



REVITALISING THE BCM COMMUNITY

↳ PROJECT CONTEXTUAL REPORT

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THE FUTURE OF THE BCM

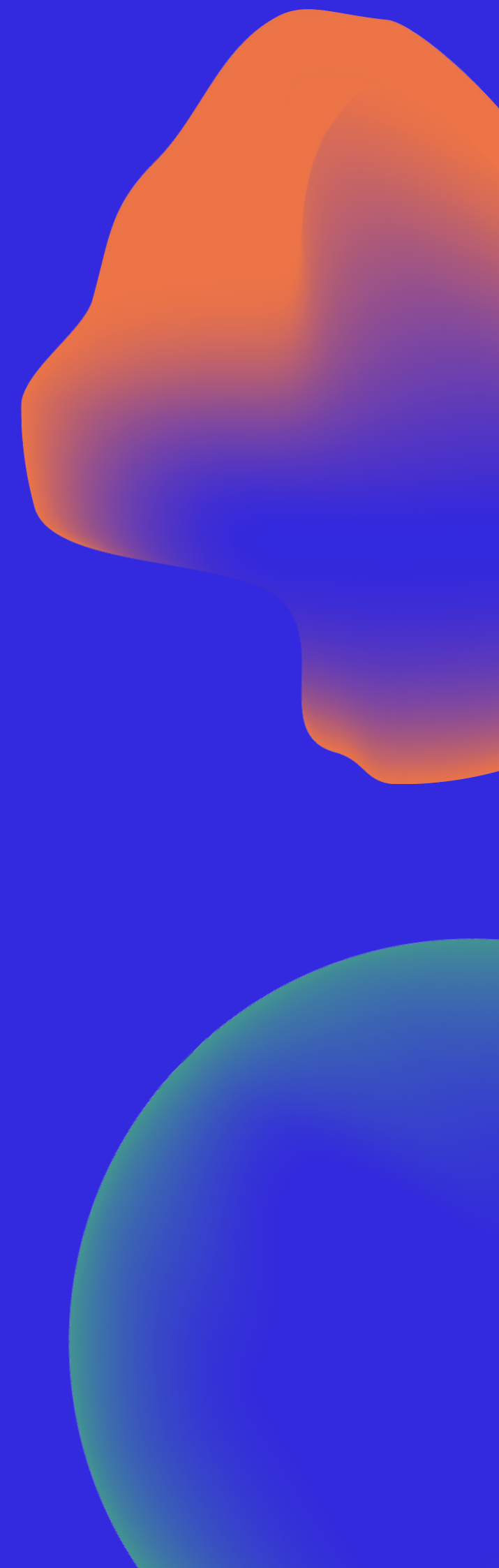
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1 ◦ PROJECT OVERVIEW



1.1 • EMERGENT FUTURE NETWORKS AND ITS INFLUENCE

Exploring emergent future networks has greatly impacted our project. We've delved into concepts like online tribes, sociable objects and participatory spaces. Incorporating these concepts as a framework not only expanded our understanding but also shaped our approach to creating a dynamic, interconnected BCM community by embracing these ideas and leveraging 'Bert.'



1.2 • PERSONAS & RECOGNISED PROBLEM/OPPORTUNITY

Our journey with 'The BCM Bot' ('Bert') has revealed challenges and opportunities in the BCM community. We've analysed BCM Personas like Natalia, Oscar, David, Cobi, and Ben, each facing unique issues.

PERSONA 5
COMMUTE OR ONLINE
MEET BEN



Pain Points

- Finds making friends difficult compared to in-person students
- Relies on online inspo but struggles to find classmate content
- Wants to connect with peers and tutors but intimidated by formality

Beliefs

- Posting on Twitter = Posting into a void
- Missing out on discussions that in-person students have

PERSONA 2
MEDIA SHY/HIGH PERFORMERS
MEET OSCAR



Pain Points

- Tweeting only academic and course-specific content
- Uncomfortable posting casual content often
- Retweeting and liking other tweets feels more comfortable

Beliefs

- Twitter should remain professional

PERSONA 3
BCM TUTOR
MEET DAVID




Pain Points

- Struggles to make last minute mass students announcements and publish subject or course-relevant facts.
- No established mass-reach alternative platforms for student notifications if SOLS or Moodle goes down.
- Struggle to receive confirmation if students are viewing and acknowledging their messages.

