15. Natalie Burclaff and Catherine Johnson, "Developing a Social Media Strategy," *College and Research News* 75, no. 7 (July/August 2014): 366–69.

In the spring of 2013, a push to energize and bolster the library's social media presence began, and a formal social media committee was formed, composed of librarians and library assistants. Before the committee met, a social media policy was drafted to reflect the needs of the ECU Library and to provide a concise guideline for staff to follow when representing the library on its social media platforms. During the initial meeting the committee discussed the reasons for using social media, what goals we were trying to achieve, what our aims should be, who would be responsible for each platform, the type of content we would post, and how we were going to measure success. Each committee member chose a platform for which he/she would be responsible based on interest and familiarity with how to use it. Ongoing responsibilities include posting content and keeping track of metrics and anecdotes of usage. Once the committee created a policy and set goals, implementation of the strategies began immediately. Most were completed by September 2013.

The library's purposes for using social media included:

- Raise the library's online profile by increasing the number of followers
- Inform users of special events and programming
- Help define the library's role within the ECU community
- Gain overall support for the library from the community in general

In order to raise the library's online profile and increase followers within the university community, the committee devised and implemented a series of promotional strategies:

- Provide linked icons for all social media platforms on the library website, blogs, and subject research guides
- Include links to Facebook and Twitter on all staff e-mail signature files
- Place promotional signage at the Circulation Desk
- Include social media icons on the library operational hours flyers
- Create circulating iPad lock screens featuring social media URLs

The committee decided that the content should positively promote the Emily Carr Library and demonstrate the multifaceted nature of art libraries in general, including:

- New arrival items
- Archival images
- Images relating to current projects
- Links to trailers for movies in the collection
- Inspirational images
- Issues and stories relating to libraries and the arts
- Student exhibitions
- Events and presentations organized by the library

The committee generated a set of goals that were created without any initial assessment of social media practices up to that point.

- Double the number of Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram followers between May and September 2013
- Implement a promotional campaign to correspond with the arrival of students in September
- Achieve active engagement on all platforms
- Network by reaching out to the broader creative community
- Set a social media precedent for the rest of the institution (and other academic art libraries) and be able to share the successes and failures

To measure value each platform would be routinely tracked for:

- The number of followers
- The types of stories that generate notable engagement (likes, shares, and comments)
- Analytical statistics
- Success stories, such as connecting with alumni and circulation of material

SOCIAL MEDIA SURVEY

In February 2014, the Library Social Media Committee created an online survey for the purpose of consulting our followers about their social media use practices and their interaction (or lack of) with our social media platforms. The objective was to use the survey results to support our research about the effectiveness of our social media presence. We wanted to understand how users interact with library social media, what they find most useful and interesting, and why they do (or do not) follow us. To find participants for the survey we promoted it through all our social media channels, on the library website, put posters up at each library computer station and throughout the school, and offered a prize. We received forty-six complete responses to the nineteen-question survey.

GENERAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE

All survey participants are users of social media in some form, which we described as being Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Flickr, etc. The two most popular platforms were Facebook and Instagram. Every survey participant claimed to be a Facebook user (89 percent on a daily basis) and 70 percent claimed to be an Instagram user (45 percent on a daily basis). Twitter and Pinterest were both used by 55 percent of respondents, but on a more infrequent basis (weekly or monthly).

We asked what people look for when they followed someone or something on social media. The highest results were general information (news) and events, followed by entertainment and social interaction. Users also looked for links and stories relating to personal interests and professional development. We asked what types of stories people felt most inclined to share with their networks and found that images were the number one response, followed closely by news stories and events relating to personal or professional interest.

Of the respondents, 28 percent did not follow the Emily Carr Library on any of our social media channels. These were all current Emily Carr students or employees. A

majority were unaware that the library had a presence on social media, making it clear that further promotion within the university would be beneficial. Another reason why respondents choose not to follow the library was that they claimed to obtain all the information they needed from the website.

SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS WHO ARE NOT EMILY CARR STUDENTS OR EMPLOYEES

We divided respondents who followed us on social media into two groups: current Emily Carr students, staff, and faculty, and people outside the current university community. When beginning the investigation, we were especially curious to hear from the library's social media followers who were not currently part of the university to discover what held their interest. Of the ten respondents who fell into this category, four were alumni, one was a member of the Vancouver art community, and the remaining five had no relationship to Vancouver or the university. Seven had never been to the Emily Carr Library, and three had visited at least once in the past year.

We asked why they followed us, and 43 percent responded that they found our social media posts to be interesting, and 29 percent wanted to keep up to date with what is happening in the library and to discover new arrivals. Although seven out of ten respondents had never been to the library, we found it encouraging that of the respondents who are outside of the ECU community, 77 percent stated that our social media posts made them want to visit. In doing so they would be interested in using materials, seeing speakers, attending events, finding new and inspiring material, and meeting the people who select the books. One respondent commented: "The ECUAD library is basically one of the resources I use to make my book shopping list. A lot of the books I add to my basket on Amazon.ca are books that were actually recently purchased by the Library."

SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS WHO ARE CURRENT EMILY CARR STUDENTS OR EMPLOYEES

Members of the Emily Carr community who followed us on social media largely did so on Facebook (91 percent follow Facebook, 21 percent follow Twitter, 26 percent follow Instagram). They followed our social media mainly to keep up to date on library events and also claimed to enjoy the content we posted and to see what new items have arrived. Of the types of stories that we posted on social media, respondents felt most inclined to share information about events happening in the library and in the community. Other posts included new arrivals, informative or serious stories, and images. By following us on social media, respondents noted that it did not necessarily make them feel more comfortable using the library as a study space, to borrow materials, or talk to library staff, but it did encourage a majority to visit the library. In fact, over half of the Emily Carr community followers claimed our social media posts encouraged them to attend an event in the library.

INSTAGRAM ANALYTICS

We created an Instagram account in January 2013 and consider it our fastest growing and most successful social media platform due to the high level of follower engage-
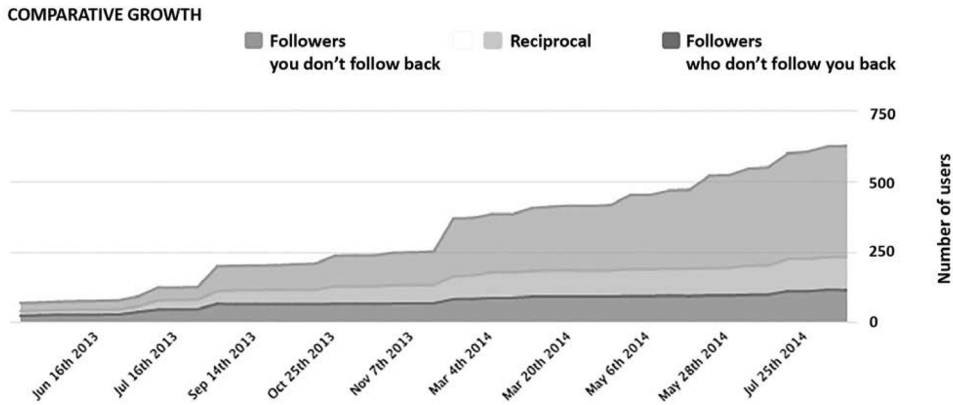
COMPARATIVE GROWTH

Figure 1. Screenshot from Iconosquare, August 13, 2014. Growth of followers, June 2013 – July 2014.

ment and success forging community connections as compared to the amount of time that we spend posting to it. Our definition of engagement in this context includes likes and comments made about our media. Typically we post one to three well-curated photos a day and scroll through our feed to comment on or like media posted by other accounts we follow. In general one staff member will spend an average of fifteen minutes a day interacting with the platform. Beyond the promotional strategies that were implemented by the Library Social Media Committee, we also hosted two Instagram photo contests, inviting students to submit photos of the library by using the hashtag #myECUlibrary and awarding prizes to the most-liked images. We timed these contests to correspond with the start of the school year and promoted them heavily to the first year students.

