

LabourStart



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12 months of slow, focussed growth

Summary

Between *June 2015* and *June 2016*, many hours of work have been focussed on growing LabourStart Brazil. What follows is a description of adopted strategies, modifications to those strategies and an accompanying analysis of results.

Outreach

Work began with an attempt to reach out to existing correspondents and translators in Brazil. Unfortunately, not a single correspondent or translator was active and nor did they want to be. While remaining sympathetic to LabourStart and expressing interest in helping, no previously-existing volunteers have made contributions.

Next, meetings were set up with those pre-existing volunteers in order to both assess previous work and to request help in making new contacts. Unfortunately few were available and new contacts were difficult to find.

The Brazilian labour movement is similar to other national movements in that some degree of bureaucracy needs to be respected in order to access means of communication and authorization for successful outreach to local unions. The international departments of every national labour central were contacted and meetings requested. Only one labour central responded and a meeting was held where LabourStart was presented to communications and international staff. Additionally, international departments of many large unions were contacted. None responded.

For three months, every time a new campaign was launched specific outreach was systematically made to hundreds of local (city-based) trade unions that represent workers in the sectors of those campaigns. Thousands of emails resulted in almost no new contacts.

Outreach was also developed with all of the global unions and the regional trade union body affiliated to the ITUC (TUCA). A couple of contacts were made and then consolidated at UNI Americas and at the PSI regional office in São Paulo. Contact was also established with two staff members of IndustriALL related to publishing the LabourStart book in Portuguese.

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Conferences, seminars, courses and meetings

Formal presentation of LabourStart Brazil at the following conferences / meetings:

- UGT National conference on Gender, Race and Youth in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais – 350 participants
- UGT Annual May Day Seminar, São Paulo 250 participants



- Table presence at the ITUC regional congress (TUCA) in São Paulo – 50 Brazilians



- UNI Americas 'Women in Unions' course – 100 participants

- CSP Conlutas - International Conference for Transport Workers – 200 participants



Despite the very positive initial responses immediately following all of these presentations, the Brazilian list did not see any kind of commensurate growth. However, other positive connections and opportunities always follow these presentations. For example, a television interview about LabourStart Brazil, invites to other events and an invitation to write an article about LabourStart resulted from participation these events.

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Digital / Social Media presence

In response to the weak results after formal requests for meetings, a more direct internet-based / social media strategy was adopted.

LabourStart Brazil site:

The LabourStart site and campaigns interface (including underlying technical text) was completely translated into Brazilian Portuguese. This included the correspondents sign-up and donations pages. New additions to the page continue to evolve. This includes embedding a television interview about LabourStart Brazil and including a 'photo of the day' feature using photos posted on Facebook by Brazilian unions.

Updating of labour news has been done efficiently and consistently. 'Google news alerts' were set up using key words including the names of all of the national trade union centrals, strike, demonstration, etc. A daily email digest with links to all of the media stories where these key words appear is used to update the Brazilian site. News from trade unions that appears from Facebook and Twitter are also posted to LabourStart on a daily basis. All campaigns are translated and posted quickly.

LabourStart

Onde os sindicalistas começam o seu dia na Internet.

Versão Brasileira

العربية | Bahasa Indonesia | Benepycian Hoo | Eunnapeon | 中文 | Česky | Dansk | Deutsch | Ελληνικά | English | Español | Esperanto | العربية | Français | עברית | हिन्दी | Italiano | Italiano | 한국어 | Kreyol | Magyar | Nederlands | Norsk | Polski | Português | Pycckий | Srpski | Suomi | Svenska | العربية

Act NOW!



Mulhaire: SFI tem que parar de enrolar a

reconhecer o sindicato agora

AFP: Exija contratos justos para os fotógrafos freelance

Pare com as práticas anti-sindicais e retaliação contra os trabalhadores que as denunciam na OMP!

Coréia: Não deixe que a morte de Han seja em vão

Turquia: Avon - Pare com as práticas

anti-sindicais!