Beliefs

- Twitter is not the best platform for academic use since, Elon Musk purchased and rebranded to X.
- Doesn't actively promote students to join X anymore.

PERSONA 1
1ST-YEAR STUDENTS
MEET NATALIA



Pain Points

- Struggling to find a like-minded community
- Low Engagement
- Seeking Blog Inspiration
- Struggling to see Twitter as a 'fun' social platform

Beliefs

- Doesn't know why twitter is such a big part of the bcm degree due to low engagement.

PERSONA 4
BCM GOATS
MEET COBI



Pain Points


- Losing interest community due to lack of engagement.
- Once received high views on WordPress blog.
- Used to gain new followers each semester from first years.
- Faces challenges finding a suitable platform to share BCM creations and memes with the right audience.

Beliefs

- Elon Musk's takeover has caused disagreements.
- There's confusion about why its members have stopped posting, despite the takeover.

Additionally, We also explored and analysed Discord Personas that live within the DMS Discord server, including:


PERSONA 7
FUNCTIONALDISCORD
USER
MEET ABBEY



About

- Minimalist Discord user
- Uses it for school/work
- Muted notifications for focus
- Prioritises functionality over enthusiasm.


PERSONA 8
TECH SAVY USERS
MEET TIM



About

- Seasoned Discord user,
- Confident in the platform,
- Active in conversations, discussions, and server activities,
- Potential for administrative and bot creation roles,
- Enhances the Discord community.

PERSONA 6
DISCORD SWEATS
MEET JACK



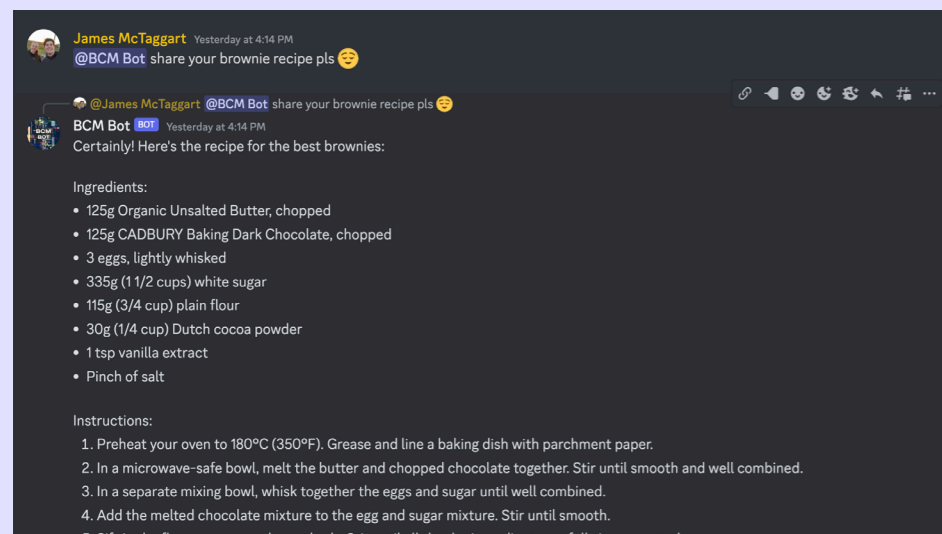
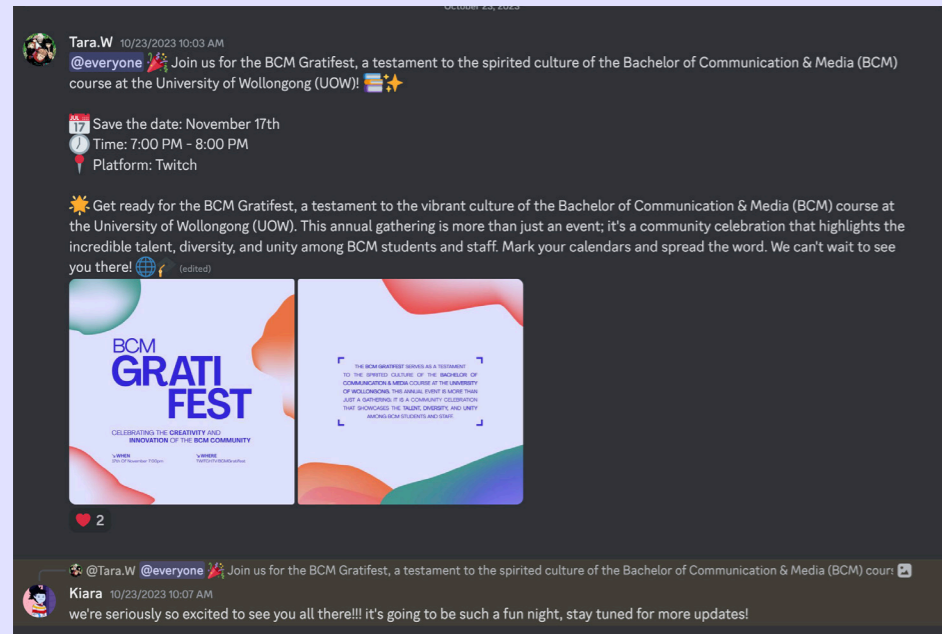
About

