**Mini-Case: Dunkin’ Donuts Adopts a Rogue Website**

The webmaster of a rogue site aimed at Dunkin’ Donuts said he or she had “way too much time on [his] hands” and posted some thoughts about Dunkin’ Donuts on a personal website. Within a few weeks, the site had “an unusual [but welcome] influx of visitors.” The webmaster learned through the referrer log at Yahoo! that all of these visitors went through Yahoo! to access the site. The webmaster also learned that Dunkin’ Donuts did not have its own website, so Yahoo! indexed the rogue site as a “consumer opinion” website about Dunkin’ Donuts.

The site started getting, it said, “500 hits and a dozen e-mails a week.” Then the webmaster requested, and was granted, the use of the domain name “dunkindonuts.org” and moved the content previously posted on his personal website to the new, official website. The site made news (Segal & Mayer, 1999, p. A01).

It must be said here that 500 hits are not necessarily 500 complaints. People stumble onto sites. Curiosity leads them to sites. Also, one person may “hit” a site more than once, so it doesn’t even mean that 500 people visited the site. And the webmaster himself admits on the page that some of the hits come from people who “are from Dunkin’ Donuts headquarters doing ‘damage control,’ ‘lurking,’ or eavesdropping.”

Dunkin’ Donuts started to respond to the comments on the rogue site. Jennifer Rosenberg, a Dunkin’ Donuts spokesperson, on the top line of the rogue site is quoted as saying, “If this was where customers were going to post their comments, we thought it was important for us to go ahead and address them.” Soon after, Dunkin’ Donuts made arrangements to acquire the site for its own use.