Lessons from online outreach

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FYFD in brief...

http://fuckyeahfluidynamics.tumblr.com

Established: July 2010
Platform: Tumblr
Format: new posts M-F
Posts: 920+
Readers: 180,000+

Featured by:

WIRED
boingboing
Mashable
physicsworld
BuzzFeed
io9
tumblr.

In the image above we see two spheres of the same size, shape, and material being dropped into water. The left sphere has almost no splash, whereas the one on the right has a spectacular curtain-like splash. Why the big difference? It all comes down to the surface treatments. The glass sphere on the left is hydrophilic, but the right one has been treated to be hydrophobic. As a result, the water-fearing molecules of that sphere push the water away, allowing air to be entrained below the water’s surface instead. This creates a big splash that’s absent when the water moves smoothly around the hydrophilic sphere. (Photo credit: L. Bocquet et al.)
Audience and Growth

- Site begins on 22 July 2010
- APS DFD starts on 22 July 2010
- Nov 2012 growth milestone
Reader Survey (July 2013)

Responses: 450+

"Does your occupation or course of study relate to fluid dynamics?"

Respondents Studying/Working in FD by Education Level

FD: 42%
Non-FD: 51%
Other: 7%
What Appeals to Readers

Which FYFD content do you find most valuable?

- Explanations of phenomena: 86%
- Links to research: 38%
- Educational videos: 58%
- Relating FD to daily life: 54%
- Answers to reader questions: 24%
- Artwork: 33%
- Other: 5%
What Appeals to Readers

Visuals draw readers in.

Explanations keep them coming back.

Relating science to daily life excites readers.

Image credits: Getty Images, Wikimedia, Richard Heeks
FYFD’s Influence

“How much has FYFD influenced your desire to pursue fluid dynamics in your schooling or career?”

- **70%** No influence
- **23%** Positively influenced
- **6%** Strongly positively influenced

62% of positively influenced respondents are under 30 yo and not yet in grad school.

FYFD is reaching high-schoolers and undergraduates and inspiring them to study fluid dynamics.
Crowdfunding

**Donors:** 80+ individual donors

**Raised:** 134% of target

Reached $2000 in < 24 hours

Donors included working professionals, graduate students, companies, etc.

FYFD and its outreach matters to a wide adult audience.
What Readers Want More Of

- Longer, more detailed posts (52%)
- FYFD-produced videos (44%)
- Themed post series (39%)

Frequently mentioned in comments:
- More math(!!)
- More frequent posts
What does the future hold?

FYFD has a large audience eager for more fluid dynamics. How can we, as a community, nurture this interest?
With special thanks to...

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