



# **TechXpo**

**2010**

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## **Situation Analysis/Objective**

Georgia Southern University offers ample opportunities and activities for students to participate in. For example, it offers students a chance to talk with job professionals at career fairs, hosts different guest speakers at the Performing Arts Center, and gives students a chance to walk through the campus's own planetarium, museum, and botanical garden. In 2009, CATS (Center for Academic Technology Support) wanted to also offer students, staff, and faculty a chance to get more involved with technology and what it can offer.

In an integrated and interdependent technology driven world, ingenuity in information technology skills takes on new importance for students' success in college. Today's students are tomorrow's leaders. They are the Internet generation. They can text message, instant message, manage social networks and multitask. It is reasonable to assume that they are the most technologically savvy members of society. But do these social information technology skills transfer to school? Can students manage spreadsheets, develop and present PowerPoint presentations, and create written documents using word processors? Do they understand basic computer usage beyond downloading music and on-line chatting?

Last year, the Emerging Technology Center held a showcase event on Friday, October 30. "Techxpo" was held from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the IT building on the Georgia Southern Campus. The event held sessions which presented an opportunity for educational technology representatives to make students, faculty, and staff more aware of the technology available on campus and what to expect in the future. The sessions were presented by students, faculty, and vendors on various topics. These sessions helped to showcase the work that goes on behind the scenes to use technology each day.

The event offered workshops in the classrooms on the third floor, which were supervised by some of the staff from GSU. On the first floor, various technology companies set up exhibits and gave workshops on their latest technologies. Some of the vendors that were present were: Microsoft, Apple, Dell, HP, Lenovo, Epson, Panasonic, Sharp, and Verizon. There was no admission to attend the event and free food/beverages were provided for all who attended. There were also prizes given away by some of the different vendors such as iPods, netbooks, gift certificates, and more.

CATS was successful in organizing and planning the event, but unfortunately, there were not many attendees to Techxpo last year. Out of the 20,000 students that Georgia Southern obtains, roughly only 100 to 200 students attended the event. A lot of the workshops and sessions that were offered; no one participated in.

The Eagle Techxpo team did a SWOT analysis to pinpoint some of the things that can be modified and improved in the upcoming 2010 event. They listed several weaknesses that needed to be changed this year. One of the problems was that most of the tables and booths were packed up and gone by the mid afternoon. The vendors need to stay until the end of the event. Some people cannot make it at the beginning and might come towards the end. Another issue was the seminars were only presented in the afternoon, which made it difficult for some people to attend. In addition, the seminars were directed too much at the IT students and didn't give enough involvement to the others who attended who were not IT students. Other problems were they ran out of t-shirts to give away, some of the equipment had a short battery life and wasn't easily portable around the building.

Although there are several weaknesses that need to be overcome from last year's event, there are some things that were done well that should be considered again for Techxpo this year.

When coming to an event that could possibly last a few hours, food and beverages are always a good plan to keep the people there longer. Techxpo did a great job in providing refreshments for free. Another positive advantage was the vendors from the bigger companies, such as, Dell and Verizon. People will stay interested in the event knowing that there are popular organization names or possible guest speakers willing to make an appearance at the event. Although there are several qualities to repeat and some to improve on, advertising is the key focus to elicit people to Techxpo 2010.

Techxpo's objective for 2010 is to create more promotion and advertising about the conference, in hopes that more people will attend. This year, the event will be held on Friday, November 12, 2010, in the IT building on the Georgia Southern campus. Its advertising will target Georgia Southern students, faculty, and staff. Once again, Techxpo will offer a vendor exhibit area; it will host sessions and seminars, and provide workshops and activities for individuals to participate in. Also, in addition to last year, a keynote speaker will be presenting.

## **Target Audience**

The researcher's chosen target audiences are new students to Georgia Southern: Freshmen and transfer students. The researchers concentrated on these two targets because most new students to Georgia Southern are not clear in what is expected of them in the regards to technology.

