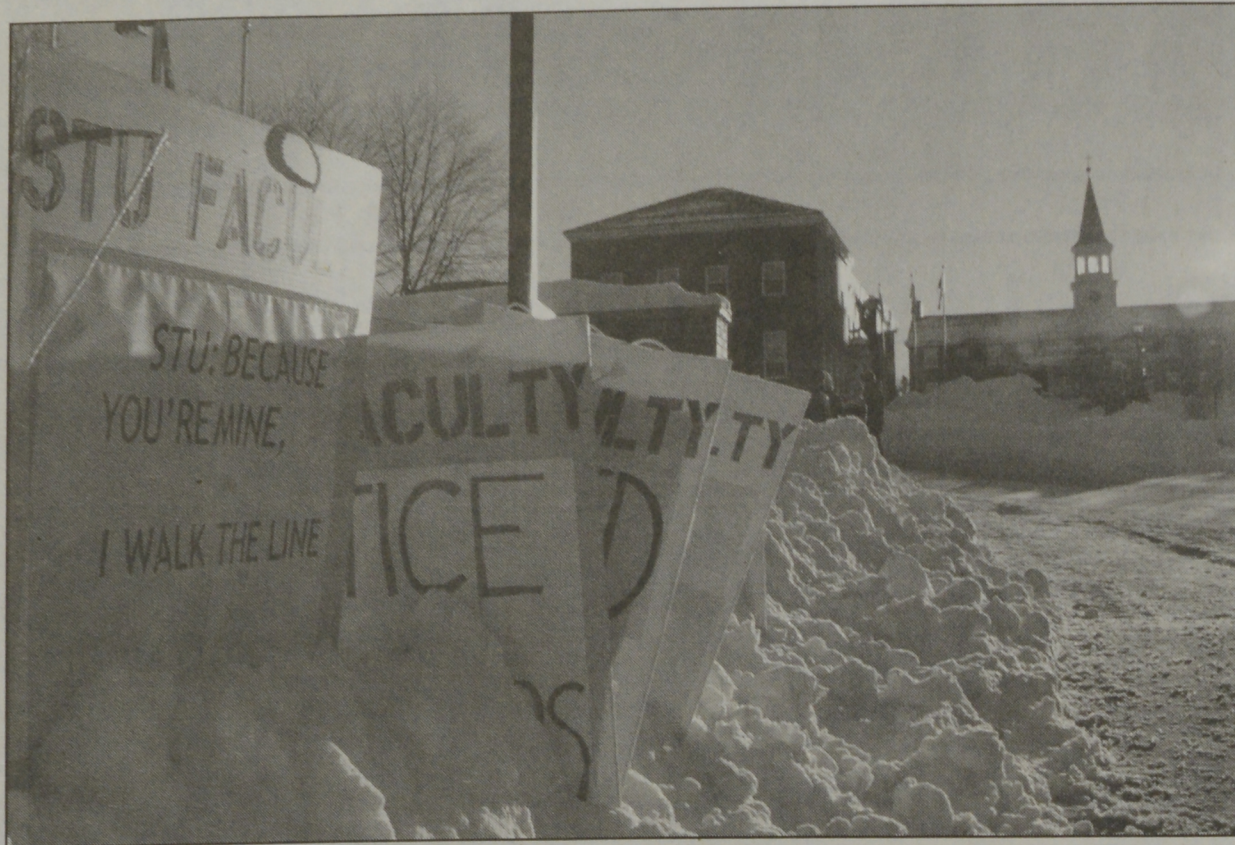


Still no classes for St. Thomas students



Andrew Meade / The Brunswickian

STU Faculty picket signs on display outside the NRC building on January 3rd

from **Lockout** page 1

STU and the union representing its faculty have been attempting to negotiate a new contract for the past 10 months. There are two main reasons at large: wages and workload.

According to the FAUST website, it shows a graphic timeline of the wages in which the President of the university has earned since 2001. They say that academic staff at STU are among the most poorly paid in Canada and have one of the heaviest workloads. They wish to have contracts stating that they have full-time workload standards set in comparison with other institutions in the Maritimes and across Canada, as well as ensuring the part-time staff are properly paid for their work and have suitable working conditions and health benefits.

