Peer to peer advice and student networking

How web 2.0 can influence applications decisions

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Introduction

"Right now, your customers are writing about your products on blogs and recutting your commercials on YouTube. They're defining you on Wikipedia and ganging up on you on social networking sites like Facebook. These are all elements of a social phenomenon "the Groundswell" that has created a permanent shift in the way the world works. Most companies see it as a threat…"

Source: Groundswell, winning in a world transformed by social technologies Charlene Li, Josh Bernoff

Forrester Research

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Perceptions of HEI's involvement with Social Networking Sites
Headlines from the Press

"Egg on her Facebook…"
Oxford student caught breaking university rules

"Students trial by Facebook"
University staff logging onto Facebook and using evidence they find on student profiles

"Students tell universities: Get out of MySpace!
JISC Great Expectations of ICT

"Would be students checked on Facebook"

"Universities urged to be more open"

"Web 2.0: boom or bane for universities"

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Student sources of information and guidance

Tutors

- their effectiveness is “luck of the draw”
- Some are good, some less so, for non academic issues but they are usually the first port of call for academic issues

Online course materials

University websites/faculty web sites

League Tables and Unistats

Student Union web sites

Student Union advisors

Parents

Peers

Websites found through “Google” but with recognition that there is no firm guarantee of quality

Source: UCAS commissioned ipsos MORI research March 2008

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Student focused websites

Students do not go to a single student site for information, instead they use a range of sites:

University websites for academic issues

Student union websites for support

Google to find information about wider issues

This results in “student” sites being used

Asking peers – via social networking sites

Usually real friends not virtual peers

Source: UCAS commissioned ipsos MORI research March 2008

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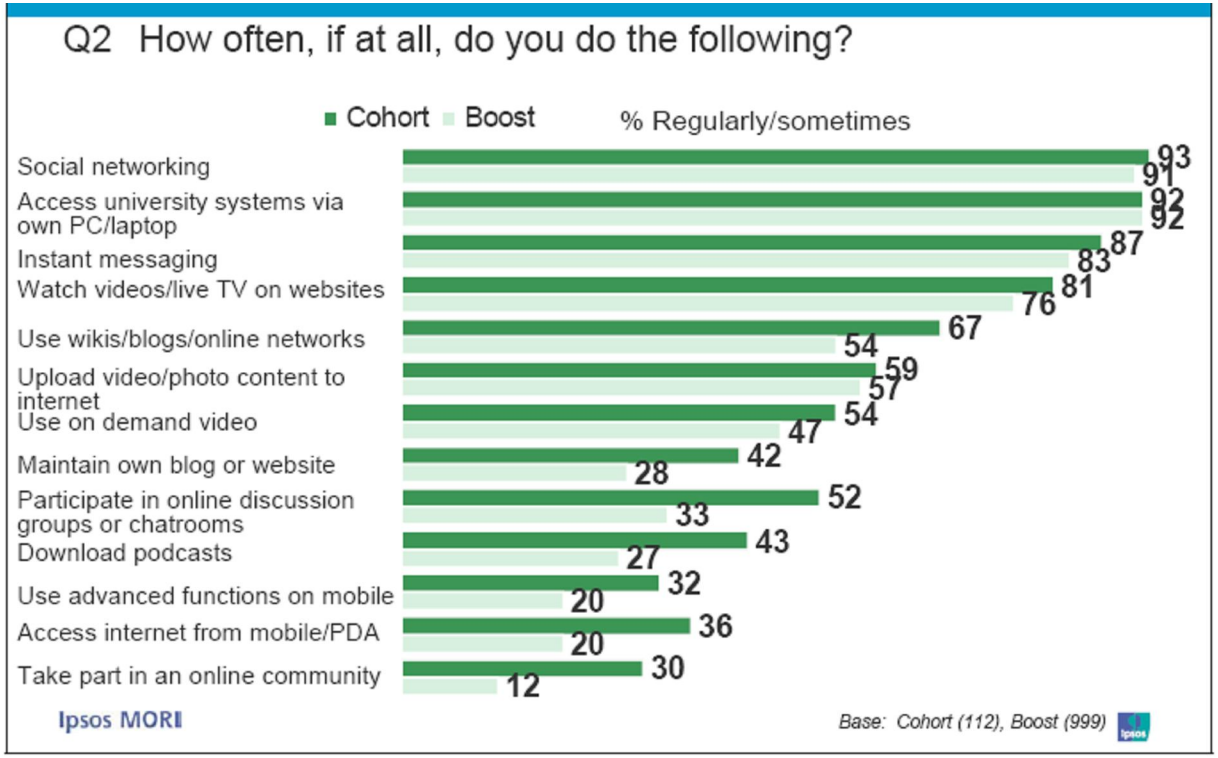
Website Usage



Source: Great Expectations of ICT

how Higher Education Institutions are measuring up

Research study conducted for the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) – Report June 2008

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How much online consumers trust online sources of information