In today's society, pre-school children are searching for their favorite game to play online. Teens in middle and high school communicate better with their friends on the Web rather than face-to-face. It is easy to assume that students entering college possess an expertise in technology; however, many freshmen struggle with their introductory computer classes.

Most students often consider themselves proficient in the use of modern technology, but it appears to be the "wrong" type for academic purposes. Students may be experts with chatting, Twittering, or Facebooking, but be inexperienced in attaching a document to an email or creating an essay with word processing software. Many students who do communicate with their professors by e-mail often disregard punctuation use, rarely use standard formatting, and generally include slang or abbreviations that confuse or frustrate the professors.

When it involves emailing or course assignments, GeorgiaView plays a huge role in access between the student and their professor. GeorgiaView is a comprehensive online course management system used for courses at GSU. Professors and Instructors use this site to email or communicate to students, ask for submissions on homework, and will post tests or quizzes to be completed. Knowing how to operate and navigate within the site is crucial to most students' grades. Students' grades, class schedule, and personal information are also maintained from the university's webpage. In order to be successful in their courses, students need to be familiar with GSU's websites.

Higher education has become dependent upon technology to convey and improve courses, particularly at the college level. Technology is continuously being interjected into traditionally-delivered classes as well. Even a preliminary level English course requires students to submit papers in an electronic format. To the surprise of many students, professors often ask them to add formulas to spreadsheets to complete math equations, and an introductory computer class is more difficult than they anticipate. It is, therefore, necessary for college students to have a certain amount of aptitude in computer and software use from the very beginning of their college careers.

Freshmen and transfer students are the perfect market to advertise to Techxpo. The event will aid in assisting new students with technology apprehensions or dilemmas. Techxpo will help the new students get accustomed to the IT building and its technology-rich environment. There will be an opportunity to use educational software programs for students who have not had much training in them. Another reason for freshmen and newer students to attend will be the door prizes and rewards. Entering college, some students do not own many technological devices to assist them during their education, such as a netbook, iPod, or possibly even a USB drive. Not only can the prizes be used as an incentive, but will also aid in students' opportunities and education.

## IMC

The researchers propose four different advertising strategies: a creative logo, an online webpage, and activity, printed advertising, and several promotional items. All the strategies will spark the curiosity of students as to what Techxpo is and what it entails.

A creative logo can turn an unknown brand or item into a household name, which is why the researchers have chosen a powerful symbol to represent the logo for Techxpo. The logo will comprise of the universal power symbol. The emblem signifies openness, power and “being turned on.” The symbol will compose of a bright, glowing blue to catch and hold the viewer’s attention. In addition, the abstract of the design will keep the audience interested. Along with the logo, the researchers have formulated a clever slogan. For a catchy, shocking slogan the researchers have chosen “Get Turned On”. It directly relates to the logo and what Techxpo is trying to accomplish: turn on the minds of the Georgia Southern community to the new technology available. The slogan is memorable and innocuously sexual enough to spark interest and curiosity.

To create brand recognition the researchers are proposing a search engine on the [my.georgiasouthern.edu](http://my.georgiasouthern.edu) homepage. Presently, the homepage entails, “Ask Gus”, a specialized search engine targeted towards Georgia Southern students. When Georgia Southern students have a technological dilemma, one of their only options is to “Ask Gus.” The problem with “Ask Gus,” is it encompasses too many topics which make the search results inconveniently saturated. “Ask a Tech” will be a search engine solely for technology related questions pertaining to GSU. “Ask a Tech” is suggested to be implemented in January 2011 before the spring semester begins. The researchers are pitching “Ask a Tech” because it is an easy way to create a good brand image of helpfulness and student service.

The researchers are also proposing a Facebook page. It will be created as a group and requests will be sent to Facebook users to join the group. Students will receive updates about Techxpo and future programs that will be offered by CATS. It will contain all of the information about Techxpo: guest speakers, activities/workshops, promotional items and various companies that are going to be present. It will then include a link to their respective sites. The researchers selected Facebook because it is a favorite site of many college students. It is free to access, easy to use/maintain, and it is a popular social networking site.

