
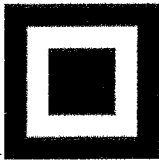
 THE 
QRPROJECT
 .ORG 

The QR Project

A Capstone Project by David Gerber
Supervised by Dr. Jonathan Cohen

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Annotated Capstone Project Proposal

Green Text indicates successful implementation.

Red Text indicates areas left unexplored or unsuccessful.

Blue Text represents inconclusive results.

Background

If you were to google the word “Judaism,” you would have to click through five screens of search results before you find the Union for Reform Judaism. You would click past Wikipedia, Aish Hatorah, Chabad, Jews for Jesus, and several Conservative sites long before you reach the URJ.

While Reform Jews are known as forward thinkers, we currently lag behind in technological integration. Technology is a means for increased accessibility and it would behoove our movement to operate on the cutting edge of innovation.

We have historically operated in response to technological advancement. Many congregations are trying to integrate podcasts and blogs to their repertoire. A handful of them are now streaming services online and an even smaller group is creating online communities. While this is a positive step in the direction of accessibility, it is very much a reactionary response. The technology being implemented now is already old news for most of the online community. It is time for the movement to transition into the driver’s seat. We need to look at the trends and projections and anticipate the next innovation.



By the 4th quarter of 2011, smartphones will account for over half of the mobile phones used in the United States. This is up from only 10% in 2008. In addition to their increased functionality, the cost has been on the decline. Many carriers offer smartphones for free with new contracts. At this rate of growth, asking someone if they have a smartphone might be as rhetorical as asking someone if they have email. While smartphones have become considerably cheaper, it looks like it will take another two quarters for smartphones to become a majority.

Quick Response codes (QR) have been around since the mid 1990s. They are similar to bar codes in that they contain information readable by scanners. For example, shipping companies might attach a QR code to a package so a person with a scanner could see where the package originated and where it is destined.

Recent innovations in mobile technology have presented new use for QR codes. Now, almost any smartphone or cell phone with a camera can read a QR code. The technology is relatively new, but is quickly developing.

The magazine *Entertainment Weekly* has a more innovative use of QR codes. If you are reading a review to an upcoming movie, you can scan an embedded QR code to instantly pull up the movie's trailer on your smartphone.

Consumers with smartphones are using the barcode scanner software to compare prices. If you are at Borders, you can scan the bar code of a book and find out how much it costs at Barnes and Noble or Amazon. Though this is not the function I find most useful for the purposes of the project, it is the reason why the technology is improving at such a rapid rate. Because of the consumer benefit, smartphone scanner technology is becoming more and more efficient.

As I will illustrate in the Goals/Procedure section of this proposal, QR Codes can be integrated into religious organizational life in a way that is communally beneficial, cost-effective, and accessible. Through this Capstone Project, I intend to show the range of effective uses of QR code integration, and establish the infrastructure for our campus and movement to serve as the leaders and innovators of this technology.

Goals/Procedure

The goal of this project is the successful implementation of QR technology in the setting of a religious organization, as well as the development of a concept-synagogue that can demonstrate the full range of potential applications for this technology. I will accomplish these goals in three phases (see below).

Before beginning these phases I will have to educate myself in some areas of technology. I already have the ability to create websites and web content, and I can generate QR codes and embed the necessary information. I will have to learn more about smartphone application development as well as web security. Though I can create QR codes, I would like to also become familiar with how it works, from the design of the code to the technology of the scanner.

Phase 1: Outreach

I will work with the staff of HUCINCI to incorporate QR technology into their current outreach effort. The goal of HUCINCI is to provide online access to the resources of Cincinnati's HUC campus. QR technology will allow us to provide more

accessibility than traditional outreach efforts. Additionally, it will serve as an effective method for attracting a more technologically inclined demographic. We used QR codes in advertising efforts such as the HUC Magnet, the Student Sermon QR, and flyers. Results were generally positive (see RESULTS section).

In addition to delivering HUC's campus resources to the community, QR technology can bring the campus to life for visitors. I will outfit our campus with QR sensors in strategic places that will provide visitors with an opportunity to experience the full breadth of our campus' faculty, staff, and resources even if they are not readily present. With the exception of the student sermons, this effort was a non-starter. While implementation would have been fairly simple, volunteers to create the content were difficult to find.

In order to accomplish the first phase, I will create an online infrastructure to host the information. The web interface must be accessible and sustainable beyond the duration of this project. Once the infrastructure is in place, I will create the content. This will include:

- Video and audio recordings of our staff and faculty about the treasures of our campus
- Educational materials
 - o "Living Bookmarks"
- Multimedia presentations
- Online access points for external campus involvement
- Marketing/Advertising

Online infrastructure completed (www.TheQRProject.org). Examples of these initiatives can be found in the RESOURCES section.