Activity	Percentage
Opinion of a friend or acquaintance who has used the product or service	83%
A review of the product or service in a newspaper, magazine or on TV	75%
Information on company's website	69%
A review of a known expert	63%
Consumer reviews on a retailer's site	60%
Consumer reviews by users on a content site	52%
Information at online consumer opinion sites	50%
An online review by the editors of a content site	49%
Information in online chat rooms or discussion boards	37%
An online review by a blogger	30%

Source: Forrester 2006 Media & Marketing Online Survey

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Monthly participation in online activities

Participation in online activities	Percentage
Watch video from other users	29%
Read online forums or discussion groups	28%
Visit social networking sites	25%
Read customer ratings/reviews	25%
Read blogs	25%
Update/maintain a profile on a social networking site	20%
Add comments to someone's page on a social networking site	18%
Contribute to online forums or discussion groups	18%
Listen to or download audio/music from other users	14%
Comment on someone else's blog	14%
Upload photos to a public Web site	13%

Participation in online activities	Percentage
Post ratings/reviews of products or services	11%
Publish, maintain, or update a blog	11%
Publish/update your own web pages	11%
Listen to podcasts	11%
Use a desktop widget	10%
Upload video you created to a public Web site	8%
Use RSS	8%
Upload audio/music you created to a public Web site	8%
Add tags to Web pages, online photos, etc	7%
"Vote" for Web sites online	7%
Write articles, stories, poems, etc and post them online	7%
Contribute to/edit articles in a wiki	6%
Use Twitter	5%

Source: Forrester's Social Technographics Online Survey 2007
Survey sample size 10,000

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Social Media information sites

facebook

YouTube
Broadcast Yourself

WIKIPEDIA

The Student Room

whatuni.com

yougo further

PUSH
...like it is
The ruthlessly independent guide to UK universities

Unistats
from universities and colleges in the UK

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Online chatter

” Was by far the nicest Uni I looked at”

”xxxx is my firm! I was soooo happy when the offer came through that I immediately knew that I wanted to go there. The campus is beautiful, the courses are brilliant (English Literature and Creative Writing in my case; and it just seems like a generally wonderful place.”

” I had an interview there recently and it struck me that apart from two guys and myself there were only white people. Don't take this the wrong way; I'm just curious if my observation reflects the universities population as a whole.”

” Temporarily sharing accommodation, Whaaaatttt??!!”

“If Carlsberg made a university it would be the University of xxxx”

“I’ve fallen asleep in a lecture at the University of xxxx”

Within 30 mins online I found a total of 136 different discussion threads ranging from application, confirmation of places, sports and societies, accommodation and orientation discussions

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Questions?

Do you know where your institution is mentioned online?

How many times is your institution mentioned online?

How many times are your competitors mentioned online?

Do you want your customers to be discussing your institution online?

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What do students want?

- Authenticity
- Trust
- No marketing agenda
- PLU
- Going through the same experience
- No effort
- BUT….
- How accurate?
- Subjective?

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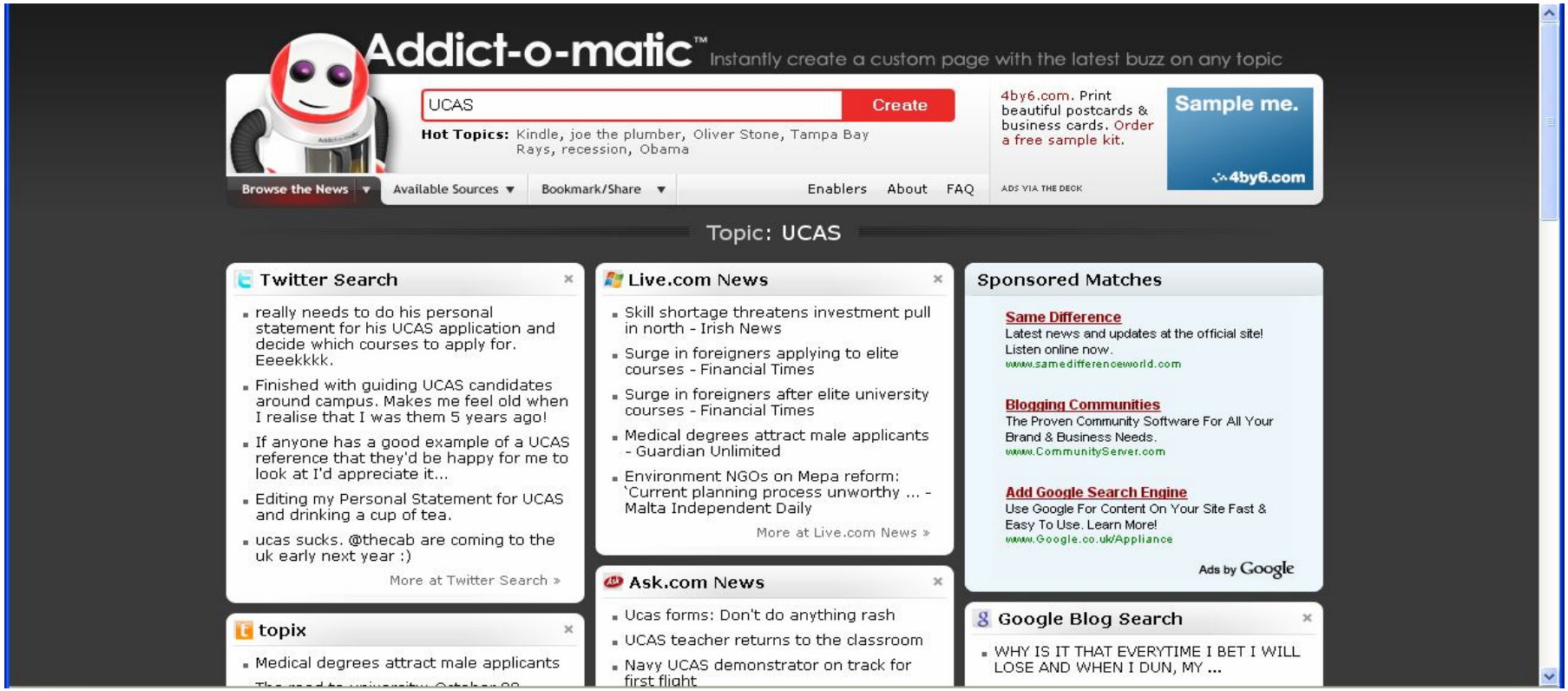
Getting a clear view of online chatter