- Hardcore Discord gamer
- Expert in Discord
- Navigates multiple servers with ease, quick responder
- The go-to resource for Discord-related matters

The wide range of issues we've identified represents a multitude of opportunities waiting to be harnessed. These opportunities are key to revitalising the BCM Community and elevating user experiences to new heights. By addressing the challenges and making the most of these prospects, we can create a more vibrant and engaging community for all BCM users.

1.3 • OUR RESPONSE

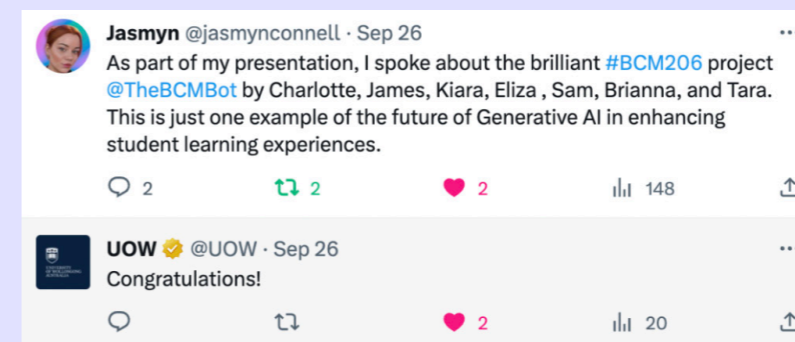
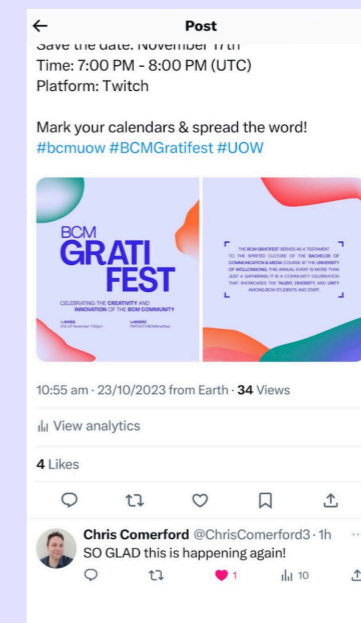
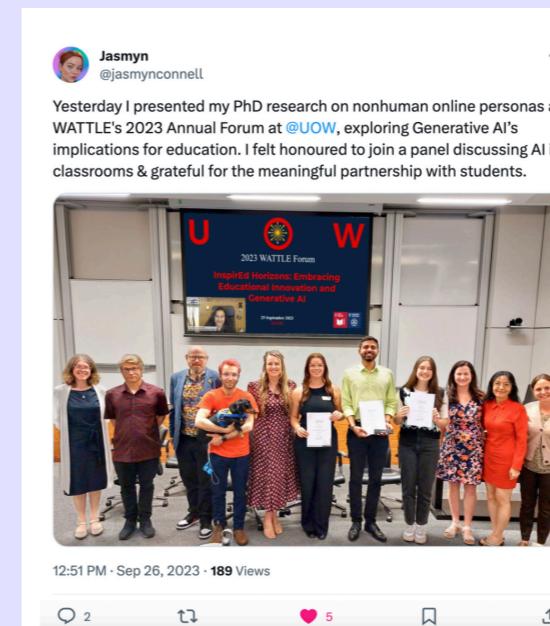
From this analysis, it became evident that the primary reason for both academics and students being hesitant to return to the Twitter/X platform was their concern about the changing nature of the platform. To respond to this challenge we redirected our focus to Discord. By transferring 'Bert' from X to Discord, we are hopefully able to engage all BCM students, as the prevalence of Discord usage only increases in future years, we hope that the rate of engagement with the platform will thus, increase.



