

Reesenews Metrics Report, Fall 2010

For this report, website metrics were gathered from Adobe SiteCatalyst (Omniiture), Facebook metrics from Facebook Insights and video metrics from Brightcove analytics. Unless noted, all metrics are from reesenews.org, not reesefelts.org. All data was gathered on Jan. 7, 2011.

reesenews.org

General site profile

reesenews.org saw the following usage statistics:

Weekly breakdowns exclude weeks during which students were away for winter break (Dec. 19 - Jan. 2). They also exclude launch week (Nov. 1) and the week of Monty Cook's resignation (Nov. 14) which both received significant jumps in traffic. These two outlier weeks are listed separately.

- 97,977 total views
 - Average per "normal" week: 7,603 page-views
 - Launch week: 21,855 page-views
 - Week of Monty Cook's resignation: 31,338 page-views
- 36,445 total visits
 - Average visits per "normal" week: 2,884 visits
 - Launch week: 5,568 visits
 - Week of Monty Cook's resignation: 31,338 page-views
- 33,435 total unique visitors in 2010, 1,247 in 2011
 - Average per "normal" week: 2,640 unique visitors
 - Launch week: 4,729 unique visitors
 - Week of Monty Cook's resignation: 13,392 unique visitors

Weekdays vs. weekends

As is the norm for Internet sites, reesenews received substantially fewer page-views on weekends. The chart below shows page-views for the first 2.5 weeks after the site's launch; note the difference between traffic on Nov. 6, Nov. 7, Nov. 13 and Nov. 14 (weekends) and traffic on all other days:

Date		Selected Period
1. Nov 1, 2010		7,427
2. Nov 2, 2010		6,602
3. Nov 3, 2010		3,539
4. Nov 4, 2010		2,323
5. Nov 5, 2010		1,274
6. Nov 6, 2010		690
7. Nov 7, 2010		631
8. Nov 8, 2010		1,626
9. Nov 9, 2010		1,671
10. Nov 10, 2010		2,080
11. Nov 11, 2010		1,170
12. Nov 12, 2010		1,250
13. Nov 13, 2010		526
14. Nov 14, 2010		653
15. Nov 15, 2010		1,544
16. Nov 16, 2010		1,370
17. Nov 17, 2010		4,579

Recommendations: Avoid posting content to the site on Friday afternoons, or over the weekend. If stories must be posted over the weekend, ensure that they are promoted heavily at the beginning of the next week. Users are simply not on the Internet as often on the weekends, and stories are more likely to be overlooked.

Mobile views

Unsurprisingly, most users did not use a mobile device to view reesenews.org. Of those that did, the majority used either an Apple iPhone or iPad. reesenews.org received the following mobile usage statistics:

- iPhone: 2,083 page-views (2.1% of total page-views). 43% of mobile views came from an iPhone.
- iPad: 1,235 page-views (1.3% of total page-views). 25.5% of mobile views came from an iPad.
- iPod Touch: 306 page-views (0.3% of total page-views). 6.3% of mobile views came from an iPod Touch.
- HTC Droid Incredible: 158 page-views (0.1% of total page-views). 3.3% of mobile views came from an iPod Touch.

Recommendations: Mobile users are likely to be in the “information pilot” (young, tech-savvy, information-seeking) psychographic outlined by the advertising campaigns class.

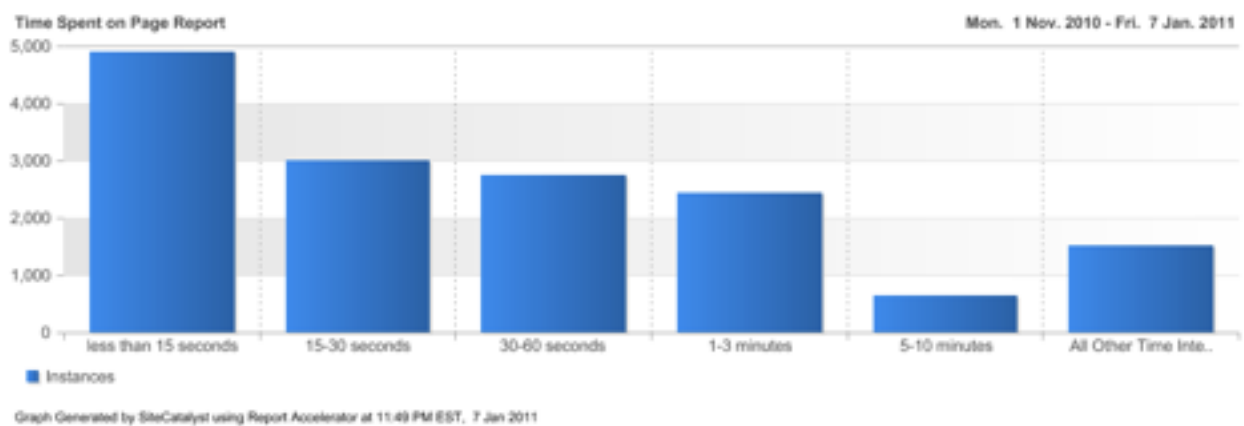
Because these users make up a somewhat sizable minority of users, consider offering a special “mobile-only” task or feature on the site to attract these users.