The students and faculty of the college naturally produce material that can be beneficial for educational purposes outside the campus. Almost every day students write iyyunai tefillah and divrei Torah. Using already existing resources, we can provide a consistent offering of education about Jewish liturgy, parshat hashavuah, and textual illuminations. Generally, I found that congregations were not likely to accept content from unknown sources. With the exception of the Chanukah QR, student materials were not used. Faculty resources were met with similar results.

Phase 2: High Concept Development

For the most part, QR technology is most effective when used supplementary. At this point, studies indicate that around 42% of Americans own a smartphone. Just three years ago, only 16% of Americans were using smartphones. At this rate of growth, it is reasonable to assume that the smartphone will become as widely used as email or even television.

I am going to develop the infrastructure needed to display the full array of possibilities of incorporating the technology. While several of these concepts can be applied in the present, the goal of this phase is to show the technology's potential.

Completed: www.TheQRProject.org.

By serving as the pioneer for incorporating QR into the realm of religious organizational functionality, I can serve as a guide for how it functions. People will

be more likely to embrace a new technology if they can see that it works, and how it might not only be applicable, but beneficial. Through webinars, blog posts, and presentations, Jewish organizations clearly recognize this project as the pioneer for this technology (See OUTREACH)

UPDATE:

Congregation Shaare Emeth in St. Louis, MO and Temple Israel of Memphis, TN have agreed to be the pilot congregations for this Capstone project. I will work with the congregations to examine the following concepts and implement them wherever possible. Much of this work can be done via correspondence, but the remainder will be done on site. During a seven-week internship in July and August, Shaare Emeth will be a working laboratory for the implementation of the following applications of QR technology. Results were highly favorable (See SHARE EMETH PROJECT.)

I intend to show that QR technology can be incorporated in the following ways:

- Congregational communications Completed in partnership with Temple Israel in Memphis, TN.
 - o Incorporating multimedia content into snail mail
 - o Personalization of newsletters/bulletins
 - o Increased accessibility
- Religious School Completed through work at Congregation Shaare Emeth
(see SHAARE EMETH PROJECT)

- Providing parents with information about upcoming events
- Access to students' assignments and requirements
- Notifications of weather cancellations
- Portal for family learning
- Worship Services Prototypes for this goal turned into the Mobile Siddur, which was met with success in its limited exposure.
 - Development of a QR concept prayer book
 - Each page will contain links to adult education about the prayer, the lyrics of the version of the prayer the congregation will be singing, and a recording of the song for further learning
 - Providing access to the service "variables" that change on a weekly or daily basis
 - Including the Torah portion, hymns, source material, Kaddish list, honors
 - Silent, educational resources to provide children who have difficulty sitting through a long service
 - Torah service supplemental material including a virtual Pew Bible
- Homiletics Idea was well-received by rabbis, but I did not have the opportunity to try it out.
 - Provide links to the bibliography of a sermon, or links to source websites
 - If a sermon contains an action item, provide a link for it

- Instantly email the congregant a copy of the sermon
- Provide supplementary multimedia
- Accessibility for the hearing impaired
- Fundraising Instructions for implementation can be found on my website, but I have no measurable data to show that this works.
 - Allow for one-click access to make donations during financial appeals
 - During services or through snail mail
 - Creation of a virtual collection plate so members without cash can donate via credit card
 - Create opportunities for selective donations through on-the-spot links.
- General Education The QR Bookmark and the Chanukah QR successfully demonstrate this idea. (See RESOURCES)
 - Clergy members and educators can have increased access to congregants
 - Educational material can be constantly modified and updated
- Conservation HUC Student Sermon QR saved HUC over 3000 sheets of paper per year (See RESOURCES).
 - QR Technology can work towards eliminating the following:
 - Sending flyers home with students
 - Songsheets
 - Supplementary service materials

- Makeshift worship services tailored to a specific occasion
 - Reduction of paper needed for newsletters
 - Increased efficiency/effectiveness of print ads/flyers
- QR technology is unable to REPLACE, it is currently only able to SUPPLEMENT
- Collaboration
 - Congregations and HUC will communicate to determine the ways in which the resources at the college can best be applied and transmitted to local congregants
 - This can serve as a model for future interactions between HUC and congregants
 - What are the best ways we can provide congregations with easy and meaningful access to the vast resources of HUC

The QR Project successfully partnered with congregations throughout the country as well as organizations such as Darim Online, the CCAR, and the URJ (see OUTREACH)

