Words Upside Down: Dyslexic Teens on Facebook

Minna Katela, children’s librarian
Celia in a Nutshell

• National library (Ministry of Education and Culture)
• Founded April 1st, 1890
• Serves the whole country
• 55 employees, > 16 000 users
• Based on the Law on the Library for the Visually Impaired
• Based on § 17 of the Finnish Copyright Law
Main Tasks

• To produce literature in accessible formats
• To lend fiction and non-fiction
• To sell textbooks
• To act as a center of expertise in accessible media
Background

- One person out of ten is dyslectic
- Talking books may help
- Dyslexic people don’t know Celia well
- Dyslexia is not always diagnosed
- Celia could have more young dyslexic users: the Arrow Project in year 2010
The Arrow Project in year 2010: Talking books for young dyslexics

• To increase awareness of dyslexia
• To affect attitudes towards dyslexia
  – Dyslexic people are not stupid or lazy
  – Dyslexia has nothing to do with intelligence or IQ
• To increase awareness of Celia and talking books
• To get new users for Celia’s library services and also share information about textbooks
Target groups

- Dyslexics of age 10-18
- Teachers
- Parents
- Friends
Means, methods & channels

- Focus on digital marketing & communication
- Social media (Facebook)
- Website (www.celia.fi)
  - Information on dyslexia
  - Quick test (based on BDA’s test)
- Google marketing
- Animation film in ruutu.fi (film about dyslexia on web tv)
- Direct email to teachers
Sipe the Hedgehog

• Sipe the Hedgehog is the face of the campaign
• Sipe is a 15-year-old hedgehog with recently diagnosed dyslexia
• Sipe has had difficulties at school
• Sipe has just found talking books
• Sipe’s adventures can be followed in facebook www.facebook.com/senatsakaisin
Animation film

• Click this!
Facebook

- [www.facebook.com/senatsakaisin](http://www.facebook.com/senatsakaisin)
- Site includes information about dyslexia, links to Celia’s website, wall updates etc.
- Photo shoot contest in facebook summer 2010
  - Photos about books and reading
  - Users voted the winner
  - Prize: iPod mp3 player
- Around 3000 fans at the end of the year 2010
Facebook year 2011-

• Regular updates: news about dyslexia, book reviews (by Sipe the Hedgehog), current events, Christmas calendar every December

• Most of the fans (70 %) are between the ages of 13 and 17. Not all of our fans are our clients, but it is also important to give out information and influence attitudes
Other activities

- We have also visited a number of education conferences as exhibitors
- We offer a regular newsletter to all the schools in Finland
Dyslexia website

• We have created a separate dyslexia website in co-operation with some Finnish dyslexia organisations
  • www.lukihairio.fi
  • The dyslexia quick test is very popular
Dyslexia website campaign

• Senat sakaisin –facebook pages are the social media of the dyslexia website.
• Launch of the website in autumn 2011:
  Animation in ruutu.fi
  Best fantasy book voting on Facebook (prize iPad2)
• The number of facebook fans doubled.
Results

• The number of dyslexics in our new clients has tripled in two years from 5% to 15%.
• Over 7000 Facebook fans
• Textbook sales have increased (year 2010 6336 books sold, year 2011 7338 books sold)
Good practises

• We comment as Sipe, not as official librarians
• We concentrate on one area (dyslexia) and the name of the Facebook page is funny wordplay and connected to the theme, not just the name of the library
• Facebook/social media is a good place to reach teenagers
Best practises

• We have different campaigns regularly
• Updates are also sometimes ”lighter”, for example competitions, questions and ”Have a nice summer holiday” –type of greetings
Challenges

• It is not easy to activate fans, they don’t comment much
• If you want to keep the fans interested, it is our experience that you have to campaign regularly, have many different types of updates and invent new ideas.
Challenges

• You have to check the pages also outside office hours and react if necessary
• Facebook changes page settings and doesn’t inform about it much in advance
Next

• We are planning to add more videos: for example book reviews and guide videos
• Sipe cartoon, maybe a new animation film
• New competitions
Thank you!

Minna Katela, children’s librarian