General homepage metrics

Time spent on homepage

Most users spend very little time on the homepage of reesenews.org.

32.2% of homepage-views are 15 seconds or less; 19.8% are 15-30 seconds; 18% are 30-60 seconds, and 16% are 1-5 minutes:



Single-page visits to homepage

14.14% of visitors who enter reesenews.org through the homepage exit without visiting any other pages. Of the homepage's 32,793 visits, 4,636 were single-page visits.

Referrals

Note: Percentages listed here are for external referrals only; they do not include internal referrals from within the reesenews.org domain. 48,808 of reesenews' 97,977 total page-views were the result of external referrals.

External referrals to the reesenews.org domain (the entire site, not just the homepage) are broken down as follows:

Referrals by type

Referrer Type Report Legend

- Typed/Bookmarked
- Other Web Sites
- Social Networks
- Search Engines



Graph Generated by SiteCatalyst using Report Accelerator at 11:28 PM EST, 9 Jan 2011

- Typed/bookmarked: 18,141 (37.2% of total external referrals)

This captures users who simply type "reesenews.org" into their URL bar. However, it also captures some social media data: because referrals from desktop-based social media clients (such as TweetDeck) originate outside the web browser, these are categorized as typed/bookmarked referrals.

- Referrals from other web sites 15,909 (32.6% of total external referrals)
- Social network sites: 9,505 (19.5% of total external referrals)
 - Facebook: 6,053 (12.4% of total external referrals)
 - Twitter: 2,537 (5.2% of total external referrals)
- Search engines: 5,247 (10.8% of total external referrals)

Top 10 referring domains

Note: Several of these domains (specifically newsobserver.com, insidehighered.com, poynter.org and charlotteobserver.com) are top referrers specifically because they linked to reesenews in an article about Monty Cook's resignation.

1. Facebook: Statistics above
2. Google: 4,972 (10.2% of total external referrals)
3. NewsObserver.com: 2,642 (5.4% of total external referrals)
4. Twitter: Statistics above
5. InsideHigherEd.com: 1,718 (3.5% of total external referrals)

6. Poynter.org: 1,371 (2.8% of total external referrals)
7. CharlotteObserver.com: 1,270 (2.6% of total external referrals)
8. Scout.com: 1,229 (2.5% of total external referrals)
9. UNC.edu: 986 (2.0% of total external referrals)
10. Rivals.com: 831 (1.7% of total external referrals)

Other notable referrers

- Yahoo and AOL (referrals from each come almost entirely from emails sent on the service) have sent 479 and 152 referrals to the site, respectively.
- Outbrain has sent 373 referrals, Stumbleupon has sent 346, and Reddit has sent 158.
- Smaller blogs tend to send a small number of page-views to individual stories; for instance, Bibdaily.com (which writes about immigration issues) sent 25 referrals, BarefootRunners.com sent 20 referrals. DailyJS.com (which writes about javascript) sent 36 referrals to a blog post on reesefelts.org, according to WordPress Stats. Each of these sent page-views to stories related to the blog subject matter.
- Nightlightclub.com sent 106 referrals to the site (the site included a link to the “Behind the Scene” story on the club).

Takeaways and recommendations:

- Media blogs and education blogs are important sources of traffic. Several of these blogs (such as InsideHigherEd.com) have not been included in our PR outreach efforts so far, but should be in the future.
- Sports forums are important sources of traffic.
- The Outbrain recommendation boxes at the bottom of stories are seeing a moderate amount of use; the service is worth keeping.
- Although reesenews’ StumbleUpon campaign needs improvements (see “Social media” section) the service has already referred a moderate number of page-views to the site.
- reesenews does not yet have a presence on Reddit, but one should be established.
- While smaller blogs tend to send only a few dozen page-views to the site, blogger outreach efforts to smaller blogs should be continued. Not only do these page-views

add up between blogs and overtime, they are made by visitors to the site are interested in a certain topic and who will read and share reesenews content on that topic.