In order to get students involved in Techxpo the researchers are proposing an interactive e-mail. The email will be sent to all Georgia Southern students with a link to a technology themed quiz on Facebook. The first 100 people to achieve a perfect score on the quiz will post their score on Facebook. Every individual who posts their score will win a 512 Megabyte USB drive. Their name will be put on a list and will be able to pick up the USB drive on the day of the event. The quiz is suggested to open on September 12 and close when there are 100 winners. The online quiz is a fun, interactive way to learn about educational Technology and about the IT building. It gives students a chance to test their technological knowledge. If they do well then they are rewarded with a prize to pick up at the event. If they do poorly on the quiz, it might give them incentive to attend the event to brush up on their tech skills and abilities. It creates brand awareness about the event and the distribution of the prize acts as an incentive and brings people into the event.

Printed flyers are going to play a large part of the promotional plan. The flyers will be spread around the Georgia Southern campus sporadically, giving students a chance to view the posters and plan accordingly to attend the event. The researchers suggest printing two variations of posters: informational posters that will have the time, date, place, and information about

Techxpo, secondly, there will be teaser posters that only consist of the power symbol, slogan and date. Two sizes of the posters are suggested to be made for more of an effect on the viewer: 8.5x10 and 11x 14. The teaser posters are suggested to be distributed in August and the informational posters will follow on October 12. The locations on campus that the researchers would like to target are freshmen dormitories, particularly the computer labs inside the dorms, and dining areas around the Georgia Southern campus. The researchers selected the dorm computer labs because part of our target audience are freshmen and since it is mandatory that freshmen live on campus, there will most likely be a number of them in the dorm labs. The Russell Union was chosen because it is a popular, frequent place recognized and visited by all GSU students. The dining areas around the Georgia Southern campus should also be advertised within because they too are often frequented by students, especially freshmen who have meal plans.

The researchers are proposing three different promotional items: a T-shirt, a USB drive and a backpack. Each item will display the Techxpo logo and symbol, the slogan, the date of the expo or any combination of the three.

The shirts will be, white T-shirts with the Techxpo logo and Facebook site address on the front, left chest. The back side of the shirt will display the power logo, "Get Turned On" slogan, and date of the event. The shirts are suggested to be handed out to the first 250 people to enter the event. The researchers decided on the T-shirt because everyone loves a free t-shirt and they work as a long running promotion because it will be seen every time the owner wears it.

In addition, the researchers suggest in ordering 100 512 Megabyte USB drives. On the device, will be printed the Techxpo logo. The USB drives would be given out as prizes to the quiz winners at Techxpo. The researchers chose the USB drive as the prize for the quiz, because

it is a technology related item and it has a high enough value that some people will put in the extra effort to win one

The researchers also suggest that 250 backpacks be ordered with the “Get Turned On” slogan, power logo, date of the expo, and the Techxpo logo. In October, the researchers suggest to organize a booth in the Rotunda on the Georgia Southern campus. The backpacks will be distributed containing a “save the date” flyer inside. The table will have logos of promoters that are going to be appearing at Techxpo. The booth will provide an opportunity for face-to-face advertising to the Georgia Southern students. When someone receives a backpack, they will be asked to join the mailing list. If they choose to join the list, they will be emailed a “save the date” closer to the event. The backpack was chosen because it is a low cost item that also acts as a long running promotion every time the owner uses it.

## **Budget**

The total dollar amount that was given to the researchers to spend as they saw fit, was \$3000.00. In order to implement all of these ideas, a total of \$2,872 is needed.

The T-shirts are priced at \$5.50 per shirt. The suggested number for ordering is 250. The local shop that was researched was Fun Shirts in Statesboro. The t-shirts came to a total of \$1,375. The backpacks are priced at \$1.76 per item. The total for the backpacks were \$440.00 when ordering 250. The website that the backpacks would be order from is promodirect.com. The USB drives are \$5.57 each on pexagontech.com. The total added to \$557.40 for 100 USB drives. The posters are priced at \$0.27 per advertisement at the Eagle Print shop on campus. The total for the posters would equal \$500.00