Phase 3: Presentation

With the proper unveiling of this project, HUC-Cincinnati and the collaborating congregations can become the pioneers of this technology and the source for education about its implementation. I would like to have the entire infrastructure in place and the campus fully integrated with the technology before we launch it. I would like to showcase the technology in the following steps:

The QR Project, by David Gerber

1. The fully integrated campus

- a. Go live on a weekend with visitors to the campus
 - i. Other possibilities include a youth program weekend or Board of Overseers weekend
- b. Integrate QR into the Saturday morning service
- c. Advertise
 - i. Press release for the community
 - 1. Emphasize that this is a breakthrough for technological integration into religious organizations beyond Judaism
 - ii. Generate a buzz on campus to gain student/faculty interest
- d. Press from this event should spark interest on a broader scale, leading up to the Biennial

2. URJ Biennial

- a. Present technology at the biennial (either in a learning session or a vendor table)
- b. Offer giveaways that demonstrate the technology
 - i. Bookmarks, magnets
- c. Provide access to the demo video (see below) either in hard copy or via hyperlink

3. Demonstrational Video

- a. Create a video that shows the immediate and long-term application of this technology
- b. Circulate the video through the URJ
 - i. Can use hyperlink for this

Results

Measuring Results:

There are three statistics required to present a comprehensive measure of the success of The QR Project:

1. QR Code Scans
2. Web Site Visits
3. Mobile Site Visits

QR Code Scans

Every resource contained at least one QR code. The QR code was the primary access point for engaging in the resource. Through the analytics of the host website (www.QRstuff.com) I am able to determine the date, time, and device of each scan. This measure is the most accurate assessment tool for the QR resources.

Challenges – This tool does not provide details about specific location of scans, only the country of origin.

Total QR Code Scans – 1732

Web Site Visits

The QR Project's web host, Photonics, installed Google Analytics on the web site. Google Analytics provides detailed information regarding the time, city, and behavior of online visitors. This is a comprehensive measuring resource that gives

us a clear picture of the behavior of visitors to the web site. This resource measures viewers who utilized The QR Project's learning resources.

Challenges – Due to negligence, Photonics failed to install Google Analytics until November 1st, 2011. The site had been live for three months up to that point, leaving over 90 days of site activity unmeasured. Additionally, it does not measure mobile views (see next entry).

Total Web Site Visits – 612

Total Page Views – 2092

Number of Countries with Site Visits – 31

Top five:

1. US
2. UK
3. Israel
4. Brazil
5. Canada

Number of States in the US with Site Visits – 32

Top five:

1. Ohio
2. New York
3. Connecticut
4. Florida

5. California

Mobile Site Visits

The QR codes used in the resources linked directly to the mobile version of The QR Project. The mobile site represented an alternate format of www.TheQRProject.org for optimal mobile viewing.

Challenges – Google Analytics did not measure these results, nor did Wordpress. This, again, can be attributed to negligence on the part of Photonics, though I believe they do not have a full understanding of mobile formatting.

Raw Data Analysis

The web site received significant spikes in visits following publicity. The most visited dates were immediately following my Darim Online Webinar, the URJ Biennial, and the Holtz Blog post. Aside from the spikes, there is a constant level of traffic ranging from 3-5 visitors per day.

The majority of site users are Jewish professionals who are looking to get ideas to innovate at their organizations. They come to the website to learn about QR codes as opposed to downloading resources. They may download to see how they work, but they mostly want to create their own products with their own resources.

It is unfortunate that I did not have a way to measure mobile data. The mobile site is designed to keep traffic after the QR scan, so I believe this would add potentially 2000 more page views.

Outreach at HUC

Concert Flyer

The first QR code we used for HUC outreach was for a concert in September. This code, when scanned, would send an RSVP to HUC instantly. This code was only scanned once. This could be for a number of reasons. For one, QR code email technology is not universally functional. Additionally, the event itself was not well attended, so the general appeal might have been limited. As of right now, I still do not trust the QR email technology and I rarely use it. Not every smartphone allows QR codes to send emails, so it is not a reliable access point.

Youth Programs Flyer

The department of youth programming issued two flyers with QR codes. The first was a basic redirect to the youth programming website. This code received 49 scans, all within a week of the flyer's mailing. There did not seem to be a lot of repeated scans. In response to this, I created a new code.

For the HUC College retreat, with a theme of Jewish humor, I created a code that when scanned, took you to a joke of the day. The same code, when scanned every day, would show a different joke. The goal was to encourage Hillels to post this flyer and encourage students to visit frequently. The code was scanned 25 times.

While this code was effective, it was also high maintenance. I used the same technology for Chanukah (see RESOURCES). Changing the content of a QR code is

Eight QRazy Nights!