- The Nightlight referrals show that story sources have the potential to drive traffic to the site (they are connected to a network of topically interested people, like many blogs). Once a story is completed (especially a feature story), reporters should encourage sources to share the story on websites or through other channels.

Top story profiles

Note: The relative abundance of traffic to reesenews' top 10 stories means that these stories are most likely to provide reliable data for general story page analysis. For this reason, these stories are used here as case studies.

See the Reesenews Top Story Profiles, Fall 2010 PDF for story metrics.

Additional notes on the story "Reesenews producer Monty Cook resigns"

- This story produced our largest spike in site traffic, substantially larger than the spike on launch day. It produced a spike in traffic to other elements of the site as well, including page-views to other stories and video views.
- The absence of Facebook likes for this story can be attributed to the fact this that is a negative story, and so not a story one would necessarily "like."
- 548 clicks were made to the story's 2nd page of comments; this means that about 10.2% of those who viewed the page after the second page of comments existed clicked through to view those comments. This shows that many users were interested in the discussion that occurred between commenters, and that this discussion can be considered valuable site content.

Top external referrerring domains (broken down by percentage of external referrals per story):

Reesenews producer Monty Cook resigns

1. InsideHigherEd.com: 20.9%

2. Poynter.org: 13.9%
3. Twitter.com: 9.9%
4. Facebook: 8.2%
5. Gawker.com: 6.9%

The return of 'The Rat'

1. Google: 24.6%
2. Scout.com: 18.4%
3. Facebook: 13.3%
4. TarHeelTimes.com: 10.7%
5. Twitter: 4.0%

The Hillside Journey, Part V

1. StingTalk.com: 28.5%
2. Scout.com: 24.4%
3. Rivals.com: 14.9%
4. Google.com: 7.4%
5. HighSchoolot: 6.4%

Following tradition, students go streaking

1. Facebook: 46.3%
2. Twitter: 15.3%
3. Reddit: 8.9%
4. Google: 7.1%
5. AOL (email): 1.0%

The Hillside Journey, Part VI

1. Scout.com: 57.5%
2. Rivals.com: 15.2%
3. Google: 6.4%
4. Facebook: 6.1%

5. HighSchoolOT.com: 5.1%

NCAA probe: Staying in bounds

1. Facebook: 42.5%

2. TarHeelTimes.com: 19.4%

3. Twitter: 14.3%

4. Yahoo (email): 1.4%

5. Google: 1.1%

The Hillside Journey, Part IV

1. Rivals.com: 48.2%

2. HighSchoolOT.com: 8.1%

3. Google: 6.5%

4. Yahoo (email): 5.8%

5. Facebook: 4.4%

With a GPS and a car, the doctor is in

1. Google: 15.0%

2. Facebook: 7.8%

3. Yahoo (email): 3.2%

4. MCVH-VCU: 2.5%

5. Twitter: 2.0%

The stories behind the DREAM Act

1. Facebook: 31.2%

2. Google: 12.0%

3. Twitter: 6.1%

4. BibDaily: 5.7%

5. Yahoo (email): 2.3%

Takeaways and Recommendations:

- **Most story traffic does not come from the reesenews.org homepage.** Links from external sites referred substantially more traffic for most stories than did internal pages (including the reesenews.org homepage). This is indicative of web users' information-seeking behavior; they are more likely to use search engines, rely on their friends, and link directly to stories from other sources than to check the homepage. For these reasons, social media and PR/marketing initiatives are very important to sustain a high level of story traffic.
- **Forums (especially Scout.com, NCPreps.com and StingTalk.com) are important sources of story-level traffic.** These online communities are comprised of users who are interested in a specific topic (such as UNC sports) and who trust one another to share interesting links and information. However, many forums have rules against self-promotion; for this reason, a reesenews account cannot be made to promote stories on these sites. Instead, a relationship might be built with particular forum members via email and other online communication channels. Then, in a way similar to reesenews' current blogger outreach initiatives, those members might be encouraged to share reesenews content themselves.
- **For some stories, the Facebook like button sees no use, and for others it sees a substantial amount.** Most notably, the button tends to see either zero or dozens of clicks, with no in-between. This may be evidence of a kind of "herding effect" among users, where users do not want to be one of the first to "like" a story and are more likely to "like" the story if others already have.
 - For this reason, newsroom staff should be encouraged to "like" stories on the site, in order to spark subsequent "likes" from users.
 - In addition, the Facebook like button should be moved to the floating ShareThis tools column on the left side of the story page. It is likely that users are overlooking the button while viewing story pages; research cited in the reesenews usability reports says that users look scan pages by looking at the top-left part of the page first, then the center, the left and finally the right (where the Facebook like button resides).
- **The email button on the top right-hand side of story pages (underneath the comments icon) is seeing little use.** Because an email icon already exists in the

