



**RHODES UNIVERSITY**  
*Where leaders learn*

## **Rhodes University Library: a shift from “you’re not allowed to use Facebook in the library” to “please like and follow our page”**

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# Diffusion of Innovation Theory

- The Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DOI)
- Developed by E.M. Rogers in 1962
- Rests on the principle that the **process** of the adoption of an innovation by a population or social system occurs over a period of **time**
- Presents an overview of the adoption and implementation of the use of social media at Rhodes University Library (RUL, particularly Facebook.

# Adopter Categories

Classification of individuals based on their willingness to try out a new innovation or new product.

## Five adopter categories



# Adopter Categories

Extreme 1	In between	Extreme 2
<b>Innovators</b>	<b>Early adopters , Early and Late majority</b>	<b>Laggards</b>
<p>Take risks Adopt an innovation at the earliest</p>	<p>Early adopters not so far from innovators</p> <p>Early majority if often the undecided group</p> <p>Late majority is not so far from laggards</p>	<p>Lag behind</p> <p>Most sceptical</p> <p>Adopt an innovation at the very last</p>

# Innovation Decision Process

- Suggest that diffusion occurs over time and can be seen as having five distinct stages
- Knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation.
- Potential adopters of an innovation must learn about the innovation, be persuaded as to the merits of the innovation, decide to adopt, implement
- The decision to adopt or reject an innovation comes last and confirm (reaffirm or reject).

# Facebook Police



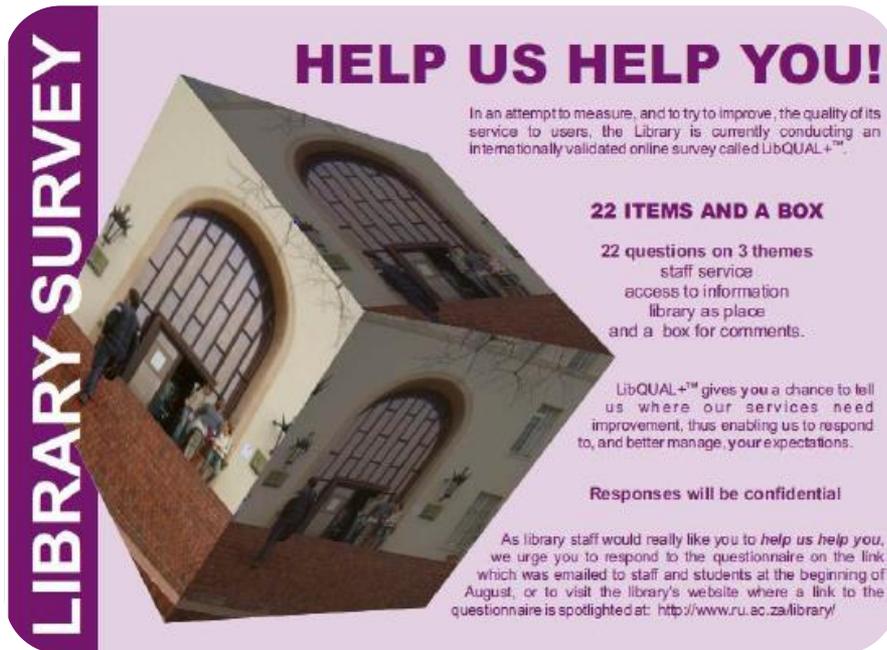
# Facebook Police



- Identified by **purple** bibs
- Student Assistants= Facebook Police
  - Supervise and monitor user behavior
  - Ensure compliance with the Library Use and Conduct Code
- Professional Librarians interventions

# LibQUAL

- Rhodes University Library conducted a LibQUAL survey in 2012



**LIBRARY SURVEY**

## HELP US HELP YOU!

In an attempt to measure, and to try to improve, the quality of its service to users, the Library is currently conducting an internationally validated online survey called LibQUAL+™.

### 22 ITEMS AND A BOX

22 questions on 3 themes  
staff service  
access to information  
library as place  
and a box for comments.

LibQUAL+™ gives you a chance to tell us where our services need improvement, thus enabling us to respond to, and better manage, your expectations.

