

RSC Training Events

25 April 2007

What a Wonderful World: an introduction to Web 2.0 tools for teaching & learning

9 May 2007

What a Wonderful World: an introduction to Web 2.0 tools for teaching & learning

12 June 2007

Effective e-learning with Moodle

15 June 2007

Advanced Animation in PowerPoint

Summer Term

eSkills for elearning course

If you would like any further information on any our training please visit: www.rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk/events.htm

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e-Learning Questions? JISC Ask!

Q: What is Web 2.0?



A: Well its difficult to give a definitive answer to this. In it's simplest form, web 2.0 refers to technologies that enable the concept of the "writable" web where users are not just consumers but actively contribute to the content of it. The commonly used services that exploit Web 2.0 technologies are Blogs, Wikis, Social Bookmarking sites, Social Networking sites, content syndication (RSS feeds), Multimedia sharing sites and Podcasting services.

- A Blog is a website that consists of paragraphs of information, opinion or diary entries that are displayed in chronological order and generally allow visitors to add comments.
- A Wiki is a website that can be edited on line by anyone allowed access which can be open or restricted. It will generally have a facility to store the history of and changes made and the individuals who made them.
- Social bookmarking involves using a content tagging system to create lists of bookmarks or favourite websites that are stored centrally on a remote server. Your collection can be accessed from anywhere and your list shared with other users of the system if you wish.
- Social Networking refers to websites that contain a variety of elements chosen by the user which are personalised and shared with other users. Others are invited by recommendation and can be accepted or rejected as appropriate.
- RSS or syndication software enables users to find out about updates or changes to the content of a site without having to visit it. Typically once an RSS feed is set up, a synopsis of any new information is collected and fed out to the user.
- The development of multimedia sharing sites such as You Tube and Flickr has been possible as a result of the widespread access to and adoption of low-cost digital media technology. Millions of people now participate in the sharing and exchange of multimedia resources. Podcasts are audio recordings usually in MP3 format which can be played on PCs and a wide variety of handheld, portable devices. More recently Vodcasts (video Podcasts) in MP4 format are becoming more common and are usually associated with a syndication service which informs users of new releases.

We have a couple of workshops scheduled if you would like to know more.

If you would like to send in a question about using technology or e-Learning, we would be happy to help. The question will be answered by the most appropriate member of RSC staff and can be anonymous, if preferred.

The sender of the question used will receive one of our pen drives with a JISC lanyard - JISC for the asking!

E-mail your questions to support@rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk

Issue 10 – April 2007

In ConTact

RSC's - Stimulating and Supporting Innovation in Learning



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Change and us

Over the years, education has regularly been the focus of change – much of that change being driven by technology.

Ancient Greeks (or should that be Geeks) used quills and parchment for several generations until Messrs Gutenberg and Caxton invented and introduced us to printing. Cost however was a big factor in using printed materials and so schools had to find other means of working for a few more hundred years!

Early Nineteenth Century "notes" were written on slate with chalk, and erased at the end of each day. Revision was difficult!

Then we had ink wells, steel nibbed pens and "jotters" – accompanied by blotters – which became the first generation of mischievous missiles when the teacher's back was turned.

The first real "technology" arrived in the 50's - the Banda spirit duplication machine – arguably a revolutionary piece of technology which changed the method of teaching away from dictation - at that time a "traditional" method of teaching – to enable a much more participatory system to be introduced. Educational folklore flippantly suggests too many were affected by the pungent aroma of the Banda fluid – a highly scented spirit – soon resulting in notes being published on Gestetner "skins" usually typed by office staff and we teachers became quite didactic in our approaches – a system we would certainly recognise today.

Then we were exposed to VCRs and slide projectors, enabling an audio visual experience to underpin classroom based teaching, and soon computers, data projectors and interactive boards reared their head in an educational context, enabling a plethora of presentational methods to be used. And now, Wikis Blogs and other Web 2.0 technologies again suggest a major change to learning & teaching methods is/may be imminent.

It is hard to imagine the difference in approaches we can now use, compared to our early predecessors. Yet all of these changes were accompanied by at least suspicion, if not downright hostility at some stage of their deployment. Despite resistance they all succeeded to greater or lesser degrees - as they say "Change happens!" Is there a lesson in this for all of us today?



Charles Sweeney, Manager

Newsletter of the RSC
Scotland South & West

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RSC
Regional Support Centre
Scotland South & West
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JISC

JANET Talk

JANET Talk is a new service in late procurement phase that has been developed as an alternative to the popular Skype service. As some of you may know Skype has a number of issues if left unmanaged on large networks, this has resulted in many colleges forbidding its use on their networks.

To answer this UKERNA has identified a number of products which meet the stringent technical & management issues as well as providing the required features that the sector demands. An invitation to tender has been published in a bid to purchase a licence for one of these products.