In order to analyze our Instagram statistics we use a service called Iconosquare, previously called Statigram, which is an analytics and marketing suite. It is a free service, but it has flaws. Although the site can provide a good overview of an account, it will only add points of reference each time a refresh is done. For example, we can see that our account gained over 100 followers between November 1, 2013, and February 1, 2014, but because we had not done a refresh of our Iconosquare account between those dates, we were not able to see when the largest increase in followers occurred to determine whether a specific event caused the jump.

Our fan base built slowly at first, averaging six-and-a-half followers per month for the first six months. Our following picked up rapidly after June 2013, corresponding to our social media promotional push, and a year later we had over 500 followers, increasing our monthly average of new followers to thirty-eight (Figure 1). The committee goal was to double followers between May and September of 2013, and this was easily surpassed as we grew from forty to 200 followers over the course of the first summer using the application. We have lost followers as well—twenty-eight in the first year-and-a-half. This is a greater loss than that of our Facebook account, which has lost only two followers in its four-year history. The loss of followers does not seem to correspond to a specific event, but the general observation is that Instagram ac-
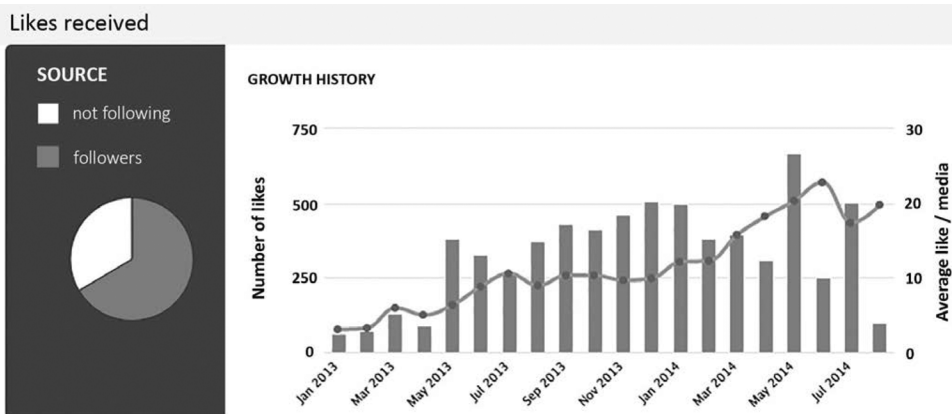
Figure 2. Screenshot from Iconosquare, August 13, 2014.

counts are more transient in nature than a platform such as Facebook, and users tend to follow or unfollow accounts in a more fluid capacity depending on current interest.

Currently we follow around 230 accounts. Of these, 118 are reciprocal, and 112 do not follow us back. The quickest way to gain new followers is to engage with other accounts, start following those that are interesting, and liking and commenting on their photos. From what we are able to determine from the limited information Instagram offers about account holders, many of our followers are not part of the Emily Carr University community.

Since May 2013 we received a fairly steady number of likes on our images, an average of 500 per month, working out to be an average of ten likes per media shared. A third of these likes came from accounts that are not currently following us (Figure 2).

From our experience in examining other Instagram accounts and by analyzing our most-liked images, popular themes include street art, lettering, letterpress, skate-boarding, crafts, animals, food, bikes, and art installations that translate well into a photographic image (Figure 3). Taking popular image themes into consideration when making collection development decisions is an idea that the library is keen to explore in the future.

On numerous occasions, patrons have come into the library asking for books they have seen posted on our Instagram feed. This is the kind of interaction that we consider successful and engaging, especially given the relatively small amount of time it takes us to shoot a photo of a book and post it (Figure 4). It demonstrates the potential to promote and increase circulation of items that borrowers may not come across on their own. Investigating our followers' accounts has led to great connections and further success and engagement, including a collection addition of a student's artist book, and connecting to alumni accounts on the platform.