floating ShareThis tools column, and because the ShareThis tools were well-liked among usability test participants, this button should be removed.

- When clicked, the ShareThis email button currently opens a box that asks the user to send the email directly from the webpage, and to import their contacts from gmail and other email clients. Users are not used to sending emails this way, and this is likely to deter users from sharing the story. Instead, the button should open the user's preferred email program directly, if possible.
- **The LinkedIn share tool was not heavily used, relative to the other share tools; however, the tool should be kept as-is.** As LinkedIn continues to build information-sharing initiatives and features (like LinkedIn Signal) into its site, LinkedIn shares may become more-heavily used. In addition, because of the nature of the service, users are more likely to use LinkedIn to share a story to their professional network; this network is likely to share the user's professional interests, and so LinkedIn shares may be an efficient way for users to bring in others who may be interested in a particular story or topic.

Video views

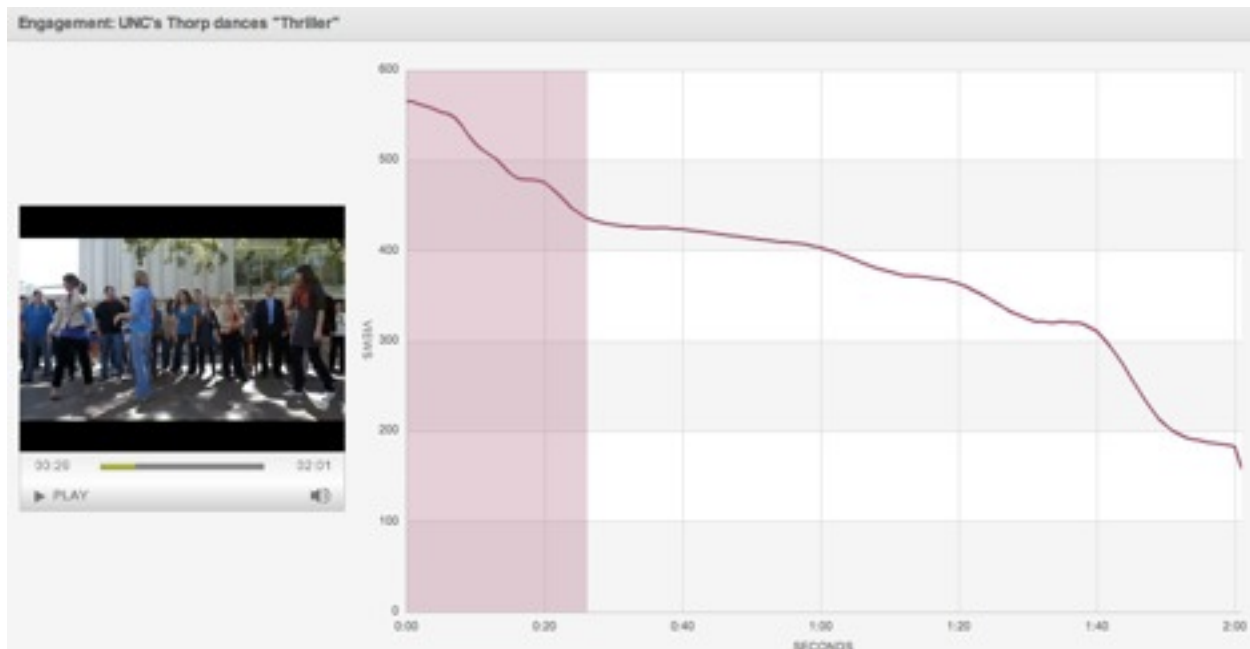
Attention Span

Viewers have short attention spans. Views on all reesenews videos drop off steadily throughout, and most videos end with less than 50% of the viewers with which they began. Below is a breakdown of the 5 most highly-viewed videos, the number of views they received, and the percentage viewers who watched both 75% of the way and 100% of the way through the video:

Video	Total views	% of viewers who watched 75%	% of viewers who watched 100%
The UNC Streaking Tradition	708	44%	29%
UNC's Thorp dances "Thriller"	581	53%	29%

Video	Total views	% of viewers who watched 75%	% of viewers who watched 100%
A Franklin Street Halloween	366	64%	59%
Dance Marathon Recruitment Week	289	52%	31%
Reesenews 11pm Election Update	234	56%	48%

The “UNC’s Thorp dances ‘Thriller’” makes for an interesting case study in viewer attention. Below is a graph of time vs. number of viewers for the video. Viewers drop off steadily while watching, but how they drop off is interesting. The actual “Thriller” dance in the video starts at the 26-second mark, which is highlighted on the graph. Before this point, viewers drop off at a relatively high rate: the video loses about 131 viewers in its first 25 seconds, a rate of about 5.25 viewers/second. However, once the dance starts, viewers drop off at a significantly slower rate: only about 115 leave in a period of about 50 seconds, a rate of about 2.3 viewers/second. Once the video ends, at about the 1:15 mark, viewers begin to drop off at a higher rate again:



Recommendations: If viewers are not “hooked” at the beginning of the video, they are likely to leave. If a video promises to deliver a specific piece of content rather than a comprehensive news story, like was the case with Thorp dancing the “Thriller,” ensure that the content is delivered as soon as possible. Also, the choice to remove the reesenews introduction graphic was a good one.

Some top-level videos are overlooked on story pages

It seems that some videos are overlooked on story pages, even if they are placed at the top of the story. This may be because, even when a video is placed at the top of a story page, the video’s “play” button does not appear unless the video is moused-over. For this reason, some viewers may confuse the video with a simple graphic. Note the following differences between page-views and video views:

- The story “With a GPS and a car, the doctor is in” received 596 page-views, but the video received only 76 views.
- The “All Day Records” story received 248 page-views, but the video received only 91 views.
- The story “Barefoot runners embrace: ‘less is more’” received 452 page-views, but the video received only 160 views.

Recommendations: Ensure that each video’s play button is visible even when it is not being moused over.

YouTube

The video “UNC’s Thorp Dances Thriller” was [posted to YouTube](#), where it received an additional 424 views. The video “A Franklin Street Halloween” was also [posted](#), where it received 629 views.

Recommendations: YouTube is a valuable platform for distributing and sharing content, and may be used to both increase awareness about reesenews and to reach a

wider audience with site content. A system is being developed to post all reesenews videos to YouTube; this initiative should be made a priority.

Other elements and pages

Administrative pages

- The reesenews “About” page is the fourth most-viewed page on the site, with 1,890 page-views (1.9% of all page-views to the site). 68.78% of visitors arrived at the page through somewhere within reesenews.org, while 31.22% of visitors arrived at the page through an external source (such as a Poynter blog post on reesenews, or through a search engine). 51.56% of visitors who view the “About” page go on to read another page on reesenews.
- The Terms of Service is receiving few page-views. The Terms of Service link in the footer of the reesenews homepage has received only 14 clicks since the site launched, and the page has received only 39 views total.
- Most other pages linked to from the reesenews footer are receiving few page-views, and are links in the footer are not often clicked. Clicks and page-views to reesenews.org pages (not reesefelts.org pages, which are not tracked by Omniture) are broken down below:
 - “Community”: 23 clicks to footer link, 89 page-views total
 - “Guidelines”: 7 clicks to footer link, 33 page-views total
 - “Feeds”: 18 clicks to footer link, 60 page-views total
 - “FAQ”: 34 clicks to footer link, 118 page-views total
 - “Get Involved”: 34 clicks to footer link, 91 page-views total
 - “Republish our Articles”: 21 clicks to footer link, 76 page-views total.
 - “Corrections and Clarifications”: 20 clicks to footer link, 63 total.

Recommendations:

- Links in the reesenews footer are often ignored. Because the “About” page is highly-viewed, and because about one of every two users view another reesenews page after visiting the page, this page should be used to refer users to other less-viewed

administrative pages. Links to the the community guidelines, the “How to Get Involved” page, the FAQ, the Terms of Service, and other pages should be embedded within the About page lead users to important site information. Because the “About” page is already linked to in the nav bar, this page can act as a community or information hub.

