



Tracking Kindness: The Valley Library's Civility Campaign on the Move

Overview

The OSU Libraries Civility Committee printed 500 unique kindness cards and made them available at all main floor service desks. Users were urged to take as many cards as they wanted to distribute, and to give out cards to people who did something kind, thoughtful, nice, or genuinely sweet. The receiver of the card could scan the unique QR code on the back and enter their location and why they received the card. Then we asked them to PASS IT ON! The goal was to see how far around the globe each card could travel - akin to the Where's George? bill tracking program.

Civility Tracker Application

Emerging Technologies and Services (ETS) at OSULP collaborated with the Civility Committee on a web app that tracks these kindness cards.

- Used Ruby on Rails and Google maps to create the web application.
- Each card has it's own QR code so that it can be tracked individually

Code is available at Github - <https://github.com/osulp/CivilityTracker>.

Feeling Gifty? The Psychology

The compliment that helps us on our way is not the one that is shut up in the mind, but the one that is spoken out. - Mark Twain

Research continues on how a compliment can change behavior in people. If a compliment from a waiter can encourage you to leave a bigger tip, or accept a dessert recommendation (Jacob & Guéguen, 2014), wouldn't a compliment on your civil behavior encourage more of the same behavior? We hope so.

Entries from

- Corvallis (33)
- Bend (8)
- Newport (3)
- West Lafayette, IN (1)

Reuse

- 42 cards used once
- 2 cards re-used 1 time
- 1 card re-used 4 times

Sample entries

- ❖ I made someone laugh!
- ❑ A reason wasn't given...she said I deserved it.
- ★ For inviting a friend to an athletics event
- The vending machine stole my protractor and I waited patiently while they tried to fix it.

Lessons Learned

- Needs a strong marketing campaign
- Long-term assessment
- It takes a lot of time and testing
- Did people understand the concept?
- Need to do a technology assessment
- App retrieval of location was difficult due to privacy settings and configuration requirements
- Requires a strong commitment to regular approval of entries on the web site

About the Civility Committee:

The OSU Valley library has created a civility committee to find creative ways to emphasize the importance of choosing civility in an environment where independent and collaborative research and teaching is conducted by a diverse community. This project is a product of that commitment, and was created by the following friendly people: Susan Bacina, Mike Eaton, Kerri Goergen-Doll, Lori Hilterbrand, Gregorio Luis Ramirez, Brooke Robertshaw, Brandon Straley, Susan Sukontarak, and Trey Terrell.