Turquia: Apoie os sindicalistas na luta para salvar as florestas da Ceramepe

Israel: A empresa 'Amicos' tem que reconhecer o sindicato

Peru: Sindicatos Expulso

Uzbequistão: Vamos defender ativista de direitos humanos Ulam Pardasov

Eventos

11-08-2016 Brasília: II Encontro de Direito Sindical - Sindicalismo um acordo coletivo com a Democracia
7-08-2016 Colorado RS: XXXVIII Congresso Nacional de Advogados Trabalhistas - ABRAJ

Archived news

Professores dizem que sem nova proposta, greve continua em MT 2016-08-02 [Record - Alta Floresta]

demissão de servidor 2016-08-01 [Século Diário]

SIBITFD realiza parafestagem contra a greve no Terminal de Transbordo 2016-08-01 [Jornal Agora RS]

Vermelho

Centrais fazem encontro nacional para discutir ações e resistência 2016-07-08 [RBA]

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Facebook

Both a fan page and profile were created for LabourStart Brazil. The profile page proved to be a much more efficient method of reaching trade unionists / progressives than the fan page. After one year, the fan page has 200 with a weekly average reach of around 400. The profile page has 2500 friends.

Contacts and names of trade unionists were pulled from news articles and

then searched for and added on Facebook. After passing 2000 friends, a natural procurement of LabourStart grew to between 5-15 additions per day. Every time someone adds LabourStart Brazil on Facebook, a personal welcome and thank-you message is sent which contains an explanation of our work and an invitation to participate and join the fan page.

All of the news stories that are added to the LabourStart page are added to the Facebook page. The addition of these stories is scheduled using the free scheduler Hootsuite in order that the stories are added throughout the day rather than all at once. In addition, many news stories or reports and photos from trade union events are added by unions and then 'liked' and shared by LabourStart. A specific effort is made to help promote the events and share the pictures from events of workers on strike. A 'photo of the day' has been created and is used regularly for this purpose.



Many of the news stories published by unions are also posted directly on the LabourStart site.

The Facebook 'groups' function is systematically used by LabourStart Brazil. All campaigns and photos of the day are regularly added to several large trade union / progressive Facebook groups. Many initial contacts were also found in these groups.

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Twitter

A Portuguese LabourStart twitter account existed but was not active. This account was reactivated and has seen steady, slow growth. All of the news stories that are added to the LabourStart Brazil page are added to the twitter page. The addition of these stories is scheduled using the free scheduler Hootsuite. Many stories that are posted by trade unions and national centrals are re-tweeted by LabourStart.

Whatsapp

The most common method of communication that Brazilian trade unionists use when communicating with each other is Whatsapp. For this reason, every time a new campaign is launched, an image is made that is designed to be shared using this platform. It is shared widely with personal contacts and in groups.



Flickr

An account to store and share photos was established. Despite a focussed effort to direct traffic to LabourStart Brazil's account, this resulted in very few new contacts.

Web

After extensive and systematic outreach to strategic media contacts working in progressive media, a 'launch' article was published on an important progressive web site called Brasil Debate. This was shared extensively on Facebook and Twitter.

Similar material was published on a health workers union web site.

Following focussed outreach through Facebook, three metalworkers unions shared (Facebook) and then published (on their own sites) information about our campaign for automotive parts workers in Korea (suppliers to Hyundai). None of these successes resulted in a marked increase in participants in our campaigns.

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Pamphlet

In response to the need for something concrete to distribute at meetings, a LabourStart Brazil pamphlet was created and printed. 200 have already been distributed.

LabourStart book

The LabourStart book has been translated and is in the final stages of editing. A national trade union central has agreed in principle to publish the book. The number of copies and final artwork remains to be negotiated.