STU's administration is saying that if these conditions were met, that would be equal to a 43% increase in compensation over three years and it

would increase tuition at St. Thomas to \$1,450 rising to \$2,000 by the year 2010. Though, looking at the FAUST website, it argues differently.

It states the faculty does not want higher tuition fees, and their proposals are not tied to increases. They say that faculty at other universities have reached agreements while seeking similar changes without the tuition fee increase that the STU administration is proposing.

STU's tuition is currently the lowest in the province.

With the university's proposal, the average full-time salary would be \$85,000 with the average full-time professor earning \$111,845.

Negotiation talks resumed into the new year with the university offering a midnight deadline on Sunday, January 6, for a proposed settlement with the union. The faculty union walked away from the bargaining table, saying they would not agree to a settlement deadline. As a result, the STU administration wanted to move to the province for

answers, going to the provincial labour and employment board to vote on their final offer.

After a media blackout of the information on Sunday, Higgins announced Monday that talks broke down and the faculty association refused to stay, opting to leave to complete their strike vote.

Student leaders were present at this meeting and have said that they have tried to be as objective as possible but that they are frustrated at the reluctance of FAUST.

What the faculty wanted was a 43% increase in total compensation over three years with an overall reduced course load, the latest offer by the administration was the same thing except for a 25% increase in total compensation. So far, FAUST has not accepted this offer.

In the meantime, STU will no longer ask the Labour and Employment Board to organize mediations and classes are now rescheduled to Monday, January 14.

UNB continues to take a neutral position on the lockout.

Google's coming of age

Search giant Google dominates online in 2007, while expanding its technological grip on the world

by Ed Cullinan

Google™

The year 2007 marked countless technological advances and growth in many of the world's top companies. Google Inc. captured the spotlight more often than not with major multi-billion dollar deals, innovations, and a stock price that flirted with the \$700 mark during the last two months of '07, marking an 823% increase since it first went public at \$85 a share in 2004.

YouTube

Google's acquisition of YouTube in 2006 was marred early in 2007 when entertainment giant Viacom (Paramount, DreamWorks, etc.) filed a lawsuit against the popular video sharing site and its parent company. The suit, filed March 13, 2007, cites massive intentional copyright infringement and seeks over \$1B in damages for an alleged 160,000 clips of Viacom's entertainment programming, which have been viewed 1.5 billion times.

Viacom is not the only company to discount Google's practices when it comes to infringement, and mounting pressure from other major entertainment groups spawned Google's own home-cooked anti-piracy system for YouTube in the middle of October 2007. The system, however, relies on companies submitting their own content to the system to create a database of copyrighted material from which the system will match to clips posted by users on YouTube.

The automated video ID system will then either delete the clip, post it, or post it with advertisements, where the copyright owner will benefit from shared revenue from the ads, as per the decision of the copyright owner. Amidst squabbling over the fact that YouTube has failed to accept responsibility for

identifying copyrighted material, instead placing the onus on the copyright owner, Viacom maintains its suit.

Advertising

The trend amongst major search companies this year seemed to be to gobble up all the web advertising companies around, and Google was no exception. Back in April, Google announced its biggest acquisition to date, a \$3.1B cash takeover of the online advertising giant DoubleClick. This eclipses Google's previous record deal, when it paid \$1.6B in stock for YouTube in 2006.

However, the merger is still in question as its completion now depends on the approval of European regulators, after being challenged by rivals like Microsoft, lawmakers and privacy gurus voicing unease over antitrust and privacy issues. The US Federal Trade Commission gave its go ahead in late December.

Not to be outdone, rivals Microsoft made a \$6B deal acquiring Aquantive, while Yahoo! and AOL each made multiple smaller acquisitions in the same area.

Mobile Platform

Years in the making, with rumours running rampant about a Google phone and speculation at an all-time high in 2007, Google finally released its plans for the cell phone industry late in November. However, instead of a physical handset or even software that integrates Google applications, the company has developed their own open platform mobile application, Android, that will power thousands of handsets.