To preserve meaningful engagement with our followers, the staff that manage the Instagram account maintain an active presence on the platform by seeking new accounts to follow, continuing to like and comment on media, replying to any comments made about our media, and sharing to our Facebook and Twitter accounts. We
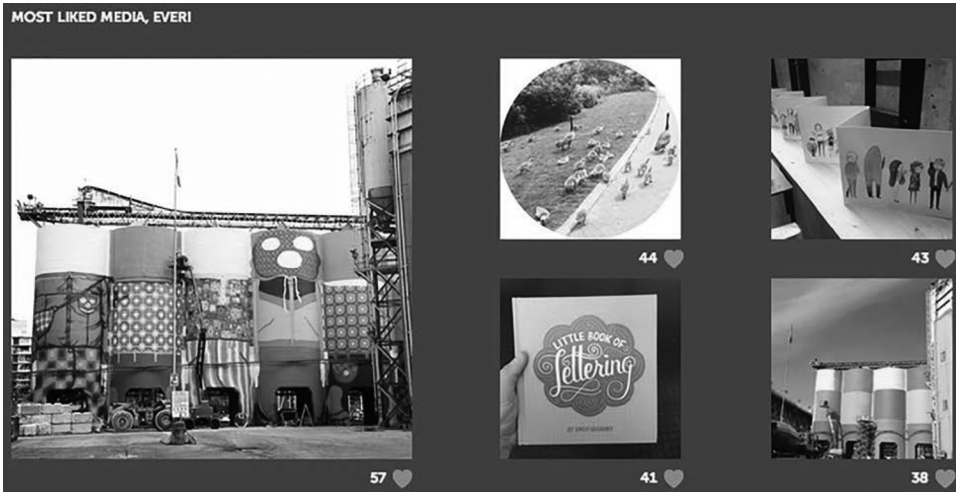
Figure 3. Screenshot from Iconosquare, August 22, 2014. Most liked media. Please see the online edition of *Art Documentation* for a color version of this image.

strive to post attractive and interesting media to keep followers connected and engaged. Through our experience with the application, we have found that the most successful Instagram accounts are ones managed by people with a keen interest in visual culture and photography.

Instagram lends itself well to an art and design library due to its visual nature. It has become our most successful social media platform due to the exponential rise in
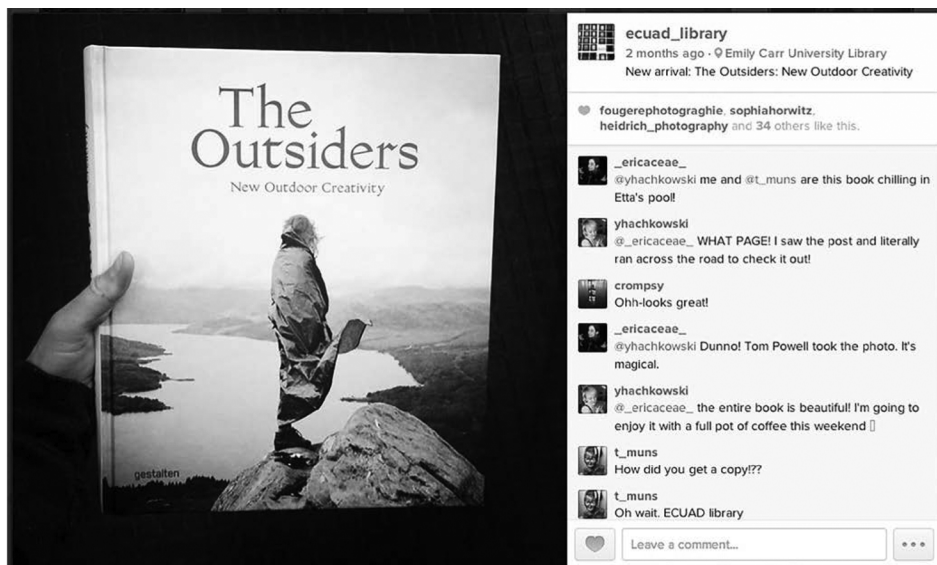
Figure 4. Screenshot from Instagram.com, August 13, 2014. Example of post interaction. Please see the online edition of *Art Documentation* for a color version of this image.

the number of followers and the amount of engagement we receive by way of likes and comments on the media we post. By analyzing our Facebook and Twitter accounts we found that the Instagram images shared to those platforms were among the most popular posts. Additionally, we have had many successful interactions with our direct community leading to the circulation of material and attendance at events. Our research conclusions have resulted in shifting our social media focus to the Instagram account, posting stories through media there first, then sharing those stories to our Facebook and Twitter accounts, which cuts down on the amount of time we spend posting to those platforms.