- The Terms of Service should be moved to the top of the page, both to boost traffic to the page and for legal reasons (which have been discussed in meetings with Woody Hayward).
- The Reese Felts blog is hard to find on the site.

Sidebar elements

- Sidebar elements are generally overlooked by users. The following stories were used as case studies:

“Reesenews Director Monty Cook Resigns” (14,707 total views)

- Dean Folkerts’ letter received 263 total clicks; Monty’s resignation letter is registering no clicks as a sidebar element, likely due to a ClickMap glitch; the link to Monty’s resignation letter from within the text received 248 clicks; the timeline of events received six clicks (if the graphic was changed and re-uploaded after its initial upload, this may have resulted in lost data and may account for the low click count).

“Return of ‘The Rat’” (3,443 total views)

- Photos received 178 total clicks; the Eugene Lyons video received 74 views; the Rodwick Nonn video received 46 views; the Larry Alston video received 43 views.

“With a GPS and a car, the doctor is in” (598 total views)

- The independence at home graphic received five clicks.

“Making noise at Meadows of Dan” (456 total views; main video received 165 views)

- The “Reesenews asks: What is noise?” video received 20 views.

“Craigslist serves as a town marketplace” (400 total views; main video received 25 views)

- Audio interviews received 8, 1 and 3 clicks from top to bottom, respectively. Data on the sidebar video “Marketing on a shoestring at good bones vintage” is unavailable (it does not show up in Brightcove analytics).

“The Cinephile: One student’s ‘shock’-ing cinema” (276 total views; main video received 146 views)

- Part two of the video (the interview with the director) received 19 views.

Note: the story “Halloween comes to Chapel Hill” was also analyzed; however, the photos on the page registered as having received only three clicks. As this was one of the site’s top ten stories and was present on the site during launch, this seems unlikely; data may have been lost if the photos were updated after their initial posting.

Recommendations: Links to sidebar content, especially to audio, should be integrated into the text whenever possible. Links to sidebar videos should be added at the top of story pages, or sidebar videos should be integrated into the main video in some way (similar to the way YouTube displays suggestions at the end of its videos).

“Popular Posts” widget

- ClickMap does not currently have click-tracking data on some of the links in the widget, because these had just been added when this data was collected. However, the widget seems to be performing well; the link to the “Return of ‘The Rat’” story has driven 345 page-views to the page.

Recommendations:

- Data should be gathered regularly from this widget over the coming weeks, and its performance should be properly analyzed.
- If possible, the number of page-views listed under each link in the widget should be changed to say “# in past week” rather than just the number alone. The widget

currently gives the impression that a given story has received a smaller number of total page-views than it actually has.

Polls

- Polls on reesenews.org received an average of 72 votes each. Political polls received significantly higher engagement than non-political polls: the two political polls received an average of 128 votes each, while non-political polls received an average of 44 votes each.
- Each poll contains a link, at the bottom of the poll widget, to a related reesenews story. Based on available click-map data for the current poll, the link seems to be performing well; the link to the article “Following tradition, students go streaking” received 98 total clicks, while the poll itself received only 40 total votes.

Recommendations:

- Data from poll links should be gathered regularly from this widget over the coming weeks, and link performance should be properly analyzed.
- The poll link should be changed to a lighter color; it may currently be getting overlooked in the clutter of other dark text at the bottom of the widget.
- Overall, a small number of reesenews’ weekly visitors vote in the weekly poll. Consider moving the poll above the tip box, which has been rarely used by users.
- To encourage interested visitors to vote, consider embedding the weekly poll at the bottom of its related story.

Tip Box

- The tip box on the right-rail of the homepage has received only seven tips total since the site’s launch.

Recommendations: The tip box should be promoted more heavily in the spring, and tip submitters should be emailed and thanked. Reporters should be encouraged to tell sources about the box, so those sources can submit any future leads they come across. A link to the tip box should be included in email footers and other correspondences

between reesenews and the community. In addition, the box should be made more graphically appealing so it catches the viewer's eye ([Gizmodo's](#) tip box is a good example).