Description

Chanukah is one of the most beloved and widely celebrated holidays on the Jewish calendar. The food is delicious, the lights are bright, and the traditions are beautiful...oh yeah, and presents are involved too!

This year, as you prepare to light your menorah, you can have one of the most innovative resources to help make this Chanukah as fulfilling as possible. So if you have ever wondered why the food is so good or why we give presents on Chanukah, Eight QRazy Nights! can answer that for you.



This QR tent contains the Chanukah blessings in the middle, and four QR codes in the corners. The QR codes are divided into the following categories:

- [Blessings](#)
- [Basics](#)
- [Learning](#)
- [Fun and Games](#)

You can scan each one to get a lesson or resource relating to the category. The best part is that every night the codes will be different. When you scan the “Basic” code on the first night you will learn about the significance of the menorah. When you

sustainable for 8 days, but over an undefined period of time, it can be tedious and inefficient.

The HUC Magnet

The magnet was designed with a code that would change content on a regular basis. The primary purpose was to unveil The QR Project at the HUC Tribute Dinner in November. The magnet was also featured at the URJ Biennial. In all, the magnet was scanned 146 times, most of which came after the Tribute Dinner. I believe this magnet proved that this type of QR code can be successful, but needs an audience that has more invested in needing to know the information it provides.

The QR Webinar

In October I was approached by Darim Online to conduct a webinar, teaching about the benefits and uses of QR technology. The webinar attracted Jewish leaders from all over the country (and Israel). More than 40 people took part in the webinar, and many of them engaged in the website beyond the class. Several of these educators have reached out to me to work with them on their specific technology needs. This webinar drew a lot of attention to the college, and there is great potential to continue this type of teaching (see RECOMMENDATIONS).

scan it the next night, you will learn all about Chanukah food. You can click on the categories above to see the schedule of events!

Target Audience

The resource is designed to appeal to a wide demographic. With different levels of difficulty, beginners and advanced learners as well as children can use this. I distributed the resource primarily at the URJ Biennial in December immediately preceding Chanukah.

Results

The resource had 312 scans. The Blessings code had the most, followed by the Basics code. This is consistent with trends in other codes that show that there is a higher demand for learning resources. Additionally, the YouTube videos that hosted much of the content collected 212 views.

Analysis

In retrospect, it would have been better to distribute this earlier. Many of the educators and rabbis who collected this resource at the Biennial were already in the middle of their religious school's winter break. While the content was well received and frequently viewed, it could really succeed if it were handed out to families in a synagogue prior to winter break. I also believe that I could achieve approximately four times the scans if I had a congregation of my own.

Scans were more frequent on the first three nights of Chanukah (and Shabbat). I expected a drop off, mostly because I'm not sure how many families light candles each night of Chanukah.

Musical Midrash

Description

Bob Dylan, Regina Spektor, Leonard Cohen...so many contemporary musicians have looked to ancient Jewish text for inspiration! With Musical Midrash you can explore how the texts that have shaped the history and tradition of the Jewish people have served as the source for some of the music we know and love today.

Each lesson contains a source text. After you have read the source text, you can explore the QR codes in the corners of the page. These codes contain the necessary guidance and media to enrich your learning experience.

[Click here to see how it works...](#)

Musical Midrash Lessons

Samson and Delilah - The relationship between Samson and Delilah might be more complicated than the Bible describes. See what the story might look like from Delilah's perspective and engage in a discussion about the nature and complexities of relationships.

King Saul and David - When King Saul becomes depressed, see who he turns to for healing. Saul's particular brand of medicine becomes an inspiration for one of the most frequently covered songs in recent history!

Isaiah - What happens when a legendary songwriter crashes his motorcycle, lands in the hospital, and opens the Bible to the book of Isaiah? One of the greatest songs ever written!

The Letter Bet - Explore the “Fab Four” like never before! The Talmud speaks of four important things that make up an essential Jewish value...a value shared by the other “Fab Four.”

Noah’s Ark - Is this a tragic story of a worldwide unnatural disaster? Or is it really a spotlight on a bittersweet love story? The rabbis have one opinion. The DMB has another!

Target Audience

This resource is ideal for teens and young adults. It features contemporary music and relatable issues. Audience could extend up to adult learners, but not likely younger than middle school.

Results

Musical Midrash codes had 151 scans. These codes were primarily scanned at the URJ Biennial when I presented the lesson during their Beit Midrash.

Analysis

During the study session, there was only one student who did not have a smartphone. I did not have to explain how QR codes worked and most students began scanning instantly. About half of the scans occurred during the session and the others occurred in the following days. Based on my experience at the Biennial, high school students are a QR savvy demographic, and they enjoy scanning.