Responses will be confidential

As library staff would really like you to *help us help you*, we urge you to respond to the questionnaire on the link which was emailed to staff and students at the beginning of August, or to visit the library's website where a link to the questionnaire is spotlighted at: <http://www.ru.ac.za/library/>

- LibQUAL survey- used to determine the level of user satisfaction, gather feedback and suggestion from users
- User-centric driven library service
- Results from the survey responses assisted RUL enhance its services
- New strategies emerged
- As part of a strategic plan, RUL adopted an e-strategy from 2013
- Policies, strategies all need to be review and even discarded!

# RUL E-strategy



- Enhancing and enabling the user experience through new services, products and tools
- Enhancing the visibility of RU Research

# Staff development: 21st century librarians

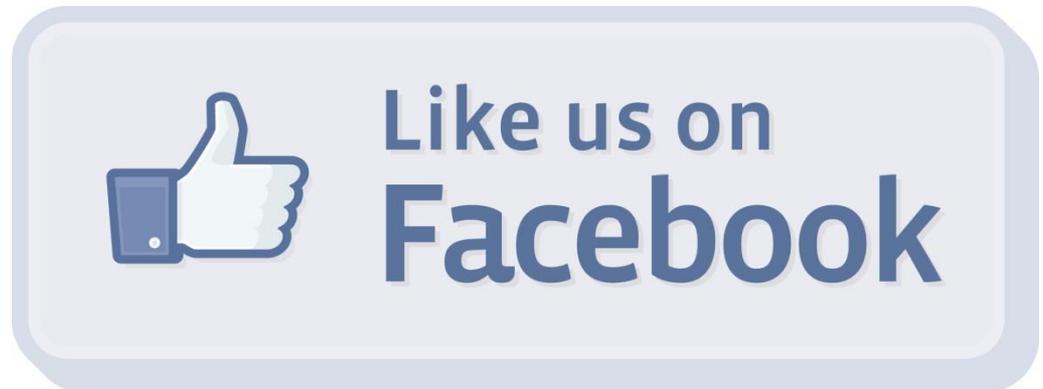
- Twenty first century librarians for 21<sup>st</sup> century users
- Review current methods
- New skills and competencies
- New roles and responsibilities
- LET GO of traditional practices and olden day methods!
- Take risks, try out new ideas, experiment and evaluate
- An opportunity for continuing professional development

# A step towards the right direction

RUL has become  
receptive of  
Facebook

RUL owns a  
Facebook page

User are now  
encouraged to like  
and follow the page



# A SWOT Analysis for social media in academic libraries

Adopting and implementing a new idea is just as important as maintaining the **relevance** of the product

- Determines an overview of the progress and opportunities for improvements
- Social media is a continuously growing trend in libraries and is used quite extensively by library users
- “A SWOT analysis of social media in libraries encourages librarians to take stock of their usage of social media and to guard against inappropriate applications” (Fernandez, 2009:36).

# Strengths

- The RUL Facebook page serves as an efficient marketing tool where information resources, events, news, displays, collections and facilities are advertised.
- The page educates and informs the RUL community. The general use of social media at RUL has had an impact on research support; Facebook is one of the tools that is used to promote research visibility and communication through the use of Altmetrics.
- The page also serves as a virtual reference tool
- Facebook page is visible and its reach is not limited to RUL current community.
- There are a controlled number of staff members who have been assigned editing rights by the page administrator. This is to ensure control over content, quality assurance and effective management of the page.