Moving forward with our Instagram account, we will take into consideration suggestions that were made by followers who completed our social media survey. Exciting strategies and ideas can also be found in current literature about libraries using Instagram. Following is a list of strategies we will integrate into our Instagram feed in order to broaden the content we offer our followers:

- Include more images of the location of the library to offer context to those who are not familiar with the university or the City of Vancouver
- Provide images of people and staff, student and intern selections of their favorite books and collections
- Offer book suggestions based on majors (i.e., Interaction Design)
- Write summaries about the books we post
- Include materials that correspond with current events, anniversaries, and events happening in Vancouver
- Utilize the video feature: flipping through the pages of new arrivals, clips from movies trailers, coverage of events
- Promote publicly available services (i.e., community borrower cards, 3D-TV, events, publicly available digital collections, a place to work) since so many followers are from outside the university
- Give co-op students or student employees guest posting spots in order to gain perspective on what they find interesting and relevant
- Repost student photos of the building or library (search hashtags to find photos)
- Provide pictures of things happening at ECU and in the arts community
- Post images found in the archives for "Throwback Thursdays (#tbt)"

FACEBOOK ANALYTICS

The library's Facebook account was started in September 2010, and Facebook Insight Analytics are available from July 2011 onwards, at which point our account had 193 followers. An effort to gain followers and engage actively with these followers was started by the Library Social Media Committee in May 2013. At that time our page had 343 followers, an increase of 151 people since July 2011 and an average increase of seven people a month. Once the committee created and implemented a plan of action, our growth increased to an average of fifteen-and-a-half followers a month, doubling the rate of page likes. The Library Social Media Committee set a goal to double our Facebook followers in the span of five months, which was unrealistic and a result of the committee not doing an initial assessment of our analytics. Although we were

Total Page Likes as of August 21, 2014: 582
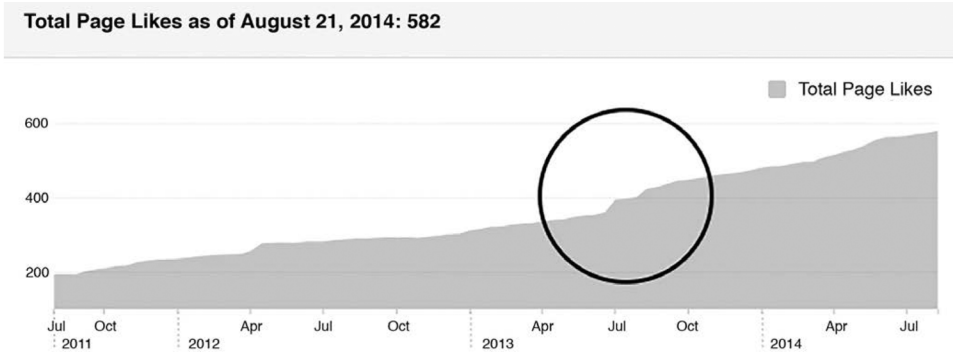
Figure 5. Facebook Insights: Total likes from July 2011 to August 2014. Follower increases in July and August 2013 are circled.

unable to double our Facebook followers, which would have been an increase of nearly 350 followers, we were able to double the rate at which people liked our page, and we are pleased with an increase of 150 followers.

The largest jump in followers occurred in the summer of 2013, consisting of a thirty-person increase over a period of five days in June, and a twenty-five-person increase over two days in August (Figure 5). We gained a majority of these new followers directly on our Facebook page and through page suggestions made by current followers. Although it is difficult to determine exactly what caused these jumps, Facebook analytics give us clues. On June 24th we posted a link to our newly created artists' books blog, a research guide and blog platform that highlights our artists' books collection. This post was shared by Project Space (a local publisher, bookseller, and host of the Vancouver Art/Book Fair) that had roughly 1,900 Facebook followers. By sharing our post with their followers, we reached 543 unique users and generated nine stories (stories are interactions such as likes, shares, comments, and mentions).