The QR Bookmark

Description

The QR Bookmark is the perfect supplement to any siddur. With a quick scan of your smartphone, you can hear the Shabbat prayers read or chanted out loud. It is like practicing with a cantor any time you want!

This bookmark is ideal for:

- adult learners
- conversion students
- religious school students
- anyone trying to feel more comfortable at Shabbat services



Just print out the following page, cut along the dotted line, and fold it in half. You will be polishing your Hebrew skills before you know it!

Target Audience

B'nai Mitzvah students, adult learners, anyone who wants to be more comfortable in synagogue.

Results

The QR Bookmark was scanned 270 times. The most commonly scanned code was the first one listed (twice as many scans as any other).

Analysis

I distributed this at the URJ Biennial as well, but most of the people in attendance were Jewish leaders who wouldn't need this resource. The fact that the first code listed was scanned the most tells me that these Jewish leaders used this as a prototype. I heard anecdotally that the bookmark was a good idea and these Jewish leaders would like to make their own. Many people seemed hesitant to distribute a learning resource with an unfamiliar cantor.

Reform Daf Yomi

Description

Reform Daf Yomi is a blog dedicated to viewing the ancient texts of the Torah and Talmud through the eyes of Reform Judaism. The blog is written and regularly updated (semi-monthly) by rabbinical student Marc Katz. Marc is scheduled to be ordained in the spring of 2012.



You only need to download the code once and you can use the same image every time. When the code is scanned, it will automatically show the most recent post.

Target Audience

The blog already had a built in audience of adult learners. The goal of the code was to determine if congregations would download pre-made QR codes and insert them into their learning materials.

Results

Reform Daf Yomi received 17 scans. Most, if not all, of these scans were in demonstrations.

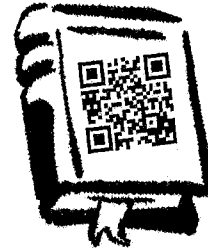
Analysis

Congregations were uninterested or unwilling to insert this code into their newsletters or learning resources. Based on my experience, I believe rabbis of congregations do not want to use materials that contain resources that they cannot control. This resource did, however, convince me of the benefits of Google Blogs.

The Mobile Siddur

Description

Mobile Siddur is a fully customizable prayer service that can be viewed on smartphones. Once you scan the Mobile Siddur logo, you will be able to access the service. If your phone is a touch screen, you can turn the pages with a swipe of your finger. Otherwise, you simply click from page to page.



Because the siddur is electronic, you can go in and change readings from Hebrew to English and back. You can insert alternate readings, pictures, and change the words based on the version of the songs you are doing.

The secret to Mobile Siddur is Google Blogs. By setting up a siddur in blog form, you can easily create and edit new siddurim in minutes. Try them out for retreats, tot shabbats, songsessions, trips, or anytime you need to take a service with you!

There are three ways you can use Mobile Siddur:

1. You can have mine. Just download the code and it is yours. If you use mine, you will not be able to customize the pages.
2. You can borrow one of mine. I have several blank Mobile Siddurim. If you want to borrow one, just [email me](#) and I will give you access. Basically, I will authorize you as a editor of Mobile Siddur, so you can go in and make whatever changes you want. You will be the only one who can edit the siddur while you are borrowing it.

3. Make your own. It is easy! [CLICK HERE FOR INSTRUCTIONS](#), or email me and I'll show you how.

Target Audience

This resource is ideal for service leaders who are conducting worship on retreats. With the ability to create versatile content and avoid bringing siddurim on trips, the service leader can offer a more personalized, convenience service.

Results

The Mobile Siddur is pretty high-concept and it was only tested once. I worked with Student Rabbi Matt Cohen to create a mobile siddur for a high school social event at a bowling alley. Since he created his own QR code, I do not have statistics to examine.

Analysis

Matt was able to conduct a Havdallah service at the bowling alley with full participation of his youth group. Without much technical knowledge, Matt created the service following The QR Project's instructions and successfully led the service. Each student in the youth group had a smartphone and enjoyed the experience.

Note: after I learned of the CCAR's Mishkan Tefilah app, I decided it would not be appropriate to push this resource at the URJ Biennial.

HUC Student Sermons

Description

After each fourth or fifth year sermon, HUC leaves a stack of about 20 copies in the mailroom. I replaced the stack of sermons with a QR code that allows smartphone users to scan and get a copy of the sermon.

Results

The Student Sermon QR code was fully functional. It does effectively save the college time, money, and resources. It did not, however, receive a significant number of scans (35 total). I do not think this is a flaw in the process, but rather a reflection of demand. I believe that not many people wanted copies of these sermons. If there were an issue with the QR code as a means for delivery, there would have been requests for printed sermons. At the upcoming CCAR conference I will have an opportunity to test this type of QR code again.

