

III SERVICES

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE REPORT
November 24, 2010 to May 30, 2011

SWEATSHOP-FREE MATERIALS



LOCAL 11 AND 35 BULK PURCHASED MATERIALS

Orientation and welcome week activities represent an important opportunity for students' unions to promote services, campaigns, and events to members. By purchasing promotional materials through the Federation, member locals realise cost savings through increased purchasing power, while ensuring that the materials they receive are ethically manufactured, environmentally friendly, and of a high-quality. The service has become a resource for students' unions to run sweatshop-free orientation week activities, and to promote awareness of the need to purchase fairly traded goods. To assist member locals of all sizes in purchasing materials for their orientation weeks, the Federation subsidises orders.

2011-12 PRODUCTS AND SUPPLIERS

Despite the increased cost of certain source materials, the Federation was able to maintain the same base prices as the previous year.

This year, the number of materials being offered for purchase has been expanded to include large fabric shopping bags, similar to the Federation-branded shopping bags that have been provided to, and proven popular with, delegates at recent general meetings.

MATERIALS MANUFACTURED BY THE SINGLE MOTHERS COOPERATIVE OF EL SALVADOR

As in previous years, the Single Mothers' Cooperative of El Salvador will be supplying all textiles. The Federation has worked in partnership with the Cooperative to supply textile orders to campuses across Canada for the past five years. This relationship has improved the lives of the Cooperative's workers while also serving as a model for supporting fair-trade on campus.

For 2011-12, advanced orders for bags and t-shirts were placed in the early fall to ensure as few delays in printing as possible. The textiles available for purchase will again be 100% cotton and manufactured using mill-ends—the trimmings from other textile mills that would otherwise be sent to landfills. The mill-end spun cotton is sourced locally and leaves a smaller carbon footprint because transportation is minimal.

| QUANTITY PURCHASED | ITEM | 2007-08 | 2008-09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 |
|--------------------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | T-SHIRT | 29,943 | 38,813 | 43,260 | 41,790 | 30,138 |
| | LAUNDRY BAG | 18,462 | 14,020 | 14,760 | 15,168 | 9,450 |
| | TOTE BAG | 18,462 | 24,910 | 15,734 | 14,881 | 5,750 |
| | SHOPPING BAG | - | - | - | - | 13,090 |
| | WATER BOTTLE | 28,850 | 32,210 | 39,340 | 44,560 | 43,800 |
| | CLIPBOARD | 7,755 | 6,910 | 10,740 | 10,054 | 7,400 |
| | PEN | - | 68,300 | 64,900 | 65,910 | 76,300 |
| | LANYARD | - | 21,270 | 12,115 | 18,563 | 13,575 |
| | TRAVEL MUG | - | - | 2,730 | 3,300 | 2,200 |
| | BUTTON | - | - | - | 38,608 | 63,620 |
| | NOTEBOOK | - | - | - | 16,357 | 17,553 |

UNION-MADE WATER BOTTLES, PENS, CLIPBOARDS, LANYARDS, PLASTIC MUGS, AND NOTEBOOKS

All of the non-textile materials produced are either union-made or fairly-made in Canada or the United States of America. Many are made from recycled materials including: water bottles made entirely from post-consumer recycled BPA-free polyethylene (PETE) and union-made in the USA; BPA-free plastic coffee mugs made from 50-70% post-industrial BPA-free recycled plastic and union-made in the USA; lanyards made from recycled pop bottles; union-made notebooks produced using 100% FSC certified post-consumer recycled material; and union-made buttons and clipboards.

YEAR-ROUND PURCHASING

The 2010-11 school year marked the first year of the Federation's year-round online store. The store allows locals to order a variety of materials throughout the year, including products not offered for orientation activities such as hats, highlighters, pencils, and toques. Member locals were able to use their existing login details for the online store in order to secure discounted pricing.

The Federation processed dozens of orders during the school year, including orders from several campus clubs, and distributed more than 15,000 promotional products. Among the most popular products purchased during the year were water bottles, pens, buttons, lanyards, and t-shirts.

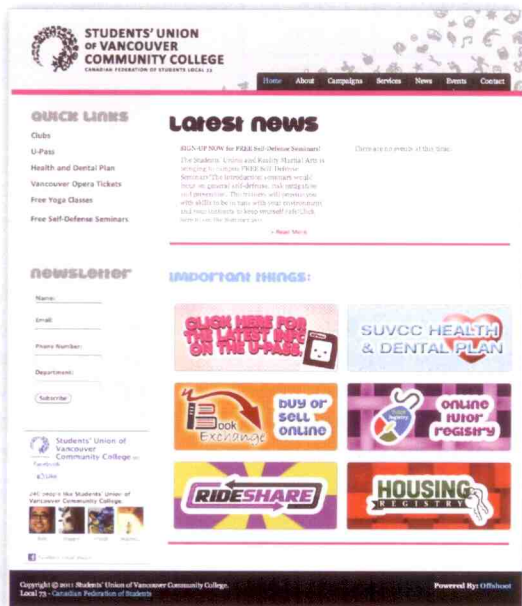
The Federation is continuing to investigate the feasibility of offering other products such as fair-trade coffee and chocolate—items that locals have previously suggested be made available in the online store throughout the year. Work is ongoing to consult third-party certification bodies regarding potential suppliers and manufacturers of food and beverage items.