On August 1, 2013, we posted a link to an online article on *Web Urbanist* about an abandoned Walmart in Texas being transformed into America's largest single story library. This article was shared fifteen times over the course of the week, had seven likes, and reached a total of 2,207 people. This was our most popular and engaging Facebook post to date (Figure 6). Pratt Institute Libraries, which are followed by approximately 1,200 people, shared this story, and the rest of the shares came from individuals. The influence of the Pratt Libraries and Project Space accounts is clearly articulated in our analytics, illustrating the power of leveraging the network strength of a larger institution to get information to a greater number of people. This is especially true for a library operating within an overarching institution. The Emily Carr University Facebook page has over 5,000 followers, many of which are assumed to be members of the university community. When the university promotes our posts through its page we tend to get a notable level of engagement. Once this realization was made, we started reaching out to the University Communications Department when we had an important post to share in order to leverage their social media network.

When our social media survey respondents were asked what kinds of information

Post Reach
The number of people your post was served to.
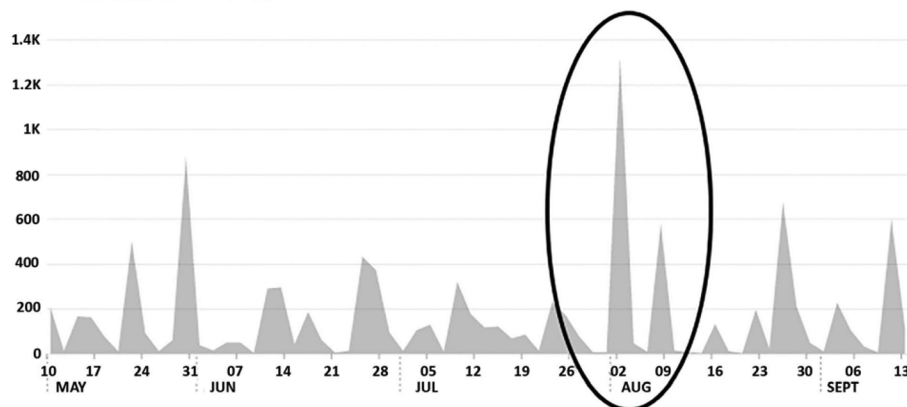
Figure 6. Screenshot from Facebook Insights, August 21, 2014: Post reach May – September 2013. Spike in August from a post that reached 2,207 people.

they were most likely to share with their networks, the highest responses were images, serious/informative stories, and events. We found that posts we have made with image content have a higher engagement rate. The results of our survey also revealed that every respondent is a Facebook user, with 89 percent using the platform on a daily basis. Of the Emily Carr students or employees who followed the library on social media, the majority followed us on Facebook (over 90 percent). They do so mainly to learn about library events and new arrivals. These findings infer that most of the followers we have on Facebook are members of the Emily Carr community, making it clear that Facebook is a platform that we should continue to support. The results also tell us what kinds of information our followers found most valuable.

A key finding when analyzing our Instagram account was that the more users we followed, the quicker and larger our fan base grew. To engage meaningfully with followers, it is important to respond to comments and take the time to like and comment on media posted by other accounts. Since this interaction formula works so well in Instagram, similar tactics are likely to work with other platforms, such as Facebook. The more energy and time we are able to expend engaging with other accounts by sharing, liking, and commenting on their media and finding new accounts to like, the more engagement we should receive in return.

TWITTER ANALYTICS

In its infancy at the beginning of 2013 the ECU Library Twitter account had less than ten followers, and tweets were being sent sporadically. To correspond with the Library Social Media Committee's push to increase engagement, in spring 2013 a concerted effort was made to post to the account at least once or twice daily on topics relating as closely as possible to art and libraries, new arrival items, and special events taking place in the library. Over the course of thirteen months, we increased our number of

followers to 170 and started following 261 other accounts. The goal to double the number of Twitter followers from May to August 2013 was easily met. Staff cross-referenced new followers with a patron list and discovered that out of our 170 followers on Twitter, only twelve are current ECU students. Although an accurate count cannot be made due to some students not being present in the library database, it is clear that the majority of our Twitter followers are not ECU students.

In general, we follow Twitter users who follow us except for proprietary organizations that have no relation to the art community. In most cases, the library does not actively seek out people or organizations to follow; rather, it uses the Twitter suggestions on which accounts to follow. That being said, we do make an effort to seek out high profile alumni, faculty, and students.

