

# National Campus News

## From University Newsrooms Across Canada

### UBC fights cybersquatter

Hywel Tuscano

Ubysses

The University of British Columbia is taking a "cybersquatter" to court who has registered an Internet domain with the university's name in it.

Stephen Noton, owner of both the company Foresightful.com and the domain name www.universityofbritishcolumbia.com said he registers domain names that are variations or misspellings of actual Web sites, or even the exact names of companies lacking an Internet presence.

He then tries to sell the domain names to the companies or institutions involved.

Noton says that there is nothing wrong with his actions. "UBC has been around longer than I have been alive," he said. "They had ample opportunity to buy the domain name - if they had interest they would have bought it originally.

They could have paid us \$750 US by now and gotten the site back in 30 days."

But Hubert Lai, UBC's senior legal counsel, said the university's name is a registered trademark. "You can't just use a trademarked name's popularity to market or advertise when you are in no way affiliated with it," he said. "The trademark laws are on our side in this case."

While UBC has legal precedence over its trademarked name, Noton said a federal court ruling in Canada would not have jurisdiction over the international Internet, meaning the parties may have to face each other in online courts.

But Lai says the federal courts have jurisdiction over the main issue that UBC is concerned with - copyright. "The federal court does have power over copyright and trademark infringement, even though it may not have the power to have the domain name ordered to UBC," he said.

Recently, Future Shop paid Noton \$1,049 US for the site futureshop.ca, a misspelling of their official site name, instead of attempting legal action. To encourage Future Shop to buy the company, Noton had linked the site to a competitor of the electronics company.

Noton also owns variations of the University of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan provincial government domain names.

In addition, he owns three misspellings for Ingram Micro, a wholesale provider of technology products and services, and he said he receives over 200 e-mails a day with requests to order products. "Even large companies with great presence on the Internet are vulnerable and fail to consider stuff like this," Noton said.

Canadian '.ca' Web sites do not suffer from the same problems as '.com' Web sites.

The Canadian Internet Registration Authority requires documented affiliation, very similar to registering new businesses in Canada, where a lot of manual background checking is done.

On the other hand, no affiliations are needed for '.com' domain names, which can be registered and reserved for only \$10

### Dalhousie students advocate creating anti-sweatshop policy

Kip Keen

The Gazette

University students at Dalhousie are planning to pressure the administration into adopting an "anti-sweatshop" purchasing policy.

Because a large amount of the clothing, including those with the insignia of universities, are manufactured in factories with poor working and wage standards, the code would ensure Dalhousie buys from only socially and environmentally responsible manufacturers and suppliers.

The Dalhousie "No Sweat" campaign is part of a national campaign promoted by such groups as the Canadian Labour Congress, Oxfam Canada, the Maquila Solidarity Network, and Students Against Sweatshops Canada.

Brian O'Neill, an Oxfam Canada employee helping to run the local campaign, said conditions in many textile factories are horrendous: six and seven day workweeks where employees spend more than 12 hours a day in often hot, uncomfortable, unhealthy and dangerous conditions.

"One of the reasons why the issue of sweatshops is being brought to the fore more and more is because, as has been documented even within Canada, the gap between the rich and poor is growing," said O'Neill. "In 1980 the income gap between the North and South was 30 to one.

In 1998 the income gap between the North and South was 76 to one."

Oxfam and the other organizations supporting the No Sweat campaign believe clothing manufacturers will be forced to improve working conditions in their factories if more institutions put a code of conduct in place.

Although Dalhousie University's clothing is crested in Canada, it is

similar codes. "It would be a different matter if we lived in a world where we could see that the gap in income and environmental standards was being narrowed...but that's not the case."

Last December, the Hong Kong Christian Industrial Committee exposed 12 Chinese factories producing Disney brand toys, clothes and accessories for sale at Christmas - the group alleged employees worked 16 hour days, seven days a week, for as little as \$90 a month. According to Oxfam Canada and the No Sweat campaign, these kinds of workplaces are common.

O'Neill said it would be easy to improve working conditions in factories abroad and in Canada. He uses a \$100 Nike shoe as an example. Figures from the Maquila Solidarity Network show that 12 per cent of the final cost of the shoe is paid to the factory, of which 0.4 per cent reaches the workers. O'Neill proposes the wages and costs of labour be raised to one per cent. "Then you have the \$100 pair of sneakers being \$100 and 60 cents," he said. "In the meantime, the workers are doing a hell of a lot better."

O'Neill said Dalhousie students aren't sure yet how they will get the university to change their code of conduct but the results would be worth it. "It might cost us a little bit more money [to buy university clothing], but that small incremental difficulty for us can mean big positive change for so many people."

"Show up Friday at noon for our Staff Meeting, if you know what's good for you."

- Sharkey



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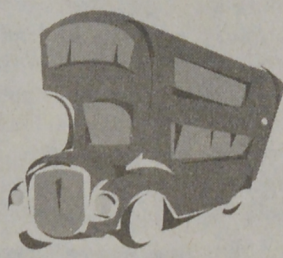
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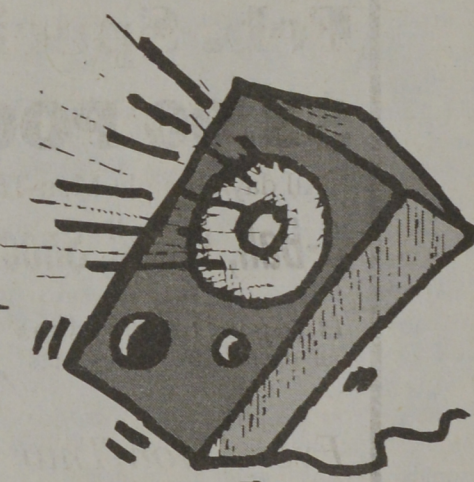
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EST. 1994

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