For the period of April to August, the online store is re-configured to exclusively receive orders for the Federation's Bulk Purchasing of Orientation Materials service. The year-round store will re-launch in the fall semester.

SERVICE NAME

The November 2010 national general meeting referred a motion to the National Executive to rebrand the service as the "Sweatshop-free Materials Service." The National Executive considered the proposal and is suggesting, instead, the service be titled the "Ethical Purchasing Network: Sweatshop-free and sustainable materials."

STUDENTS' UNION WEBSITE SERVICE



LOCAL 73 WEBSITE



LOCAL 15 WEB CALENDAR

Online communications can be costly and time-consuming if undertaken independently by a students' union. Website design and hosting, email storage, mailing lists, domain name registration, data backup, and content management, all require significant resources and technical knowledge, especially when something goes wrong.

At the May 2004 national general meeting, member local representatives identified the design and hosting of high-quality local websites as a service that could be provided more effectively through the Federation. As with all of the Federation's co-operative services, the goal of the Students' Union Website Service is to provide high quality, student-focused services at affordable prices. Along with having the first, and only, national student-run hosting service, the Federation is also a bulk domain-name reseller, allowing students' unions to register and renew their domain names at a reduced cost.

The Website Service provides member locals with a domain name, a template-based website, access to the Services Portal, full email functionality (including the creation and maintenance of mailing lists), and dedicated support by email and phone. In addition, member locals are never charged for the new features continually being developed for the Service.

NEW FEATURE DEVELOPMENTS

MEMBER LOCAL SERVICES PORTAL

Member locals participating in the Website Service are able to provide members with a comprehensive suite of cost-saving services through the Services Portal. These services currently include a book exchange, tutor registry, housing registry, ride share registry, and listing of Studentsaver and ISIC discounts. In addition to listings specific to their own local, students are able to browse the listings for other institutions in their region and across the country.

Currently there are more than 1,000 books, 100 tutors, 300 apartments, and 100 rides posted. French translation of the Services Portal has been completed, making it fully bilingual. To date, more than 3,500 students have created Services Portal accounts (a 67% increase since the November 2010 general meeting), and the Portal continues to receive more than 1,000 unique visits per month.

Feedback on the Services Portal's functionality is being gathered and will be considered as improvements are introduced in the next update to the Portal.

CALENDAR COMPONENT

The Calendar Component was one of the first components available through the Service, displaying posted events in a calendar-like interface. A major update to the component has been completed that makes it more feature-rich and useful. Improvements include a complete redesign of the calendar interface, the ability to create recurring events, colour-coded events, the ability for visitors to submit events, and the ability for visitors to subscribe to a feed of their member local's events that automatically refreshes. Because of the advanced functionality of the new calendar component, locals looking to add it to their website will need to submit a request to the Website Service Coordinator.

FEATURED CAMPAIGN SLIDER COMPONENT

A Featured Campaign Slider Component has been developed, allowing for member locals to promote local campaigns and services and make their sites more visually appealing. An image "slider," sometimes also referred to as an image carousel, is an interactive image slideshow in which each image links to a different web page. The dimensions of the images will be customisable by the Website Service account administrator, as will the transitions between images.

OPTIMISATION OF WEBSITE SERVICE SITES FOR MOBILE DEVICES

At the November 2010 national general meeting, a directive was passed to improve the appearance and functionality of Website Service sites on mobile devices. Work has been undertaken to identify the most effective ways to optimise member local websites for display and usage on mobile devices including iPhone, Android, and Blackberry devices.

WEBSITE HOSTING

In order to provide the Website Service, the Federation is dependent on third-party companies to provide certain services. One such service is that of data-hosting, for which the Federation leases a dedicated server from the hosting company iWeb Technologies Inc. (iWeb). For a monthly fee, this server and all of its hardware components are provided by, maintained by, and are the responsibility of, iWeb.

SERVER DOWNTIME

On Tuesday, April 5th, one of the server hard drives began to fail, causing the server to crash. As computer equipment eventually wears down, the Federation had prepared for this scenario by storing website data on two separate hard drives that were exact duplicates of each other. This meant that if either hard drive failed, the server could continue to run using the remaining drive while the defective drive was replaced. Arrangements were made accordingly to have iWeb replace the defective drive later on that evening.

Unfortunately, iWeb replaced the wrong hard drive—they replaced the functioning drive instead of the defective drive. Further, this mistake was not immediately identified by iWeb, who spent several days offering different explanations as to why the server continued to crash on a regular basis. It was not until the afternoon of Saturday, April 9th that iWeb finally acknowledged their mistake.

Once it was identified that the wrong drive had been removed, the server was taken offline to ensure that none of the data on the remaining defective drive was damaged. When iWeb failed to produce the functioning drive they mistakenly removed, several failed attempts were made to copy the defective drive's data to a new disk. When this failed, the only option remaining was to have a new drive installed in the server, and to manually import all the data off of the defective hard drive.

WEB'S CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SUPPORT

It should be noted that in addition to the serious mistakes made by iWeb, and the time it took them

