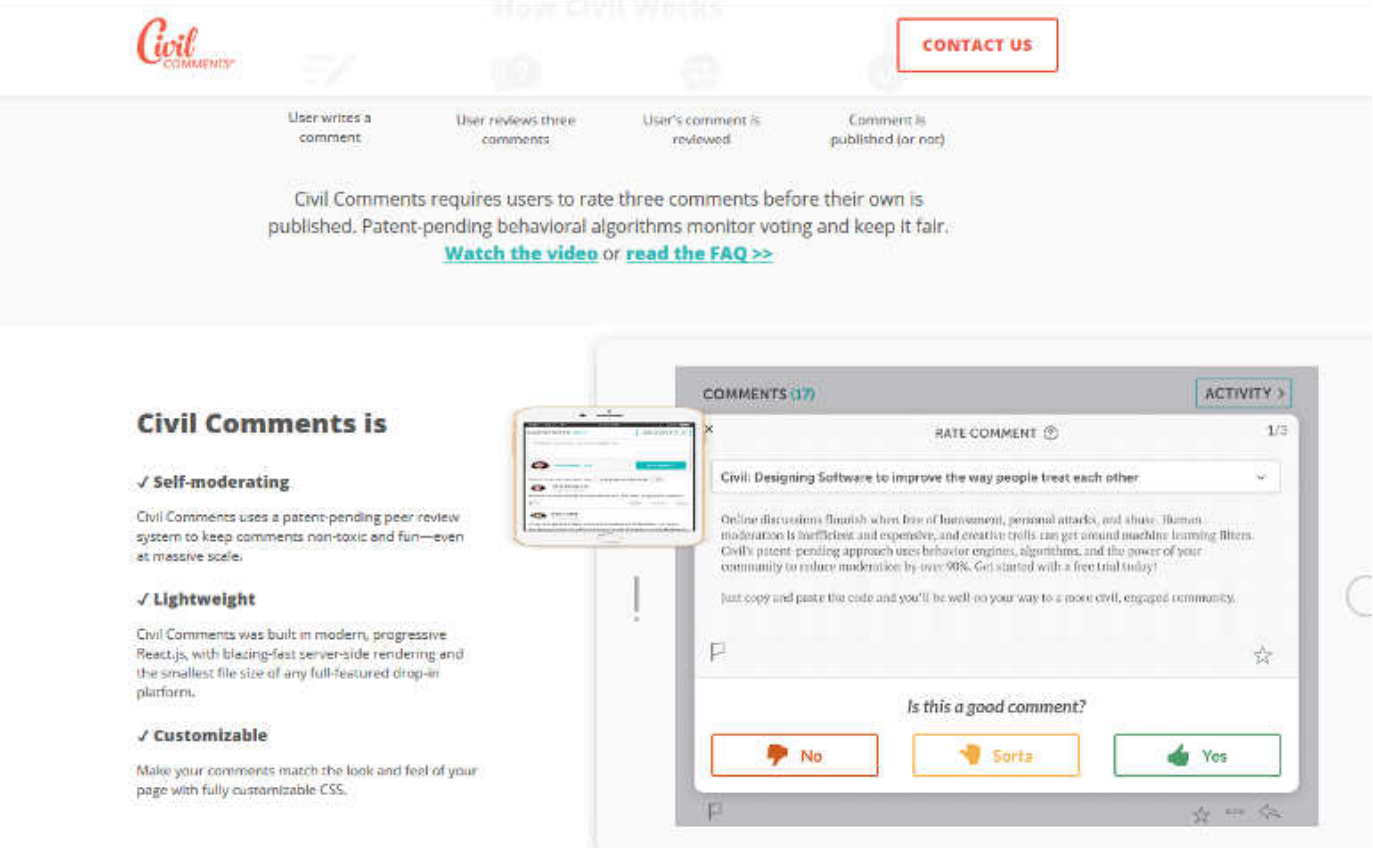
Opinion



by Dennis Coday

View Author Profile

dcoday@ncronline.org
Follow on Twitter at @dcoday

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

December 4, 2017
Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

Editor's Note: *This message was original published Nov. 28 under the headline "A note to our commenting community." I have put a new headline on it and refreshed the publication date so that readers who might have missed the earlier message understand why the comments are closed.*

About 14 months ago, we embarked on an experiment using the program Civil Comments to host our commenting community. Since then about 3,800 people have registered with Civil Comments and have made about 125,000 comments on the NCR website. That's an average of 250 to 350 comments a day. That's a lot of dialogue.

Those of you who have been around awhile — and some have been here since the days of NCRcafe.org — know that we've had our ups and downs with comments. We've endured spam and trolls, pettiness and rancor. We've tried any number of ways to manage comments: no moderation, full moderation, some moderation. We've had 24/7 access and for a while we closed comments for the weekend and holidays. We've used Drupal comments and several iterations of Discus. We found and tried Civil Comments.

For the most part, we – the editors and moderators of NCR – liked Civil Comments. It allowed a degree of peer-to-peer moderation that many of you said you wanted and also gave us some powerful tools to help sort the wheat from the chaff. It wasn't everyone's cup of tea, but from the perspective of the editorial department, it worked better than any other system available to us. Regrettably, it won't be available to us after Dec. 1.

I have to inform you that Civil Comments will be shutting its doors in December and NCR will be without a commenting system after Dec. 1.

Civil Comments was not a free system and the company needed to raise funds to keep developing and growing. The Civil folks searched for the better part of a year for more funding, but none was found.

We at NCR are caught in a dilemma. We believe that the comment section is a valuable forum for discussion. I know that many of you have formed a community here. We do see the value of comments and want to bring them back as soon as we can, but we also know our limitations. We cannot return to an unmoderated, free-for-

all, but we do not have the staff resources to do full moderation.

I very much want to have a fruitful, thoughtful commenting community on the NCR website. My team and I will be looking for options and consulting experts to find a system that works for us and for you. I don’t know how long that will take. Watch this space for updates. Until we have a new system in place you can join discussions on the NCR Facebook page.

After Dec. 1, you will not see any comments on our pages – not even the ones you have already posted. Those comments, however, will be archived. Once we have a new system in place, our plan is to restore those comments to the site.

[Dennis Coday is NCR editor. His email address dcoday@ncronline.org.]

Advertisement