

Teaching and Learning with Technology Seminar

Media Guide #1 - Web Based Resources for Training

Project 4 – Overview

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R519: Effective Writing in Instructional Technology

Context:

A printed handout of this Media Guide will be used during a section of a one day (six hour) face to face seminar entitled “Teaching with Technology” for adult learners. The seminar is geared to instructors and provides an introduction to the various technologies available for training. This Media Guide will be used during a section of the seminar that focuses on the latest generation of **web based resources** available for training.

The seminar will highlight the features and instructional uses of a range of web based tools and provide a high level overview of how to begin trying the tools. During the seminar, an exploration of the training application ideas will be covered and a demonstration of the use of each type of web based resource will be given by the facilitator. Since each web based tool differs in terms of features and functionality, the high level overview of use will focus on the common aspects of the resource types.

In addition to receiving a printed copy of the handout, the participants will also receive a .pdf file of the handout via e-mail. The .pdf version of the handout provides direct links to vetted free resources (see right sidebar on each page) that participants can access on their own computers after the seminar.

Teaching and Learning with Technology Seminar

Media Guide #1 - Web Based Resources for Training

Welcome!

Welcome to Teaching and Learning with Technology! This seminar provides an introduction to technologies for use in teaching and learning. In this first section of this seminar, we cover **web based resources** for training. After attending the seminar and reviewing the readings and resources in this media guide, you will be able to:

- Describe key features of the latest generation of web based tools for training.
- Explain the advantages and challenges of using each of the tools.
- Provide examples of potential training applications for these web based tools.
- Complete the basic steps to set up and use the representative web based resources.

Web Based Resources

The web based resources covered in this media guide are listed below. Note that a number of free or low cost web based tools are provided in a “Resources” section on each page. While not all tools have the same functionality, the listed resources will provide a good trial of the standard features common to most tools. Many of the listed tools are “hosted” options meaning that users do not need to set up the software on their own web servers. Continue to the next page in this handout or click on the name of the web based tool listed below to advance to a specific page.

- [RSS Feed Aggregator](#)
- [Blog](#)
- [Wiki](#)
- [Podcast](#)
- [Instant Messaging](#)
- [Web Meeting](#)
- [Social Bookmark](#)
- [Group Space](#)

RSS Feed Aggregator: Gather new content from a web site

Features:

RSS is an acronym for Really Simple Syndication which refers to a process of tracking and gathering information contained on a web site. As new content is added to a web site, the site's feed (a web file that records information about the web site) is updated. An RSS feed aggregator recognizes the update to the feed and gathers the information in the RSS feed aggregator.

Advantages and Challenges:

An RSS feed aggregator eliminates the need to make repeated visits to web site to track new content. Instead, you can subscribe to a feed and receive the updated content as it is automatically added to the RSS aggregator. While reading the content in the RSS aggregator is a simple process, initially setting up the feeds within the aggregator can be challenging and time consuming. In addition, not all file and media types can be read by all aggregators.

Training Application:

- Aggregate course member blogs, wikis, podcasts and other syndicated content.
- Share social bookmarks to vetted resources.
- Distribute articles to online newspapers and other publications

Getting Started – The Basics:

While each RSS Feed aggregator has slightly different features, the process to set up and add feeds to an RSS Aggregator includes the following steps:

1. Set up an account with an RSS Aggregator.
2. Locate the RSS feed URL from the target website - for example: <http://www.websitename/feed>
3. Enter the RSS feed URL into the RSS Aggregator – see the Bloglines subscription box below:

Feed URL:

Resources:

- Bloglines (multi-media) - <http://www.bloglines.com/>
- Doppler (podcasts) – <http://www.dopplerraudio.net/>
- iTunes (podcasts) - <http://www.apple.com/itunes/download/>
- Flock (multi-media)– <http://www.flock.com/>
- Google Reader (multi-media)- <http://www.google.com/reader/>
- Newsgator – <http://www.newsgator.com/>

Blog: Create an online journal

Features:

A blog is a web site that functions as an online journal. New content is added to the blog via a blog post. Blogs typically feature text based content, but other types of media, including audio and video, can be incorporated. Blogging platforms offer many simplified web publishing options, including What You See Is What You Get (WYSIWYG) text editing and RSS feed creation.

Advantages and Challenges:

Blogs allow a user to quickly and easily publish content on a web site. While blogs function well when creating a single narrative voice, other collaborative tools (such as wikis) are a better option when a group is producing a single document.