Follow buttons

- The follow buttons in the top-right section of the homepage are not often used. The various buttons have received the following numbers of clicks since the site's launch:
 - Facebook: 52
 - Twitter: 33
 - LinkedIn: 5
 - Flickr: 5
 - YouTube: 9
 - Digg: 3
 - StumbleUpon: 2
 - Vimeo: 3
 - Foursquare: 8
 - RSS: 25

Recommendations:

- A Facebook "like" box that includes photos of users should be added (research shows that Facebook "like" boxes that include faces receive 2-3 times more clicks than boxes without faces).
- A "Follow us on Twitter" link should be added to the Twitter stream on the right-rail, and the Twitter stream should be moved above the tip box, if possible.
- A social media page should be added that includes reasons why users should follow reesenews on various social media sites ("Follow us on Twitter for...") and more detailed information about reesenews' activity on those sites (recently-uploaded YouTube videos and Flickr photos, recent tips on Foursquare, etc.)

Area info

- The area info pages have received a moderate number of page-views. The Chapel Hill information page has received the most views, with 163. Carrboro has received 97, Raleigh 56, and Cary 52. Bynum and Morrisville have each received the least views, with 11 each.
- These pages received the vast majority of their views in the days following the site's launch. For instance, the Chapel Hill page received 28 on Nov. 1, 25 on Nov. 2, and 32 on Nov. 3. Views then dropped off: the page has not received more than nine page-views on any single day since Nov. 4, and has not received more than seven page-views on any week in December.

Recommendations: A paragraph should be added to the top of each page explaining its purpose (and stating that the information on the page is not generated by reesenews). The drop-off in page-views suggests that those who viewed the pages during the launch of the site have generally not returned to use the pages as reference tools; this is an opportunity for survey research on what users expect from local news websites. Are users only interested in original content, or are they interested in general information about the local area as well?

Behind the Scene

- Metrics suggest that the [Behind the Scene](#) page needs further changes. The page currently states that the "All Day Records" video is the newest in the series. However, while the page itself has received at least 107 page-views since it was changed (it is unclear whether the page has received more than this, because a similar "Behind the Scene" page is listed in the site metrics as having received hits as well) the "Latest video in the series" image underneath the venn diagram has received only 12 clicks. This means that either users are navigating to the story by using the venn diagram rather than the image link, or the story is overlooked altogether. The All Day Records page itself has received 251 total page-views; only 64 of these page-views came from within reesenews.org (the others arrived from an external source like Facebook or Twitter) and only 32 of the page-views came from the "Behind the Scene" page.

Future research

Changing site elements

In order to research some changing site elements – particularly the light box, links underneath polls, links to stories underneath category boxes on the homepage, links in the popular stories widget – it is necessary to gather ClickMap data in several different batches over an extended period of time. Because all data for this report was gathered on a specific date, these elements were not able to be analyzed. Future research should focus on long-term analysis to properly analyze these features of the site.

Navigation bar

Due to a problem with ClickMap where an important pop-up window is hidden by the navigation bar, data on the bar could not be gathered. This issue needs to be resolved before data on the use of the bar can be analyzed.

Social media

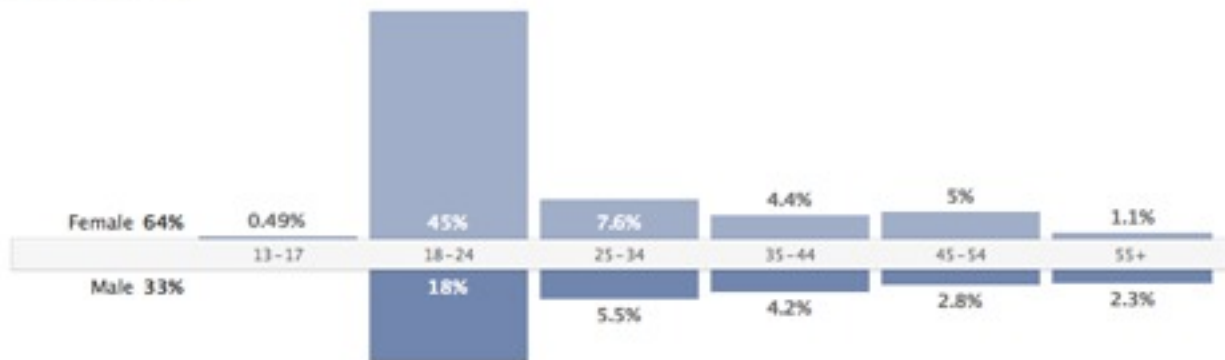
Facebook

All Facebook metrics were gathered through Facebook Insights on Jan. 7, 2011.

Demographic breakdown

Facebook fans are largely comprised of users aged 18-24. Demographics are broken down below:

Gender and Age?