Google also introduced to the world the Open Handset Alliance, a group of 34 wireless heavyweights (and counting) who are committed to developing the Android platform. Participants include manufacturers Motorola and HTC, provider T-Mobile US, and chip maker Qualcomm. Android phones will hit the American market mid-2008.

The goal of Android is to develop more user-friendly services and handsets that bring the full power of the internet to mobile devices. The open model will help development and increase availability across devices to offer advanced functionality at lower prices. Android will compete directly with smartphone software from Apple, Microsoft, Nokia, Palm, and Research in Motion.

Wireless Spectrum

In late November, Google officially announced its application to bid on the 700Mhz band wireless spectrum in the U.S. Federal Communications Commission auction on January 24, 2008. If it wins, a Google phone could become more of a reality; Google could build its own network or partner with an existing carrier. In any case, the opportunity presents an important advertising venture for not only the Google brand, but the ability to sell advertising that reaches an entire network.

The 700Mhz band travels far and penetrates walls. It previously had been used to send analog TV signals, but that has since been abandoned with various technological advances in television. Google could control the next generation of wireless networks, expanding the frontiers of the Internet and emblazoning each device with the Google name.

Although Google has declined to comment on their plans for the spectrum, should they win the auction, the idea is to bring the experience of the Internet on the PC to the mobile world, at a low cost, and probably subsidized by advertising in some way. Consider a little ticker ad running at the bottom of your screen on your cell or smartphone, displaying advertising for local restaurants and hot spots – that is only one way Google could use the network to bring more eyes to their ads.

The auction, which proceeds in stages and is shrouded in secrecy to prevent antitrust collusion between bidders, may continue into March 2008. The minimum bid is \$4.6B.

A similar auction will be conducted in Canada in May 2008 for the 700Mhz band in our country with different rules focused on increasing competition in the cellular industry. As in the States, the size of the spectrum is large enough to create a new national network, increasing choices, and hopefully driving prices down to be comparable with U.S. counterparts.

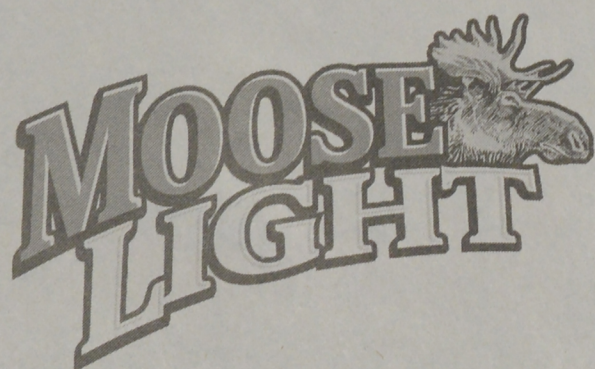
Online Super Power

Coming in holding around 64% of the US market share amongst search websites, there is no question that Google is top dog in that field. With the numerous acquisitions over the years, the expansion into world-class advertising business, and a venture into the mobile world, Google is becoming more and more of an online super power.

Besides the business, Google also boasts a number of useful applications. From the revolutionary Google Earth (and sister Google Maps), to Gmail and Google Documents & Spreadsheets, Google is always expanding its online tools to increase ad traffic and turn a profit. Some new features this year include "Street View" in Maps, where users can see a 360° shot of many streets in major hub cities in the U.S.; IMAP email access in Gmail; and a major increase in productivity for Docs & Spreadsheets, to name a few.

With the upcoming auction and the decision on the DoubleClick deal drawing near, Google is poised for greatness yet again. What remains to be seen is what Google can do to capitalize on each opportunity to propel themselves forward in 2008.

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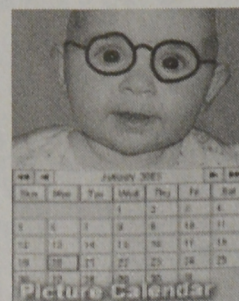
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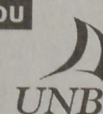
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