

20100204 Ubyyssey – VFM should be continuous

<http://ubyssey.ca/ideas/editorial-vfm-should-be-continuous>

## Editorial: VFM should be continuous

Thursday, February 4th, 2010

Every AMS election season, the AMS' Voter Funded Media (VFM) contest pours \$8000 of your money into student blogs.

This has a number of good effects besides keeping *The Ubyyssey* on its toes. It provides coverage of the elections and editorial opinion from multiple sources. It gets new students involved with the AMS and makes it viable for independent student journalists to put a significant effort towards reporting. And finally, it gives students a chance to express what sort of media coverage they prefer.

VFM culminates in a payout based on student votes, which is announced along with the election results. But once the elections are over, something eerie occurs. With the exception of UBC Insiders, VFM blog activity goes from a continuous and unending downpour to a modest trickle overnight, with occasional spikes when the odd scandal occurs.

Why? Firstly, there is generally a lot less easy reporting available after the elections. But more importantly, there isn't as much of an incentive to write multiple posts per week.

There is another option. While the AMS was running its VFM contest, the original creator of the contest, Mark Latham, was running his own one. However, Latham's was a continuous model. People voted every day on which blogs provided value to students—and he paid out a percentage of a \$50 daily pot to the blogs which received the most votes. Why couldn't the AMS adopt this style of VFM, and keep up funding throughout the year?

It create an incentive for blogs to do work throughout the year, and increase coverage of issues beyond the AMS elections. If there is more media reporting on governance issues, campus culture and academic issues, students will be better off. This could attract more bloggers as well—there were few VFM entrants this year, and most were already involved with the AMS.

*The Ubyyssey* would be more than happy to welcome the competition for breaking stories that year-round continuous VFM would bring in. Or, at the very least, we'd welcome the photoshopped pictures of Joe Stott surrounded by glittery unicorns.

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## 1 comment

### 1. [Matthew Naylor Feb 4](#)

Agreed – although “Bah Humbug” to the idea that Insiders posted more in the off-season than the Tribune. Sure, after they started up again, but who kept chugging along throughout the summer, providing valuable coverage like this:

<http://radicalbeer.wordpress.com/2009/07/26/our-blackboard/>