So we decided to end up launching iCue at the end of April 2008 with the four courses in it. We had then obviously built up the social networking features. We had really perfected the Cue Card technology. That was our revolutionary flipbook media player, which we absolutely love and anybody who has ever seen it just says, my god, that is so cool. And then obviously we launched the site...

-Former NBC News CFO, Adam Jones

**Cue Cards**
The pride and joy of iCue, as well as its central artifact of activity, are the Cue Cards (see Figures 1 - 4), which are pieces of media (mainly video clips, but also print documents, etc.) embedded in a Flash player that mimics traditional, physical flashcards in that the card is “flippable,” and can be stored in a “stack” for review (see Figure 4). On the “front” of the card is a media player with links to notations and content sharing. On the “back” of the card, users can view tags, notes and other metadata about the content and its origins. The metadata (“keywords”) was coded by iCue producers. In the case of videos, a transcript of the video to improve accessibility, searchability, and to allow better integration with traditional written school assignments is also provided. The aforementioned links on the front of the card to notations (“jots), allow the user to make notes and add their own metadata to the cards.

*Figure 1: An iCue page for the US Government and Politics course, with one artifact in focus (lower left).*
Figure 2: The front (left) and back (right) of the Cue Card. The front shows fairly standard video controls for the clip, in addition to icons that facilitated sharing of the clip via social media. The back (reached through the Flip button) shows meta data, and keywords.

Figure 3: The jot function on the front of the Cue card allows users to make their own notes about the video clip.
These cards, loaded with both NBC-defined metadata as well as user annotations, can then be shared and collaborated on with other users, allowing users to build connections with “friends” over time. The cards also contain a “comments” section in which users can connect to others and have conversations around the content of the cards.

Cue Cards were the key bridge between the static media of the 20th century (video clips of news broadcasts) and more interactive media today. By empowering users to not only view media, but also to claim it as their own blended the 20th century media with 21st century social media consumption and participation.

Figure 4: A “stack” of Cue Cards that a user collects could be stored and categorized under the user’s account.