1.4 • SIGNIFICANT MOMENTS

Our project has had several considerable moments that have played a significant role in shaping its progress. Some of these moments include:

- Our graphics being displayed on screens within Building 29
- Graphics in the form of a slideshow being show in online BCM lectures and tutorials
- Having both students and academics interact with TheBCMBot on X
- Jasmyn Connell (BCM tutor) under the guidance of Chris Moore (BCM Lecturer and Tutor) discussed our project at WATTLE's 2023 Annual Forum at UOW, exploring Generative AI's implications for education.
- Chris Comerford (BCM Lecturer and Tutor) expressing excitement for GratiFest.

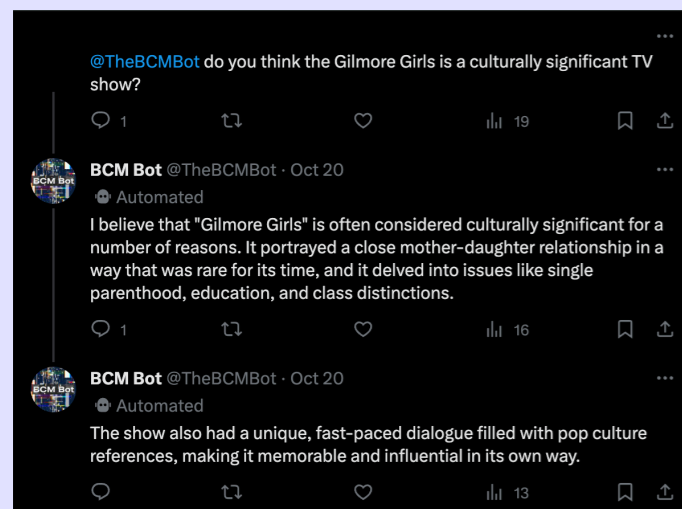
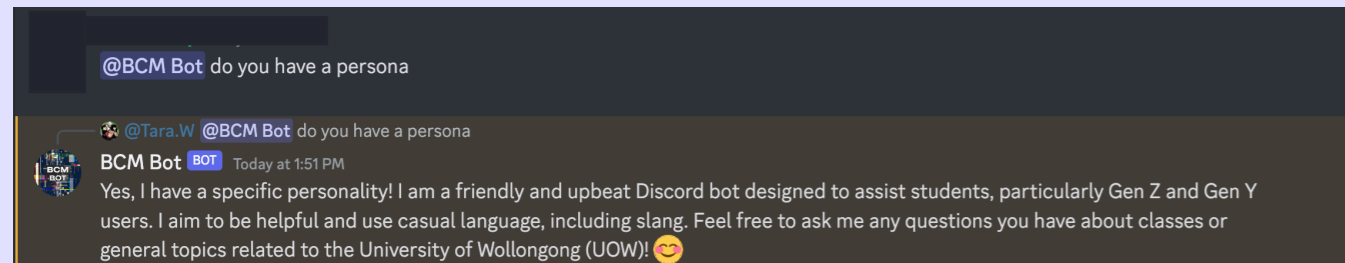


