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Don't Worry Mom, I'm at the Library: Making Connections with Undergraduate Students

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Don’t worry - We’re at the Library!
For the past three years Western Libraries has introduced our services, collections and facilities to students via a welcome tent erected during orientation week. A great deal of planning goes into creating interactive and meaningful orientation displays that will capture attention and educate students about the role of the academic library as a physical and a virtual space!
Don't Worry Mom, I'm at the Library: Connecting with Undergrads

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London, ON Canada
Welcome

What we’ll cover this morning:

Orientation at Western, A Short History


Looking Forward, Where We’re Going
Orientation at Western

A Short History...

Local Context(s)

✓ Campus Culture
✓ Library Culture
Orientation at Western (cont'd)

Impetuous for Change...

✓ New Focus on Campus Outreach
✓ New Hires (Interests / Skills Set)
✓ A Fresh Approach Considered

How it all got started...

✓ The Idea
How it all got started...

✓ The Pitch (2005)

• support from library administration (financial / institutional)
• marketing proposal (goals & objectives, available and required resources, local suppliers, budget)
Looking Back (2005)

How it all got started...

✓ The Planning Process
  • made contacts (on and off campus)
  • solicited and coordinated volunteers
  • garnered support for system –wide participation
  • ensured staff were encouraged / prepared

How it all got started...

✓ Western Libraries ‘Welcome Tent’
  • each September, during O-Week
  • three years = three unique themes
  • thousands of visitors each year
Looking Back (2005)

‘Just Try to Graduate Without Us’

Session 1715: Don’t Worry Mom, I’m at The Library: Connecting with Undergrads
Looking Back (2006)

‘Lost’

Session 1715: Don’t Worry Mom, I’m at The Library: Connecting with Undergrads
Looking Back (2007)

‘The Library’
(http://ca.youtube.com/watch?v=-Pq78OoqnK4)

Session 1715: Don’t Worry Mom, I’m at The Library: Connecting with Undergrads
Looking Back (2008)

‘Always In Style’

Session 1715: Don’t Worry Mom, I’m at The Library: Connecting with Undergrads
Looking Back (2005 - 2008)

Library Swag!
Lessons Learned...

✓ each year a success
✓ careful planning required EVERY year
✓ allow adequate time for planning
✓ involve those who are passionate
✓ document the process (assessment)
Looking Forward

✓ Communications & Outreach Librarian (February 2006)

✓ Communications & Marketing Team (February 2008)

That, the proposed communication / marketing team be given a mandate to coordinate and support marketing strategies by:

• creating space for sharing of ideas
• generating effective campaigns
• liaising with other campus groups; and
• facilitating the process of relevant advertising and communication in all locations
Looking Forward

Session 1715: Don’t Worry Mom, I’m at The Library: Connecting with Undergrads
Looking Forward

It’s too noisy in here to think. This is a quiet study area not a shopping mall.

We asked and you told us: the library is too loud.

Library etiquette. It starts with you.

Session 1715: Don’t Worry Mom, I’m at The Library: Connecting with Undergrads
I spent five minutes cleaning up your mess before I could begin my studying.

We asked and you told us: This place is a mess! Please clean up after yourself.

**Library etiquette. It starts with you.**
Looking Forward (Orientation 2009)

✓ Communications & Marketing Subcommittee

✓ encourage individual libraries to continue engaging their users

✓ ‘Welcome’ vs. ‘The Rules’ (strive for balance)

✓ user-centred approach

✓ Assessment
Thank you

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