http://addictomatic.com/

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How can universities embrace social media with students online?

UCAS application process is seen by students as first step to sourcing a space at university or college

UCAS recognised the need to communicate with students within an environment which they are comfortable with that is safe and secure and credible

UCAS embarked over Confirmation and Clearing 2008 a campaign to use its own student networking site yougo (www.yougofurther.co.uk) to communicate with applicants

The campaign comprised of

- **UCAS on yougo profile**
- **UCAS daily webchats on yougo reacting to questions asked by applicants and answered by a dedicated team of UCAS customer services advisors**

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UCAS on yougo campaign

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UCAS on yougo results

20,240 page impressions

53 total number of webchats including one ever weekday between July 1 and September 20 (clearing period)

7,682 unique visitors to the UCAS on yougo profile page

3,587 of them return

1,575 enquiries received (20.5% of unique visitors are interacting with UCAS)

1,691 users have made UCAS on yougo their friend.

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The future, how universities can use web 2.0 to influence students applications decisions

Following the success of UCAS on yougo

UCAS is set to launch of a new www.yougofurther.co.uk aimed at the pre applicant audience as well as UCAS applicants and beyond

The new look yougo is positioning itself close to the UCAS brand and will aim to deliver timely and credible information to its audience in a personalised way

New features will allow a university or college to have a official yougo profile which will be viewable to pre applicants before they make their final decisions on where to apply

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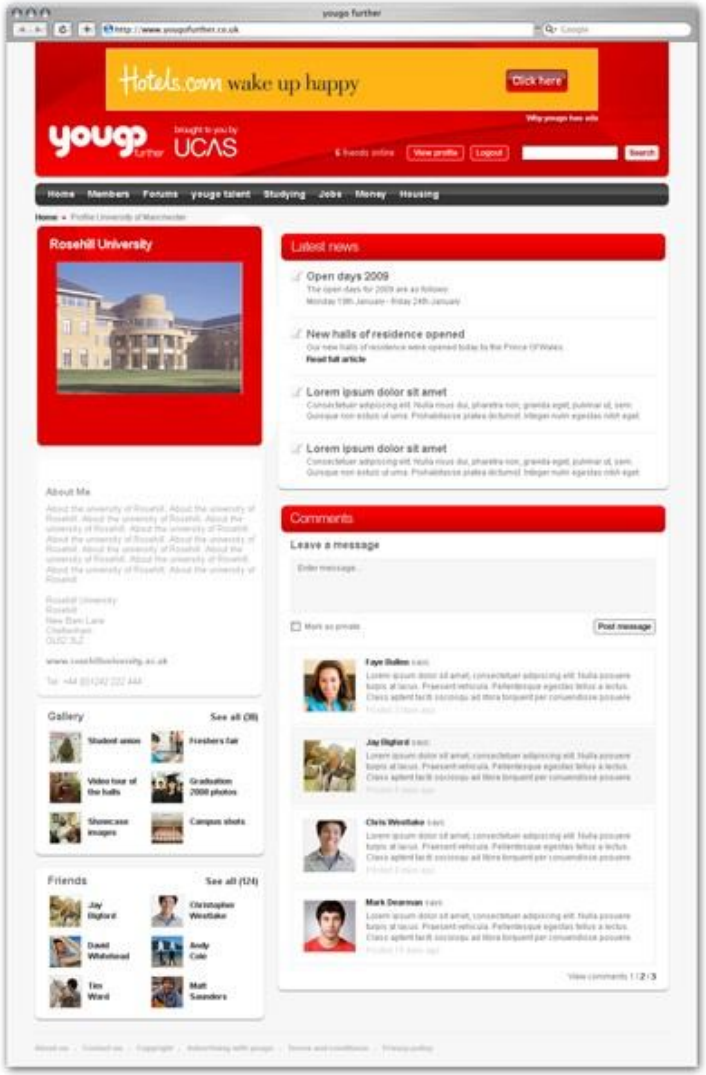
University profile page on yougo



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Questions?

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