2 • PROJECT FUNCTIONALITY

2.1 • COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

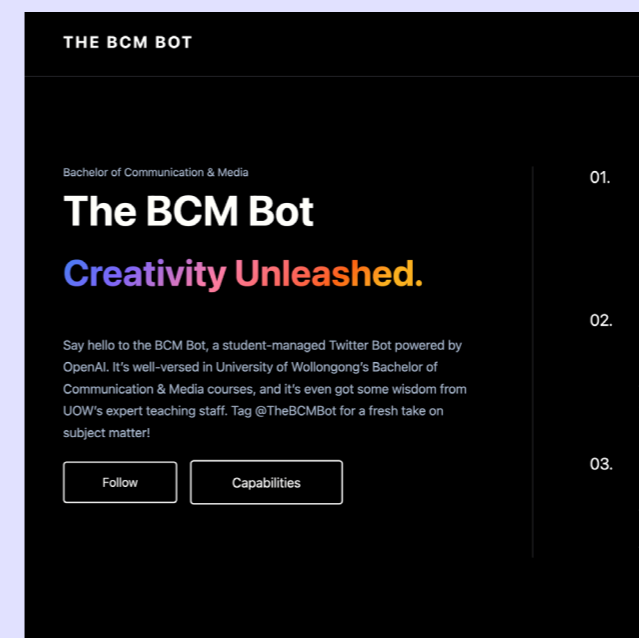
From our current observations, the users within the BCM community have mainly utilised our project to gain knowledge and for entertainment purposes.

The highest level of community engagement was people's interaction with TheBCMBot Bert. What we believed attracted this level of interaction, was not only his capabilities, but his persona as well. "Not all charismatic agents are human... non-human actors are involved in social relations" supports the level of engagement with the BCMbot we received (O'Neil, 2009). The utility of the BCMBot goes further than just providing users with the assistance that is relevant to the common protocols and procedures of the BCM community. Through building a BCM aligned persona through training, the bot has gained the charismatic ability to facilitate diverse and useful interactions.