- Over the course of thirteen months, 309 tweets were made with the following engagement: A total of thirty tweets were marked as favorites by two or fewer followers, covering a variety of topics from new arrivals, to an art show announcement, to a link to a video on YouTube
- Of fifty-one retweets, two posts had three retweets, four had two retweets, and thirty-seven had one retweet
- Of the two tweets that had three retweets, one was a link to an article in which Henry Rollins discusses empowerment through libraries, and the other an announcement of an art installation by two students in the library. The four tweets that were retweeted twice ranged in topic from an art show announcement to a link to the Art + Feminism Wikipedia Edit-A-Thon day
- Tweets that were retweeted once ranged from a link to the Little Library movement to a welcome to new students on the first day of classes
- Eight tweets had one reply each

Faring better in engagement than favorites and retweets are posts where a link is clicked.

- Of the 309 Tweets we made, 280 included links to stories, events, or items records in the catalog
- 138 of these links were clicked
- The number of times links were clicked ranged from one to nineteen, the majority being one click

It is hard to determine any significant patterns for which tweets get clicks. The tweet with nineteen clicks was an Instagram photo of a Little Library that appeared behind the university. The tweet with the second highest clicks was an Instagram photo of a new book. It is worth noting that of the 280 tweets with links, eighty had Instagram links to photos of new items, photos of student art exhibited in the library, or general photos in relation to libraries. Half of the tweets we posted with Instagram links had clicks, ranging from one click to eighteen.

Overall, engagement with ECU Library Twitter account is better than expected. Anecdotally it seems that engagement with tweets is sparse. However, when the

numbers are analyzed and we factor in the number of clicks made, engagement with issues relating to libraries and art libraries in general is satisfactory. In relation to our goals for social media, Twitter met the mark of doubling the number of followers. It has allowed for outreach to the local creative community, and it has created engagement with the library. Given that staff time devoted to Twitter is minimal (fifteen to twenty minutes per day), the return of engagement compared to amount of time invested is fair. Since our tweets with Instagram links get clicks more often than not, the committee has decided to focus mainly on tweeting links to photographs through the library Instagram account, which we hope will encourage our Twitter followers to follow us on Instagram and will allow for the continuation of using social media in a more visual manner.

CONCLUSIONS

An assessment of the Library Social Media Committee's goals reveals that we were able to reach almost all of our benchmarks. Although we were unable to double our Facebook followers, we are pleased with an increase of 150 people. We were able to easily double followers on both Twitter and Instagram. The campaign we created to promote our social media presence to first-year students was successful, and we mentioned our accounts to all students who came through the library or visited our table during the first-year student orientation. We achieved a satisfactory level of engagement and outreach to the creative community on all platforms and are particularly pleased with the success of engagement on our Instagram account, especially given the low investment of time commitment that staff give to the platform on a daily basis. An important takeaway from the assessment of the library's social media activities is how important visual posts are within an art and design library. A wide variety of information can be posted creatively in a visual format including photos of new arrivals, activities taking place in the library, and even announcements including changes to operating hours. Rather than using social media in text format, the library will continue to pursue using social media as a visual communicator, and Instagram and Facebook are excellent tools for an art and design library such as ECU to employ. Twitter use will continue, however in a more limited capacity. Tweets will focus mainly on sending links to our Instagram photos.

Our research has established that social media use needs to be active in order to build and engage with a community. Putting a relatively small amount of time and effort into networking on these platforms results in an increase in followers, online exposure, and participation. Our research project was just the beginning of an ongoing campaign to establish our library as a key part of the Emily Carr University community and the overall creative community in Vancouver. Creating a Library Social Media Committee and collaboratively setting goals and strategies have been important in building and maintaining an active presence online. The process of setting goals and benchmarks, analyzing data, and hearing from our community through a survey allowed us to determine what success with social media looks like for us. Although engagement levels could have been perceived as low, a thorough investigation revealed meaningful connections forged with students, alumni, univer-

sity staff, and community members, resulting in the circulation of, and excitement about, library resources and attendance at library events.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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