The image displays two versions of LabourStart materials: a pamphlet and a book. The pamphlet (top) features a red header with the 'LS' logo and the text 'LabourStart Brasil'. It includes a list of instructions for union members, such as 'Como podemos trabalhar juntos?' and 'Assinem e divulguem as campanhas'. It also provides contact information: 'LABOURSTART.ORG/BRASIL' and '@LabourStartBR'. The book (bottom) has a red header with the text 'O QUE É LABOURSTART BRASIL?' and 'CAMPANHAS INTERNACIONAIS DE SOLIDARIEDADE'. It contains sections on 'NOTÍCIAS SINDICAIS BRASILEIRAS' and 'Funciona mesmo?'. It features a photo of a man and a map of Brazil. The 'LabourStart' logo is prominently displayed at the bottom right of the book design.

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Conclusions and future work

A much-hoped for dramatic early increase in the number of Brazilian trade unionists on our list never materialized. Rather, slow steady growth has been the result of all of this work. A lot of ground work has been completed that has built familiarity with the name, image and concept of LabourStart. Many people that did not know we exist are now familiar with our work. The more difficult task of driving those people to our list and to ultimately participate in campaigns is underway.

Brazil has many different national trade union centrals. Many unions and trade unionists themselves are extremely loyal to their central and do not have interest in projects of other centrals. This means that LabourStart Brazil must remain agnostic and more focussed on local union activities and not enter into (or be understood to be involved in) national trade union central politics or positions. Similar to the situation in many other countries, this also means that we must be careful in the selection of campaigns.

Barriers to growth:

- This year of work has occurred in an extremely challenging and exceptional year. The recently-elected CUT-supported PT president was removed from her position after an extensive right-wing campaign in parliament and in the streets. National centrals, local unions and trade union activists pronounced and defended extremely diverse and divisive positions. This has both polarized trade union work and drawn many resources away from other projects.
- Most trade union work relies very heavily upon personal relationships. For this reason, thousands of outreach emails and personal meetings have not resulted in any new contacts for LabourStart Brazil.
- Internationalism is not well-developed in Brazil nor in the Brazilian trade union movement. Brazil is a very large, diverse and complicated country. Thus, the vast majority of time, effort and focus that trade unionists mobilize is local
- The national model of Brazilian trade unionism remains one that is based upon the ideas of Mussolini. A fascist, corporatist model. This structure results in many trade unions that exist only on paper, many that are completely de-politicized servicing unions and a few that are independent of employers. Sometimes these divergent tendencies exist at the same time in the same organization.

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Next steps

- Finalize editing and publish the LabourStart book.
- The communications department of the second-largest national trade union central (UGT) has taken all of LabourStart Brazil's materials under analysis and is currently developing a strategy to reach more trade unionists and increase our Brazil list.
- Abandon Flickr and establish an Instagram account for LabourStart Brazil.
- Efforts to find and develop an international solidarity campaign for a Brazilian trade unionist continue.
- After more significant growth of the Brazilian list, LabourStart Brazil will run national campaigns and communications to the list.

The longer-term slower work of building a profile for LabourStart in Brazil is beginning to show results in the growth of our list. The infrastructure for a period of accelerated growth has been built and will continue to be developed.

The screenshot shows the website for the Sindicato dos Metalúrgicos de São Carlos e Região. The header includes the union logo (a large 'M' with 'CUT' below it) and the text 'Sindicato dos METALÚRGICOS de São Carlos e Região'. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for 'Início', 'Sindicato', 'Notícias', 'Serviços', 'Estatuto CUT', 'Clube', 'ADESM', and 'Pesquisar'. The main content area features a large banner for the 'CAMPAÑA SALARIAL 2016' with the slogan 'SEM PATO, SEM GOLPE POR MAIS EMPREGOS E DIREITOS!'. Below this is a news article titled '23 Jun - COREIA: Não deixe que a morte de Han seja em vão', which discusses the death of a worker and the union's efforts to improve working conditions. To the right, there is a sidebar with a 'JORNAL METALÚRGICOS' section and a 'INSCREVA-SE' section for 'ADESM' (Associação Desportiva, Educacional e Social dos Metalúrgicos de São Carlos - SP).