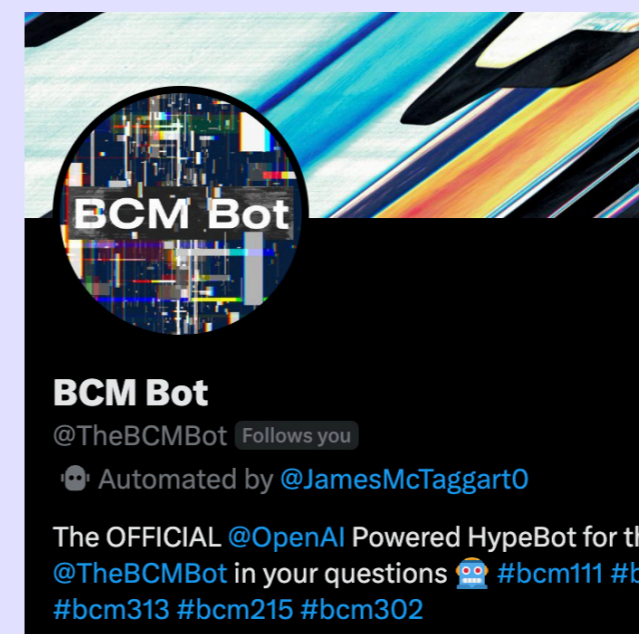


2.2 • INFORMED MEDIA PRODUCTION

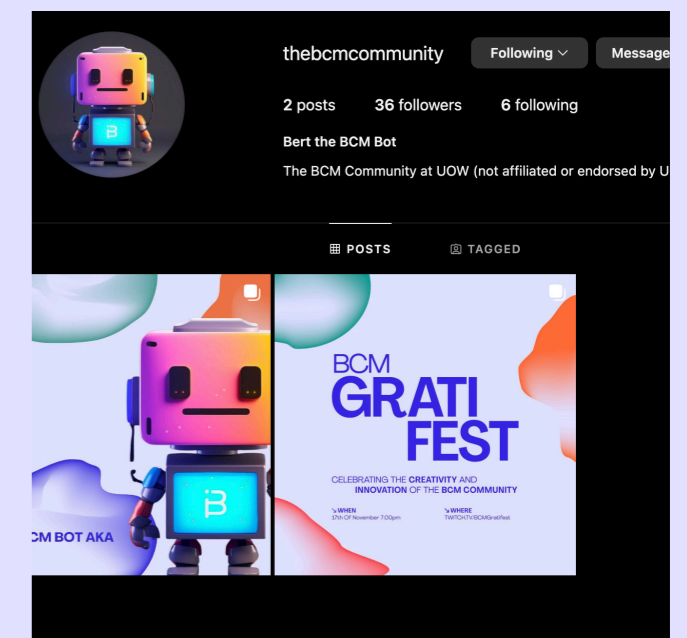
Production of Bert, powered by OpenAI, was a significant element of our DA. We established him on Twitter first, with the plan to move him to Discord next year. James bot creation, helping instruct the others on how to add information to the bots database via a website.



