

OUR VIEW

Facebook offers more than procrastination

One of your closest friends — someone you, me and the guy sitting next to you in the computer lab all know intimately — just had a birthday. Our mutual friend: Facebook.

Last week marked the fifth year of Facebook's existence, and a change in the way all of us (at least 99.9 percent of us) interact socially. We all are closer than we ever have been before. Just by browsing the statuses of a couple hundred of your closest "friends," you become connected. We know what's his face — that cute guy in chemistry class — was sick last Wednesday. We know that girl from high school gained weight, lost weight, got married and had two children. No, we didn't actually physically talk to the chemistry cutie or the former high school acquaintance. So how do we know the totally mundane nitty gritty details of each other's lives? We checked our Facebooks, of course.

The most fascinating part of Facebook's birthday is reflecting on the tremendous growth in the diversity of its users. When it began Facebook only was available to Harvard students, then all of the Ivy League, then all students with .edu e-mail addresses and now anyone can access it. Your friends from high school and college aren't your only friends anymore. Your second grade teacher, your mom, your great-aunt, your professor and your future employer all are on Facebook too. Wait, your professors? Maybe its time to stop posting drunken pictures. Wait, future employers? Maybe its time to stop posting pictures all together — or deactivate our accounts.

Now, hold on there. Dismissing Facebook as just a place for hormonally charged college students to gather electronically does the site a disservice. Facebook is a place

to help people network, and who needs to network more than college students facing graduation and a job search? By using Facebook as a place to build a pool of contacts and to keep in touch with them remotely, we, the future workers of the world, can get a step up on the competition. The real issue is striking a balance between too much information and useful sharing. Using common sense is helpful in this circumstance—for example when posting pictures: drunken Jacuzzi pictures no, friends at dinner yes. We're not advocating being square, just sensible.

As tricky as the future employer conundrum is, the biggest dilemma students are facing when it comes to networking with the more mature crowd is: To friend or not to friend your professor? Obviously, you don't want to friend the professor who gave you a D last semester, but what about the professor whose class you really enjoyed? Your friends might want to call you creepy, but really is it too much to assume college students have reached a level of maturity where it is possible to interact socially with people who aren't your peers? If we aren't able to do that, college has done us a disservice. By networking with the people you are learning from, really useful and eye opening relationships can happen — post-graduate relationships.

Just think about it this way: If you are procrastinating late at night for a test the next day, nothing would be cooler than being able to go on Facebook chat to ask your professor for a last few minute study tips. If networking is done with discretion, it can become another helpful tool in your pre and post graduate life.

So go on ahead, friend them. You know you want to add to your friend count anyway.

CORRECTIONS

To submit corrections or to contact the editor, please e-mail index@truman.edu, call us at 660-785-4449, or send a letter to Index, 1200 Barnett Hall, Truman State University, Kirksville, Mo. 63501.

- In a graphic on page 15 of the Feb. 5 issue of the Index, Lincoln University was incorrectly identified as adding volleyball, men's soccer, and women's soccer to their roster of sports. In reality, they only are adding women's soccer and volleyball.
- Former Truman professor Mary Giovannini was incorrectly identified as Head academic adviser Marianna Giovannini on page 14 of the Feb. 5 issue of the Index.
- In a story on page 11 on the Feb. 5 issue of the Index, student Opeyemi Amosu's surname was misspelled as Amuso.

CARTOON

BY ERIN NEUMAN



Letters to the Editor

Column lacks real analysis of University budget issue

It might be time to rethink who is published in the opinions section of this newspaper. My first response to reading the column "Simple fixes relieve budget Crisis" in the Jan. 29 issue of the Index was to thank God that Jackie Gonzalez isn't president.

Apparently Gonzalez's communication and history majors have given her extraordinary insight into the realms of business and accounting for large-scale budgets. Almost every one of her suggested changes would not go far enough, or they are simply asinine in the assumptions they make. Getting rid of the USA Today? Fine. Great idea. But while we're at it, let's go a little further. If the USA Today is like the McDonald's of newspapers, then the Index would be the Hot Pocket equivalent. Stopping a newspaper that is read for enjoyment seems a little hypocritical, doesn't it? Unless providing articles that appear to be written by a high school English class that fail to inspire confidence in our newspaper is what the Index is all about, in which case a congratulations is in order. Doesn't Truman Today also play the same role that the Index does, while saving the paper and ink by being online? If I were pretentious enough to suggest ways to fix the budget, I would keep the smarter workers of Truman Today and the Index and fuse the two in order to save some money.

The SAB has too much money? But doesn't the student body vote to increase the amount we give them? Isn't it the majority who decides whether it is a good investment to provide entertainment for a population of students who live in a town relatively devoid of recreational activities? The column says, "If I were an SAB member, I'd feel pretty

guilty right now." Wow. If I were you Miss Gonzalez, I would start writing with a pen name and try to incorporate some level of integrity in my writing.

I will not comment on the student workers who sort out printed paper because I am one of the students employed to do so — it would be inappropriate for me to discuss the subject.

To suggest more money for the Career Center would be just as wasteful as keeping the Index around. In the three times that I have gone there to seek an internship or campus job, the only thing I am told is "Well, have you signed up for the e-recruiting yet? That's where all the campus jobs are posted. And you can use internships.com for the other one." Except that only a small percentage of the campus jobs are posted on the e-recruiting Web site, and the rest are received by talking to professors. Which professors? Just go ask around. If the point of the Career Center is to direct the students to a Web site or two, why do they need more money? For that matter, why do they need more than one worker?

I don't consider myself unreasonable when I point out some of the flaws in Gonzalez's logic. I think the opinions of perceptive students would be a great thing to read. I also understand those are not the views of the Index. But the fact is that you allowed a dense column to be published as a representation of the opinions of Truman students, insulting me and every other Truman student who is represented by the newspaper and making me question the level of intelligence of the entirety of the Index.

David Goddard
Senior

Halt to digital conversion needs to be permanent

Like many students and Kirksville residents, I have become fatigued by KTVO newscasters and Index reporters constantly reminding me about the oncoming digital TV conversion.

The Democrat-controlled Congress has just reversed, at least on the short term, the conversion deadline caused by corporate TV capitalists and postponed the change to June 12, 2009. This reveals how the federal government, under the business-minded Bush-Cheney administration, has now run out of cost-reduction conversion rebates. Astonishingly, an estimated 12 million residents of this once prosperous country lack the resources to afford the conversion costs.

This is just a sample of the corporate conversion extortion by private greed masquerading as technological necessity. False conservative administrators make the extra tax impost compulsory, a conversion en masse from analog to digital, at all, in the very first instance. This originated in the late 1990s when the conservative Republican Congress made it hard to find American computers that play different countries' regional TV or DVDs.

More than just a partially forestalled TV conversion debate, what's at stake is a whole set of choices for President Obama and Congress to make. There's a real social future for a retained analog service if Congress realizes what the digital conversion is really pushing. Write to Congress and President Obama to extend the merciful reprieve deadline extension. Digital TV is nothing more than another example of coolly conformist frivolity.

Larry Iles
Kirksville Resident

INDEX

Serving the University community since 1909

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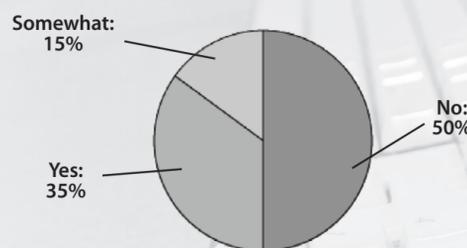
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WEB POLL

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