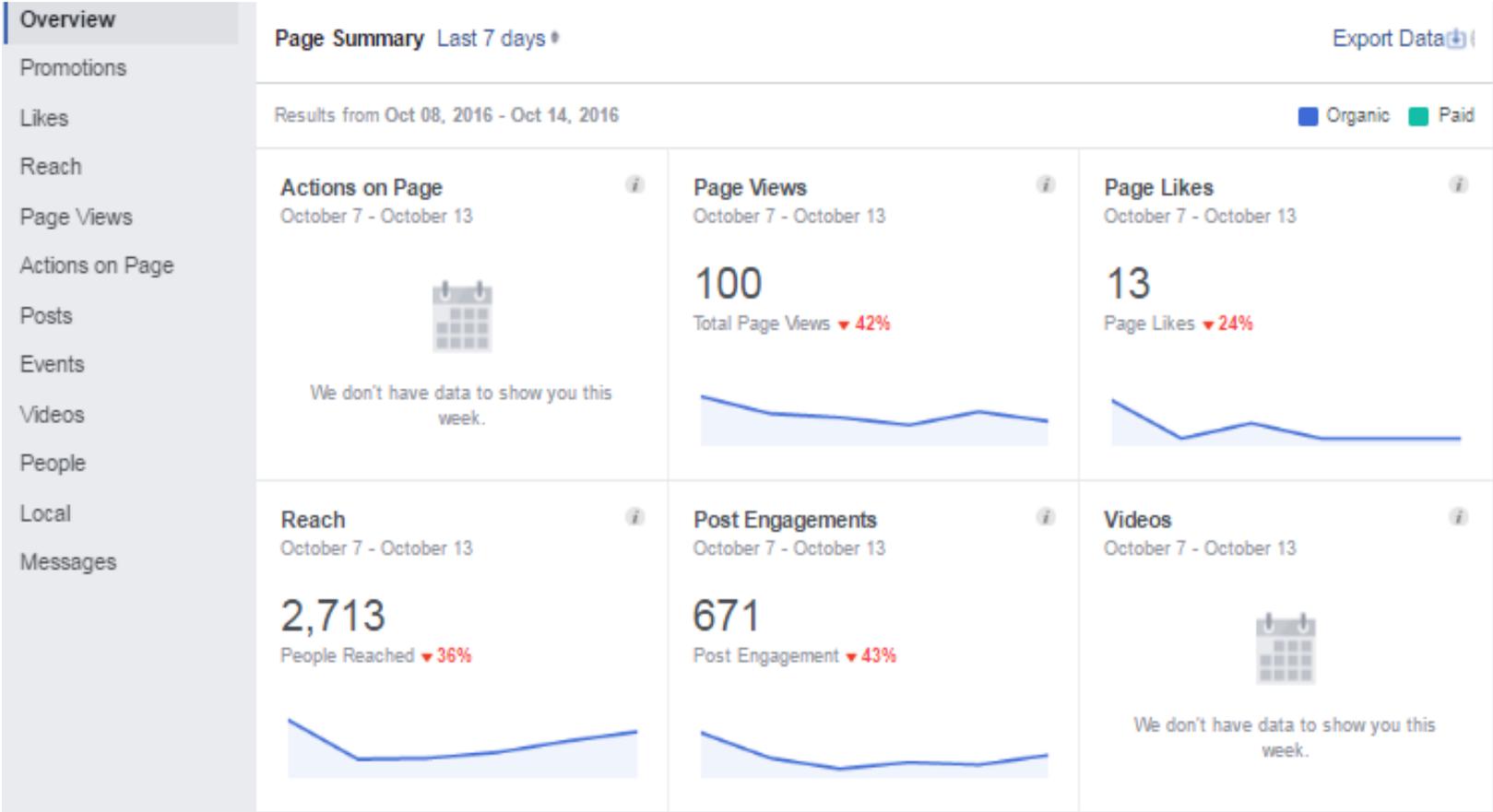
# Opportunities

- Cost-free marketing and communication tool which can potentially be exploited to its maximum capacity.
- Social media opens up libraries to criticism; this assists librarians “consider constructive criticism as an opportunity for them to improve their services” (Fernandez, 2009:37).
- Facebook is a space that users are currently on, and “people who might not be familiar with the library, possibly viewing it as old-fashioned, can become users once they see the library using social media” (Fernandez, 2009: 37).
- The two-way communication afforded by social media will go a long way toward creating dynamic libraries that are constantly evolving in tandem with their users' changing needs and expectations.

# Weaknesses

- If a post has been (viewed, etc.) 400 times, what can be gleaned from that "statistic"? That the article has been downloaded (viewed, etc.)
- No social media policy for implementation to guard against the inappropriate and unethical use of the page.
- Measuring metrics remain a challenge for RUL; the number of people reached does not demonstrate what it means to "reach" users.
- Determining the return on investment (effort and time) remains a challenge as the library simply depends on insights figures offered on Facebook, which are only figures without any qualitative explanation.

# Insights



# Threats

- It is possible that a social media account can be hacked and hijacked and the owner's reputation compromised
- Libraries could also see themselves losing all the content they have invested in their social media pages.
- There is no written agreement of ownership between the social media providers and the current users, so it is possible that one day we might wake up to the non-existence of Facebook as “social media providers may decide to fold up for any number of reasons, and librarians may lose” (Fernandez, 2009: 37).

# Thank you 😊

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