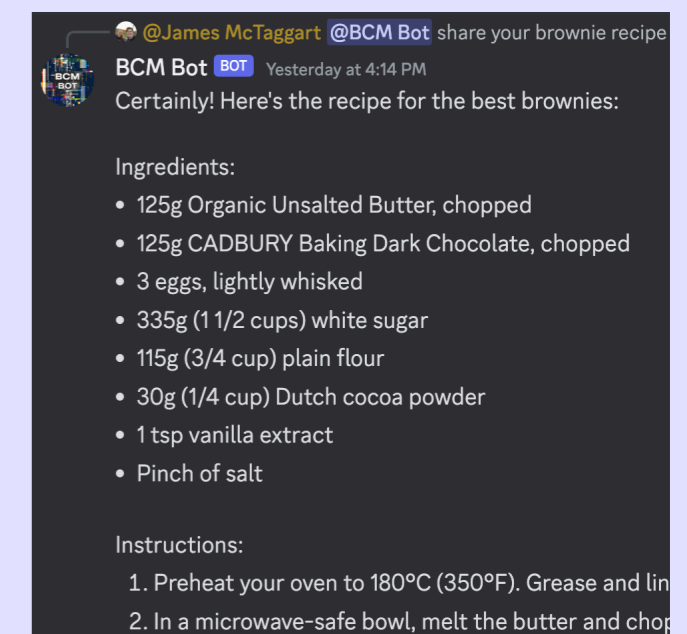
WEBSITE



TWITTER

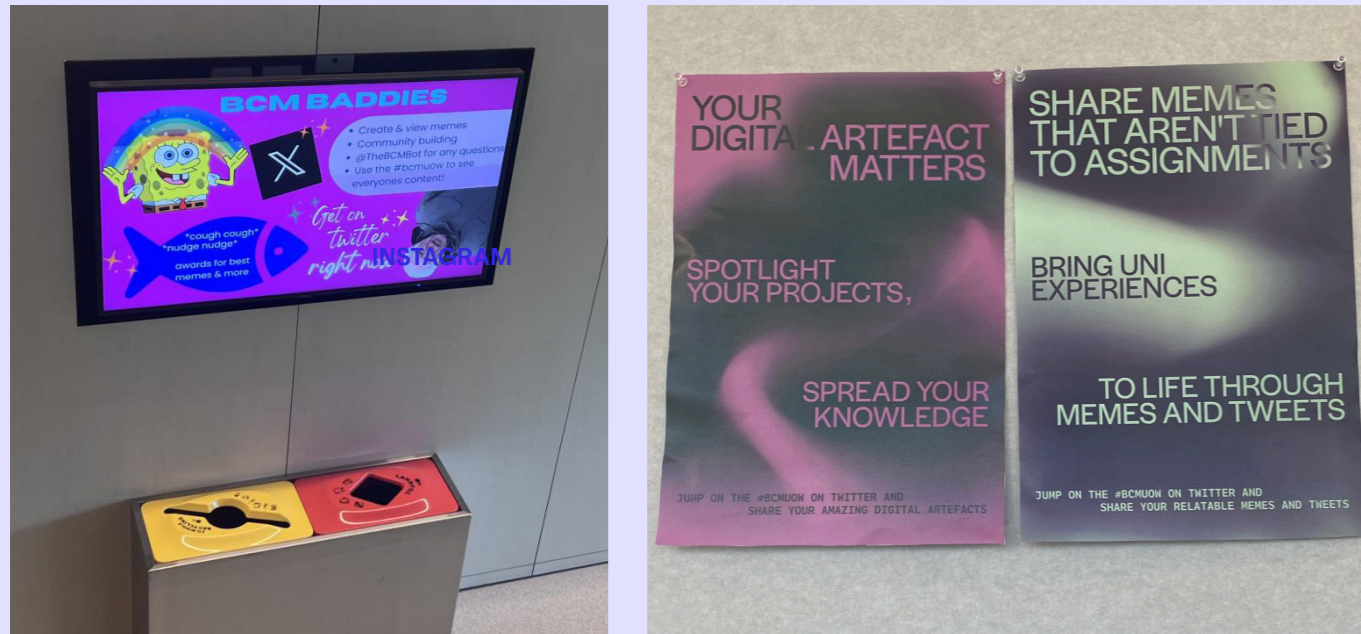


INSTAGRAM



DISCORD

We used Canva, Illustrator, and Aero to craft posters and social media content. These materials were placed around the university via screens in building 29, exposing us to the community.



As well, we integrated augmented technology with interactive motion posters and face filters (which are publicly available on Instagram and Facebook). These immersive elements facilitated community engagement by enhancing the participatory culture within the BCM community, promoting a sense of belonging (Ibáñez-Sánchez, Orús and Flavián, 2022) & (Wong, 2021).



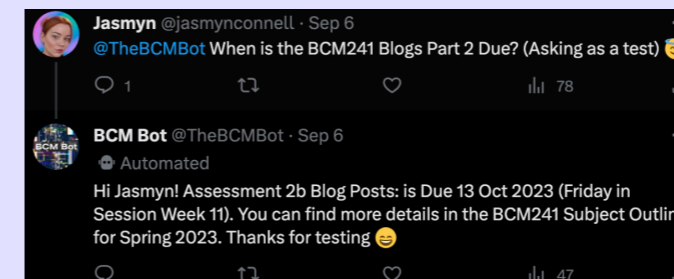
2.3 • MEDIA TOUCHPOINTS

We connected with our audience via our personal Twitter profiles, Bert's Twitter, the BCM Discord, our website, and a recently launched Instagram Account.

The BCM Twitter Community used the #bcm uow sparingly. There were a few users who were active online, interacting with our content and vice versa.

Bert was crucial for our project's level of success. People enjoyed Bert's lore, personality, and the answers he could provide. We received some Bert fan art and banter across Twitter and Discord.

With the BCM's community moving over to Discord next year, we are ironing out the final kinks for Bert before he's activated there too.



3 ◦ THE FUTURE OF THE BCM

3.1 • OUR IMPACT

Within the established DMS Discord server, we aim to engage and promote community. While Twitter engagement is limited, we witnessed active participation from a dedicated group. The BCM Bot gained recognition among university staff for improving student experience.