The Shaare Emeth Project

Concept

The first QR Project pilot congregation was Shaare Emeth of St. Louis, MO. After conducting interviews with the rabbi, cantor, and religious school director, we collectively decided that the first QR code integration should be a religious school initiative. We determined that the younger audience would be more likely to embrace the technology, and it could create cost-effective opportunities for engagement.

The Shaare Emeth Religious School has historically provided religious school students with audio recordings of the blessings taught in preparation for B'nai Mitzvah. The cantor spends roughly one week out of every summer burning CDs for nearly 100 students. It is a costly process both in time and resources. Additionally, the effectiveness of learning by CD is questionable.

The primary goal of QR integration in this process was to provide CDs as the exception, not the rule. By using the audio files from the CDs, we were able to program QR codes to play the blessing when scanned. These QR codes were then pasted into the religious school curriculum where appropriate. Students who did not have access to a smartphone could then ask for a CD.

The secondary goal was to use these QR codes to create resources for B'nai Mitzvah preparation, conversion students, and adult learners. Since the audio for the QR codes needed to be hosted on some sort of web platform, we decided to create an online resource for all learners.

Implementation

The first challenge facing the successful implementation of this project was the Shaare Emeth website. The main problem, which is something that is extremely common among temple websites, is that it is not mobile compatible. When accessing the site via smartphone, the site looks like a miniature version of the desktop view. This makes the site difficult to see and navigate. Additionally, the website did not have a standard audio player. We were unable to load playable audio files on the site. Fortunately, one solution worked for both issues.

Using the text of the prayers and the audio files, I created a YouTube video for each blessing. I then created a YouTube channel for Shaare Emeth to host the videos. YouTube is naturally mobile-compatible, so this solved both problems. We then embedded these videos on to the Shaare Emeth website in a new section called Prayer Center.

With a YouTube site hosting all of the audio content, I was able to create a QR code for each prayer. The QR codes were then pasted into the curriculum on any page that asked the student to pray out loud.

The curricula contained a cover letter explaining how the QR codes work, as well as what to do if you do not have access to a smartphone.

The Prayer Center site that hosted the YouTube videos was expanded to include additional learning resources. These include the text and translation of the prayer, the transliteration, and resources to learn the melodies of the prayer that are commonly sung at Shaare Emeth.

Results

This project has both scientific and measurable results. I was able to monitor the scanning of the QR codes as well as the number of hits on the YouTube page.

Data from September 1, 2011 through January 31, 2012

Total QR Code Scans: 406

Analysis: Of the 406 scans; over 250 scans come from the four blessings that the students have covered up to this point in their studies. There are spikes in scans on religious school days when a prayer is featured. Codes that have the fewest scans are ones such as The Four Questions for Passover, which has not been taught yet. The scans generally occur in the afternoon or evening following a religious school class. In a conversation with the religious school director, she has learned that it is primarily the parents who are scanning the codes. They have enjoyed being able to practice Hebrew with their children—especially the parents who are not Jewish or who have not learned Hebrew.

Total Views of the YouTube Page: 8080

Analysis: Only a fraction of these views come from the Shaare Emeth Community (less than 20%). The popularity of the YouTube page was truly one of the surprises of this project. The remaining 80% of the views are coming from all over the world.

Additionally, the site was never advertised or promoted, so viewers have actively searched for this resource. This tells me that there is a need for Reform Jewish prayer resources online.

Summary and Recommendations:

The QR integration was successful both scientifically and anecdotally. In fact, it may be the first time that anyone has documented proof that students are doing their religious school homework! The real lesson here is that there is a serious need for Reform educational resources online. This is an area where HUC can easily fill a need. At no cost, HUC can create a YouTube site to host the content and attract thousands of new viewers. If actively maintained, the YouTube page can direct the viewers to additional content on the HUC website.

Recommendations For HUC and Technology

Education

Technology has already been established as an essential part of Jewish outreach, education, and engagement. Many synagogues have fully functioning websites, social media accounts, streaming services, and a contingency that is exponentially more technologically advanced than previous generations. As the Reform Jewish seminary, HUC should take action to ensure that rabbis are given the training needed to be leaders in a technologically savvy community.

This need goes beyond the novelty of innovation; it is becoming a fundamental skill for successful Jewish leadership. A Jewish leader needs to be able to know how a website functions, how to navigate social media, and how to utilize technology in order to facilitate communal growth. As someone who just completed 4.5 years of HUC, I can confirm that there is no avenue for learning these skills at HUC.