Likes

The reesenews.org Facebook page currently has 617 “likes”. This number has grown steadily overtime, and the page has seen a small number of “unlikes” (only 16 total since the page was launched). See the page’s growth in the graph below:



The page acquired a strong base of fans before reesenews.org’s launch on Nov. 1; on the day before the site’s launch, the Facebook page had 382 “likes.” This is due to a Facebook campaign that was run in the month leading up to launch and that focused on establishing a pre-launch presence on the site.

The campaign included the creation of a custom Facebook landing page, a photo contest and regular updates to the page’s wall. The campaign used the reesenews staff, along with members of an advertising campaigns class that was working with the newsroom, as a “core” of members upon which the page could be built. During the initial campaign, these students and faculty of the school were asked to both join the page

and to encourage their friends to join; the effect of this initial outreach is evident in the large 221-member jump that occurs in the two days following Oct. 11.

The launch of reesenews.org resulted in a second 60-member jump in the two days following Nov. 1. Membership has been growing steadily since then, although the pace has slowed (especially in December, likely due to UNC-Chapel Hill's winter break).

Recommendations: The Facebook page should be highlighted in the spring's various marketing campaigns; the page is a significant source of traffic for reesenews stories (see the reesenews.org referrals section for more information).

Welcome tab vs. wall

The welcome tab and the page wall have received about the same number of views (1,064 to the wall and 1,022 to the welcome tab). This shows that the welcome tab (which all new page visitors see by default) is an important point of contact with new users, and can be continually updated to drive users to action in various ways. The tab currently features several calls to action, one of which is for the user to visit the page's wall.

Per-post statistics

Facebook allows pages to see the number of times a specific post is viewed on that page's wall, or on the news feeds of its members. These "impressions" generally range from 900-1,400 for reesenews Facebook posts. In all, posts have received 40,340 impressions total since the launch of the page.

While posts are being seen by a large number of Facebook users, few posts are "liked" or commented upon; most users simply view content. Only 125 likes or comments have been left on Facebook posts since the launch of the page.

Recommendations: Page engagement should be sparked with a Facebook-based campaign this spring. We discussed several possibilities with the advertising campaigns class at the end of the fall.

Case study: Gingerbread house competition

In December, reesenews hosted a simple gingerbread house competition on its Facebook page. A gingerbread house-building event was being held by a student group at UNC, and reesenews went to take pictures of the houses; these photos were then posted to the Facebook page, where users could then “like” the photos to vote on their favorite. This initiative resulted in a significant spike of activity to the page; over half of the page’s fans were “active” (in that they interacted with page content in some way – by viewing photos, “liking” page elements, etc.) The gingerbread photos received 45 “likes,” and the reesenews.org page itself received 22 new “likes.”

Twitter

The reesenews Twitter page currently has 401 followers. Unlike Facebook, Twitter does not yet have an in-house analytics tool; for this reason, the growth in followers cannot be trended over time. In addition, ShareThis and TweetMeme both provide incomplete data on total Twitter shares, and ShareThis analytics do not provide a way to properly analyze reesenews’ Twitter campaign thus far. ShareThis analytics only provide data on the total times a story was shared on Twitter through the tool, and on the total times a shared link was clicked; in addition this data is only provided for a select number of top stories.

Recommendations: reesenews needs a comprehensive Twitter analysis tool. The tool must have the capability to specifically track engagement (retweets, clicked links and replies) with tweets from the reesenews Twitter account. This would allow reesenews to measure the traffic driven by its Twitter campaign (this data is currently mixed with shares from other Twitter users) and to find its influential followers and retweeters more easily. Use of a custom reesenews Bit.ly short-link may provide such capability.

StumbleUpon

The [reesenews StumbleUpon page](#) has been used to stumble mainly reesenews stories. However, 13 of the 14 reesenews stories posted to StumbleUpon have received

only one view (from when it was initially reviewed). In contrast, the reesenews.org homepage has been viewed 235 times through the service.

Recommendations: reesenews' StumbleUpon presence needs to be strengthened by stumbling a more diverse mix of both reesenews content and third-party content, by leaving reviews on third-party content, and by following other users. Stumbles of third-party content should focus on journalism and new media-related pages, similar to the third-party content shared through the site's Twitter feed. As other users come to trust reesenews for its recommendations, they will follow reesenews back, and hopefully a dialogue can be started between the organization and users on the platform. The newsroom staff can be used as a "core" of followers here, similar to the Facebook page campaign. As reesenews gains more authority on StumbleUpon, the site's algorithms will likely share site content with other stumblers more often.