

Activists Want Better, Safer Technology

WIPS 2020 Flash Talk

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- ❖ Essential Question: What do activists want from technology, and how can we provide it?
 - Activists: people who practice protesting, demonstrating, or direct action to effect change
 - Technology: **social media**, blogs, org websites, SMS, chat apps, Google, street poles, etc.
- ❖ Method: in-person interviews with 50 BLM activists June 1st-16th, 2020
 - **How did you hear about this action? How do you usually find info about similar actions?**
 - 84% use social media regularly; only 48% heard about that day's actions through SM
 - 40% use personal networks; 42% heard about that day's actions through PNs
 - **How easy is it to find the information you are looking for? Why do you think that is?**
 - 27% said was easy if and only if you were already "in the know" about pages & accounts
 - 66% cited existing connections as a determining factor of ease
 - **How safe do you feel using social media to organize? Why do you think that is?**
 - 45% safe (12% totally safe); 45% unsafe (25% totally unsafe)
 - Concerns: 64% misuse of personal info, 22% information credibility & reliability, 10% hacking
 - **What might make digital organizing tools better (easier, safer)?**
 - Suggestions: 35% encryption/privacy, 33% abolish corporations, 21% authentication
- ❖ Common Threads: community (72%), lack of privacy (64%) & info reliability (40%)
- ❖ Next Steps: community networks v. privacy online, new features, replacing corporate SM