Furthermore, there are not many organizations affiliated with the Reform movement that effectively teach this skill set. It is not something that can be learned through seminar or workshop; it needs to be ingrained in the rabbinical training process.

The congregations and pulpits we serve generally rely on students for this type of innovation. In our current model, if the student is so inclined, they can experiment with various uses of technology, but there is no support system to assist those without the skill.

I recommend that HUC begin teaching a required course on Technology and the Rabbi. This course, similar to the education course in the second year, would provide basic technological skills using the class as well as student pulpits as a laboratory. In doing so, we will not only educate rabbinical students with hands-on experience, we can also provide a more consistent rabbinical presence for the communities we serve, and expand the brand of HUC.

In envision this course covering the following topics:

- Your Online Persona
 - Controlling your Google
 - Building an online portfolio
- Twitter
 - Developing your rabbinate 144 letters at a time
 - What your Twitter profile says about you
- Facebook
 - Utilizing groups and events
 - Safe communications
 - Role of Facebook in daily life by generation
- Blogging
 - Microblogging
 - Blogging v. Tweeting
 - Blogging etiquette
 - Effective use of blogs other than blogs
- Googlesites
 - How to build a website
 - When to use Google and when to use your tech person
- Streaming Services
 - Pros and Cons

- How to
- Mobile Technology
 - Mobile trends
 - App development
- Cyberbullying
 - Protecting children
 - Prevention
- Online Safety
 - Privacy issues
 - Content
- Etiquette of electronic communications
 - When should you call, write, or email?
 - Getting your message across without a voice
- Using video chat
 - Interviews, counseling
 - Expanding your brand
- Online Aesthetics
 - The website is the new foyer
 - Functionality
- Video
 - Building a congregational TV station
 - YouTube, Vimeo, ooVoo

Investing in Mobile Technology

The challenge of an increasingly mobile society is that websites are not naturally designed to interface with a mobile screen. A laptop or home computer can do things that a smartphone can't, such as right-click or drag. If a website requires any of these motions, it is ineffective on a mobile platform. Additionally,

the text is generally too small to read without zooming and the pages become clunky and slow due to various images and plug-ins.

At the moment, HUC's web platforms are not mobile friendly. I do not have access to the numbers as to the number and frequency of visitors to HUC's website, but I would venture to guess that it is primarily used internally by HUC students, faculty, and associates.

While it will not largely benefit the college immediately, it would be worthwhile to ensure that current and future web endeavors are developed with mobile accessibility in mind. This is for two significant reasons:

1. If the college wants to venture into providing online resources for lay people, it is becoming increasingly likely that they will access this information on a mobile or tablet platform
2. Even if the college's website stays the same, every day fewer and fewer people are able to access it on their preferred medium

Pulpit resources

One of the most glaring needs for our immediate constituency is increased rabbinic presence at our student pulpits. Many of these congregations have a rabbinic presence once or twice per month, which could amount to as few as 10 days out of the entire year. Some of these pulpits are used to a more consistent presence, but cannot afford it.

Through technology, we can provide resources to these congregations in order to allow them to utilize HUC's resources. When I served a monthly pulpit I

provided a simple blog that allowed me to provide an online Torah study during the summer months when I was not visiting.

Each student pulpit should have access to a blog that provides weekly Jewish learning created by HUC students and faculty. This could be integrated into the technology course. This would allow the students to learn how to blog effectively as well as train them in other areas of writing (sermons, bulletin posts, etc). Students would learn effective use to technology, distance learning, and online communications.

Partnerships:

Through The QR Project, I have worked with congregations all across the country (literally...from Miami, FL to Anchorage, AK). There is a need for technological education among educators in congregations. HUC can get in the business of providing educational webinars or materials to serve this population. The webinar I conducted for Darim Online was largely attended by educators and rabbis from our movement. It can only benefit the Reform movement if we provide our own resources.

The partnership with Temple Israel in Memphis is a great example of the potential for an HUC-congregation collaboration. TI has a leadership team that promotes technological innovation. They were willing to listen and try out my ideas and share their successes and failures with their own. Together, we developed new and exciting resources that were developed with congregants in mind. Furthermore, TI has enthusiastically sought out opportunities to provide its

members with access to HUC faculty and resources. If the college sets the expectation that HUC's faculty should be available to provide congregational resources, this partnership could provide endless learning opportunities and a greater national presence for the college.

It is no secret that organizations such as the RVI have made it clear that they are beginning to expect more from the college in exchange for their MUM dues. As someone who has been in charge of working with visiting synagogues, I have heard similar complaints from many rabbis. In addition to providing better training for rabbis in terms of contemporary issues such as technology, we can easily (and cost-effectively) increase our benefit to congregations by offering learning resources to their members. This is all dependent on our effective use of technology.

