



## Students Engage in the Future of Broadcasting

*Through a cooperative partnership between NAB and Baylor University, Baylor University student interns have been helping with logistical support for running the NAB Technology Conferences at the NAB Show in Las Vegas for the past 20 years. Bethany Wekesser, Junior Communication Special Major; Ryan Huestis, Senior Film and Marketing Major and Melanie Sayed, Senior Film & Marketing Major*



John Gage with Baylor University students (l-r) Bethany Wekesser, Ryan Huestis, Melanie Sayed and Deandre' Upshaw.

*prepared the following article to share their impressions of the NAB Show and Super Session they participated in "Social Networking and the Democratization of Broadcasting" on Monday, April 14.*

As we walked into the Las Vegas Convention Center for the 2008 NAB Show; we were amazed to learn how world-wide and influential this broadcasting industry is. We were intrigued by the topics discussed in the Super Sessions and inspired in viewing a few of the 1600 exhibits from around the world.

What an honor it was to be the first NAB interns to participate in a Super Session discussion panel, speak about our interaction with current social networks and share how that influences our lives. Chief Researcher of Sun Microsystems Inc, John Gage helped lead the discussion about Social Networking and the Democratization of Broadcasting with moderator Peggy Miles, the president and found of Intervox Communications. Joined on stage with us were professionals Josh Bernoff, the co-author of "Groundswell" and Dmitry Shapiro, CEO of Veoh Networks.

Immediately following Mr. Gage's introduction, we Baylor students shared our favorite forms of communicating and likes and dislikes of media trends and social networking. Each of us got personal and explained why and how we use certain networks to enhance our social circles. Our time came to a close as we shared our expectations and hopes in what the Internet and networking capabilities will be in the future.

We testified how important it is for us to access and control how and what we use to connect with our friends. We are highly motivated and busy students so convenience regarding when, where and how we access the Internet is key. That is why we and countless other users are to thank for the success and influence some social networking sites such as Facebook, Myspace, Youtube, Twitter, Nexus, and Hulu have on the broadcasting industry. Our cell phones are our constant companions because all it takes is a push of a button to check our email or text a friend.

Mr. Gage, Josh Bernoff and Dmitry Shapiro all contributed to our casual conversation on how the industry and technology will grow. As consumers of information, we enjoy conversing in class and with friends about "what's next" as far what products we will use to upgrade our social profiles and devices. Conversations like this are enjoyable but our professional panelists shed light on how difficult it is for program engineers and advertisers to reach our demographics.

As the broadcasting industry continues to mature it is important to realize that the information gap between older and younger adults is huge; which may prove the biggest obstacle as the older industry creators attempt to "wow" us younger crowds; while simultaneously gaining information that translates into dollar signs. Not every novel idea will be as big and successful as Youtube or Facebook but whoever is willing to create a product or application that allows us to be socially active on the Internet will be able to find ways to sell and reach this target market. Social networking is extremely important to our generation and as long as companies continue to acknowledge this, it will pay off for them in a big way.

However, the winners in this race to gain information while selling us services or products may not be the flashiest, quickest or the even most technology forward devices. The winners will be the people who create sites that attach to our daily activities and satisfy our wants, needs and desires. The best technology will not necessarily win here. Our advice for companies seeking our generation's information is this; create something that makes it easier for us to express who we are and what we like to become. These types of sites aren't going out of style anytime soon, so improve upon them and personalize them to each demographic of users. It's basic advertising; knowing your target market.

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