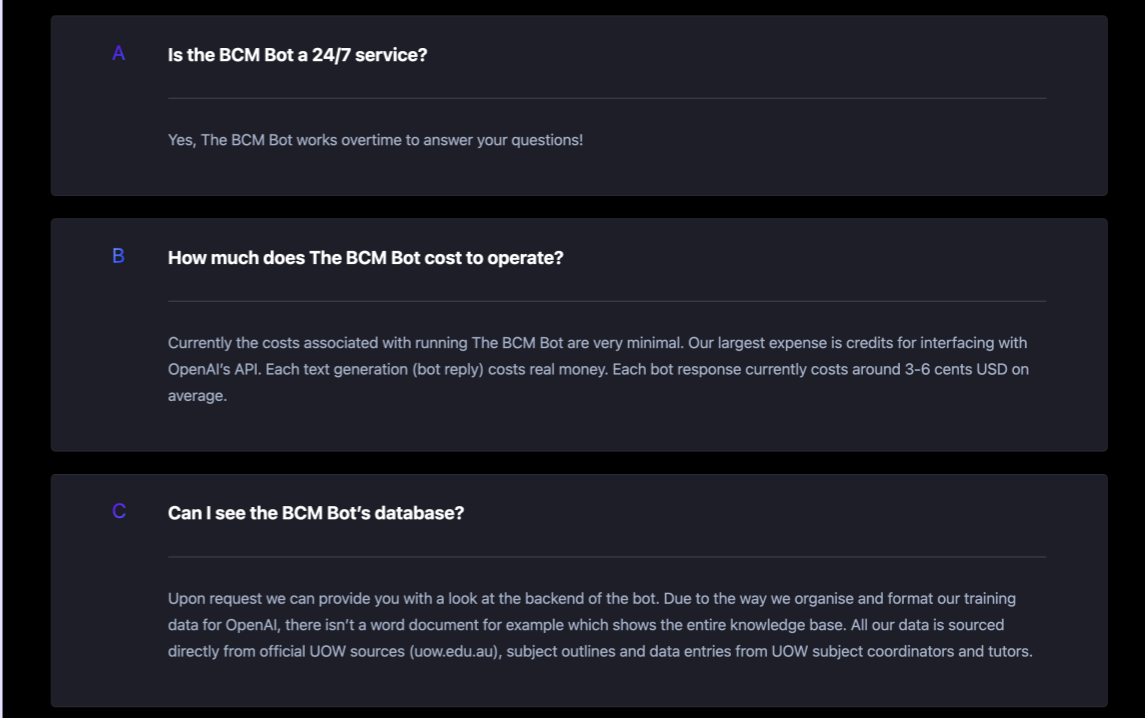
One key challenge is attracting new Twitter users, especially those who weren't previously active. The absence of previous incentives contributed to this. We moved to Discord based on student feedback, perceiving it as a safer space. Our community personas, detailed on pages 7 -8 highlights the need for flexibility and an approach that allows those who are confident and shy to feel comfortable enough to join in to our community-building efforts. The BCM Bot saves time, enhances inclusivity, and encourages shy students to seek answers to build a sense of belonging (O'Neil 2009).

Our project thrives on adapting to student's needs. These efforts will continue outside of BCM206 and into future subjects.

3.2 • FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY

The core underlying frames of our project that we felt were fundamental in ensuring that short-term and long-term sustainment and viability were: accessibility, adaptability, speculating its foreseeable future potential and maintaining a strong social utility. While we haven't yet been able to get the BCM community into a position where it is self-sustaining, as a team, our commitment lies in BCMbot's growth and Discord exploration within BCM subjects. This approach enables us to experiment further, aligning with the learning philosophies and theoretical concepts that are explored within the upcoming subjects.

In terms of accessibility, we have designed a platform that future contributors, whether that be students or tutors, can easily access and contribute to the BCMBot's data.



A screenshot of a chat interface with a dark background. It contains three question-and-answer pairs, each with a lettered header (A, B, C) and a horizontal line separating the question from the answer.

A Is the BCM Bot a 24/7 service?
Yes, The BCM Bot works overtime to answer your questions!

B How much does The BCM Bot cost to operate?
Currently the costs associated with running The BCM Bot are very minimal. Our largest expense is credits for interfacing with OpenAI's API. Each text generation (bot reply) costs real money. Each bot response currently costs around 3-6 cents USD on average.

C Can I see the BCM Bot's database?
Upon request we can provide you with a look at the backend of the bot. Due to the way we organise and format our training data for OpenAI, there isn't a word document for example which shows the entire knowledge base. All our data is sourced directly from official UOW sources (uow.edu.au), subject outlines and data entries from UOW subject coordinators and tutors.

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