Sitemap for www.TheQRProject.org

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- [A QR code's URL \(Web Address\) can be shortened to make the QR code more basic, and therefore easier to scan.](#)
- [A Song About Light](#)
- [About QR](#)
 - [How to Create a QR Code](#)
 - [How to Introduce a QR Code](#)
 - [Size, Color, Content](#)
 - [What are QR Codes?](#)
 - [Which Phones Can Read QR Codes?](#)
 - [Why Use QR Codes?](#)
- [About The QR Project](#)
- [Adonai S'fatai Tiftach](#)
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- Event Details
- Photographs and Videos
- Social Media
- Web Address (URL)
- V'ahavta
- V'shamru
- Where does the story of Chanukah come from?
- Why is Chanukah Food Fried in Oil?
- Witty, Hilarious, Self-Deprecating Jewish Humor
- Witty, Hilarious, Self-Deprecating, Jewish Humor
- Yismechu
- Yotzeir Or

The QR Project Summary

Using QR technology, I have been able to create a variety of innovative resources that have assisted in creating opportunities for learning, outreach, and conservation. The statistics show that the resources have been well received and QR codes can be an effective medium for engagement.

On a broader scale, The QR Project demonstrates that the Reform Jewish population is ready and willing to begin to engage with Judaism on a mobile level. The mobile platform is rapidly becoming the preferred informational resource for the US population and the Reform movement should be prepared to meet its contingents at the mobile level.

The Hebrew Union College, in training Jewish leaders, is well positioned to take a leadership role in this type of innovation. HUC students branch out all over the country and serve congregations who would likely benefit the most from mobile technological innovation. Additionally, congregations are actively seeking this type of guidance as they prepare to meet the needs of their increasingly mobile contingency.

HUC has many willing partners as well. Organizations such as Darim Online are actively looking for organizations that share the same values and goals, which is to ensure that Jewish communities are operating at the forefront of technology. The CCAR and URJ have technological initiatives that would also be better served if there existed greater synergy within the movement. The most obvious partner for HUC may also be the most difficult.

Through my work on The QR Project (as well as other HUC work) I have noticed that there is an obvious rift between the three stateside campuses of HUC. Each campus is protective of their ideas and intellectual property, and they seem to be positioning themselves to constantly prove their worth. This is, no doubt, fallout from the financial crises that occurred in 2009. In order to realize the full technological potential of this institution, there has to be full collaboration and utilization of our cross-campus resources.

There is also a practical challenge with this type of organizational fracture. When the college's main source of public relations is based in New York, it can be difficult to highlight the achievements of the other two campuses. Especially if the communication is lacking. The clearest example of this is the URJ Biennial. The lack of communication between the campuses cost the college a serious PR opportunity.

The QR Project was partially funded by the Hebrew Union College and is an example of HUC's willingness to fund innovation and encourage collaborations with congregations. The intention was to display this collaboration at the Biennial. Upon arrival at the convention, I discovered that the HUC table had already been planned and there was no room for The QR Project. As a result, I was forced to set up my display at the adjacent table. The display did exactly what HUC wanted it to do. I spent virtually the entire conference consulting with congregations and circulating my resources. Unfortunately, HUC did not benefit from this because there was no clear affiliation with the college. All of the press that came out of the event featured the project but did not mention the college. This was a missed opportunity for HUC and could have been prevented by better communications between the leaders of

the campuses. There were many successes of The QR Project, but in terms of PR for the college, I would say we did not meet expectations.

Now that The QR Project has reached its completion, the next question to address is: what's next? The site should remain active as a learning resource for congregations. This can happen at no cost to the college. I do not believe the college should continue to create new QR resources. It would take too much time for a single person and the resources would be better spent elsewhere.

QR codes have proven to be effective, but they are only a small piece of the outreach puzzle. The QR code itself has a limited shelf life. It is my belief that mobile technology will advance beyond QR codes within two years. With augmented reality on the horizon, a smartphone will be able to interface with reality in the same way without the physical QR code.

The rapidly advancing nature of technology means that HUC should always be looking out for the next QR project. The people assigned to run the college's outreach and educational programs should be technologically savvy and able to anticipate the direction of mobile technology. The students of HUC are a natural resource for this, since young adults tend to be early adopters of technology. Projects such as The QR Project should be encouraged, supported, and fostered by campus leaders and faculty. There should be incentives for students to use their technological expertise to benefit the welfare of the college. HUC's ability to not only adapt to new technology, but to pioneer it and teach it will define its ability to stay relevant and maintain the standards it has set for being the foremost institution for training Jewish leaders.