JANET TALK is hoped not only to provide a voice communication service but data/desktop sharing and video conferencing in a similar way to Skype does at present. Further information can be found at the URL below.

<http://www.ja.net/development/voip/janettalk.html>

New Website in Development



The team at the RSC are in the process of populating our new look website which will of course contain all your favourite pages plus some new features. Plans for a launch of the new website after the Summer Break are underway. Let us know what features you can't do without and we'll make sure you'll be able to find them easily.

Email the team with your suggestions at support@rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk before the end of May and your name will be entered in a draw for a USB memory stick.

RSCs Do IT - ESF Project

The European Social Funded project finished in October but, as those involved in administration of ESF projects will know, it takes a while to wind up the paperwork. As we near the final stages it seems a good time to reflect on successes of the project. The additional funding enabled the RSC to additionalise its training provision by widening the range of training we could offer. Three additional staff were employed for a period of 2 years, enhancing the range of expertise in Virtual Learning Environments, Accessibility and eContent and eResources. During this time the project managed to almost double the original target specified in the bid. The larger team also meant that more time could be spent developing new related workshops and resources. Accessibility was embedded into all RSC training support as well as providing bespoke training on accessibility out in colleges.



Overall, the project was a great success and helped significantly increase awareness and technical skills of College staff in the use of ICTs.

New eAssessment Workshops

Have you considered using eAssessments with your students? There are a number of advantages in doing so. These include the fact that students will be given immediate and timely feedback, and there can be a considerable reduction in marking time for lecturers.



The JISC RSC is developing workshops promoting the use of eAssessment to be scheduled in the new Academic year. Further details will be posted to our website (<http://www.rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk/events.htm>). The workshops will give an overview of the eAssessment banks currently available. These include the SQA SOLAR Summative assessment materials and COLEG COLA formative assessments. The workshops will also explore the pedagogy involved in authoring eAssessment content, and will highlight some of the eAssessment tools available.

Over the next few weeks the RSC will be conducting an eAssessment survey in order to gain an understanding of the needs of the sector. Further details of the survey will be available soon.

The TechDis Higher Education Assistive Technology Scheme (HEAT)

A Funding Opportunity

TechDis have in collaboration with the Higher Education Academy Subject Centres, announced a second round of funding under their HEAT Scheme. This scheme will fund the purchase of technology (and in rare instances training in the use of that technology), to enable staff to uncover or develop an aspect of inclusive teaching practice.

What Might I Apply For?

Traditional 'assistive' or learning technologies which would broaden learning experiences. The bidder must submit a 2500-word case study report describing how the technology was used. The closing date for bids is 31st May 2007, early submission is recommended. For examples of the kind of projects funded under the first round and to download a bid form look at the TechDis website:

www.techdis.ac.uk/getheatscheme.

Who Can Apply?

Anyone who is teaching HE courses, even if they are working in an FE institution. (e.g. HND programmes). Bids should be made in collaboration with the Higher Education Academy Subject Centres and the closing date for bids under HEAT2 is May 31st 2007. Have a look at the HE Academy website to see a drop-down list of all 24 subject centres. www.heacademy.ac.uk For further guidance on liaising with the HE Academy Subject Centres, please liaise with Simon Ball, the Senior Advisor for HE at TechDis who can be contacted at simon@techdis.ac.uk.

Priorities for HEAT2

Priority will be given to bids that satisfy one or more of the following criteria, although bids that do not will also be considered for funding:

- Bids from regions not represented in the successful Round 1 bids i.e. Wales and Scotland
- Bids from Subject Disciplines not represented in Round 1: Art Design Media; Built Environment; Economics; Education; Engineering; Geography Earth and Environmental Sciences; Languages Linguistics and Area Studies; Materials Science; Performing Arts; Philosophy and Religious Studies; Psychology; Sociology Anthropology and Politics; Social Work and Policy
- Bids using technologies or techniques not represented in the successful Round 1 bids
- Bids building on successful projects from Round 1

Feel free to pass this information onto anyone in your institution who may be interested in this initiative. You can also contact Margaret McKay, eAdvisor at the RSC if you require further assistance.

Good Luck!!!



JANET SMS Texting service

UKERNA has gone to tender to procure a SMS texting service which is hoped will undercut current service provider offerings but virtue of economies of scale.

The service when ready should provide a means for colleges to broadcast SMS messages to groups of staff/students or individuals as required. Integrating with existing MIS & Library systems will form part of the support service. The service should include a method by which individuals can text a response which will be directed to the appropriate recipient.

It is envisaged that this service will be of great help to Libraries as a means of issuing overdue or as a tool to help address attendance and retention issues. The application that this service can be used for is endless. Further information can be found at the URL below.

<http://www.ja.net/latest/itt/sms/index.html>

If you would like to discuss this services any other UKERNA service please contact Mark Clark
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