



Use of Social Media to Inform, Educate, and Communicate with library users at North-West University (NWU) Libraries during the #FeesMustFall Campaign Period from 20 October 2015 - 31 March 2016

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Introduction and background

- ❖ 2004 - saw the introduction of Web 2.0
- ❖ 2014 - NWU Library adopted Facebook and Twitter
- ❖ 2015 - Library's Socia Media assumed a new role due to #FeesMustFall

Objectives

To:

- ▶ highlight the ways in which the North West University Library- Mafikeng Campus used Facebook and Twitter to inform, educate and communicate with library users during the #FeesMust Fall Campaign
- ▶ outline the challenges faced by North West University Library- Mafikeng Campus during the #FeesMustFall Campaign
- ▶ articulate the advantages and disadvantages of using social media in the midst of crises

Discussion, Findings and results

	Informative	Educational	Communicative	Total
Number of Posts	23	9	21	53
Total Reach	10926	13494	19013	43433
Likes	188	74	156	418
Comments	8	10	15	33
Shares	10	143	65	218
Clicks	528	624	1667	2819
Total	11660	14345	20916	46921

Discussion, Findings and results continued

- ▶ 53 posts sent by the library
- ▶ 23 informational, 9 Educational, and 21 Communicative
- ▶ 0.6 percent comments on average from the users
- ▶ 885 total reach is achieved per post
- ▶ Post with more reach - post announcing the 24 hour library

Informational role of Social Media during the #FeesMustFall

- ▶ enhance the traditional role of the library
- ▶ keep our users abreast of developments in the Campus and the library
- ▶ Posts that could be categorised as playing the information provision role were about new developments at the University and the libraries

Educational role of Social Media during the #FeesMustFall

- ▶ The educational program did not stop during the #FeesMustFall protests especially for postgraduate students.
- ▶ Social Media used to request library resources through ILL and Intercampus Resource Sharing.
- ▶ Social Media used to post informational retrieval guides for users to easily access information.
- ▶ Social Media used to renew library material by students.

Communication Role of Social Media during the #FeesMustFall

- ▶ Social Media served not only as a student-library communication platform, but also as a student-student communication tool.
- ▶ Students could communicate with each other
- ▶ Library sent notices to students regarding hours of operation.

Challenges of using Social Media during the #FeesMustFall Campaign

- ▶ Negative commentary was the biggest risk.
- ▶ Propaganda and incitement of other students
- ▶ Trolling
- ▶ Spamming and Hoax messages

Conclusion and recommendations

- ▶ Educational posts were the least popular
- ▶ Opportunists may take advantage of the available platforms to dilute and change the intended meaning of messages.

Recommendations

- ▶ Creation of awareness on the availability and meaning of Social Media policies and their implications to users.
- ▶ availability of educational information through e-Guides should be publicized via social media, with active links to full content.
- ▶ users should be blocked from spamming or trolling on official Social Media platforms.
- ▶ collaboration with other university pages be encouraged with a view to compare practices and user behaviour particularly during times of crises.

For further studies, the study recommends a comprehensive study on the awareness of students about the consequences of the abuse of social media at the university level.

Thank you