Training Application:

- Prepare a blog based class web site.
- Capture learner reflections.
- Facilitate feedback among learners, peers and instructors.

Getting Started – The Basics:

While all blogging tools have slightly different features, the process of creating a blog on a hosted site is fundamentally the same and includes the following steps:

1. Set up an account at a hosted blog site.
2. Create a new blog post by adding written content, including links to other web sites.
3. Attach media files, such as audio, pictures or video, to the blog post.
4. Publish the blog post to the Internet for viewing and comment by others.

Resources:

- Blogger.com - <http://www.blogger.com/start>
- Edublogs - <http://edublogs.org/>
- Wordpress - <http://wordpress.com/>

Wiki: Collaboratively author web based documents

Features:

Wikis and other collaborative web based writing tools allow one or more writer to contribute to a written document prepared on a web site. While each writing tool works slightly differently, all allow users to create, collaborate, edit and share documents online. Most offer RSS feeds to track content updates, as well as import and export functionality to work with desktop applications.

Advantages and Challenges:

The key advantage of using a wiki is the ability to collaboratively author and publish an online document. Wikis work well for projects that require input from multiple individuals to produce a single document. However, documents created by more than one writer can become disorganized and lose a central voice. Also, some wikis use a markup language that is not as user friendly as What You See Is What You Get (WYSIWYG) text editing found on most blogging tools.

Training Application:

- Create a course web page.
- Facilitate learner group projects and e-portfolios.
- Present web based instructional materials.

Getting Started – The Basics:

While collaborative writing tools have slightly different features, the process of creating a wiki or similar web based documents is fundamentally the same and includes the following steps:

1. Set up an account at the hosted wiki web site.
2. Invite collaborators to participate via an e-mail invitation from the wiki web site.
3. Create and collaboratively author the document's content.
4. Publish the document to the Internet as a web page.

Resources:

- Jotspot - <http://www.jot.com/>
- Google Docs - <http://docs.google.com/>
- Mediawiki - <http://www.mediawiki.org/wiki/MediaWiki>
- PB Wiki - <http://pbwiki.com/>
- Wikispaces - <http://www.wikispaces.com/>

Podcast: Create and distribute media over the Internet

Features:

Podcasts are media files published and shared over the Internet. While many podcasts are audio based, podcasts can include written or video based media. The media files can be shared (using an RSS feed) and downloaded (using an RSS feed aggregator).

Advantages and Challenges:

Podcasts offer an efficient and cost effective means of distributing content via the Internet. However, creating and editing high quality media files can be difficult and time consuming.

Training Application:

- Create, upload and share audio or video based lectures.
- Prepare learner audio or visual projects.
- Provide verbal feedback to students.

Getting Started – The Basics:

While podcasting tools have slightly different features, the process of creating a podcast is fundamentally the same and includes the following steps:

1. Record a media file using recording tools and software, such as Audacity.
2. Set up an account on a hosting web site, such as Odeo or YouTube.
3. Upload the media file to the hosting web site.
4. Share the RSS feed with the intended audience.

Resources:

- Audacity (audio) – <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>
- Castpost (audio) - <http://www.castpost.com/>
- Garageband (mac) – <http://www.apple.com/ilife/garageband/>
- Odeo (audio)- <http://studio.odeo.com/>
- Google Video - <http://video.google.com/>
- YouTube (video) - <http://www.youtube.com/>

Instant Messaging: Conduct real time web based conversations

Features:

Instant messaging (IM) is a real time Internet based communication tool. Most IM tools include text, audio and video chat, one-to-one or multiple user chat sessions, history of past conversations, and file transfer during the live setting.

Advantages and Challenges:

A key advantage of using IM as an online communication tool is ease of use. Installing, configuring and using the required software are all simple processes. Many people are now familiar with IM from their personal use of free IM tools. While most IM clients are proprietary and do not allow chats with members of competing vendors, third party IM clients, such as Trillian and Meebo, permit chats across IM platforms. Note that IM software downloads may be blocked on tightly controlled computer networks.

Training Application:

- Facilitate synchronous class discussions.
- Conduct team member meetings.

Getting Started – The Basics:

While IM tools have slightly different features, the process of participating in an IM chat is fundamentally the same and includes the following steps:

1. Set up an account with the desired IM client, such as AIM, Yahoo! or MSN.
2. Download the required software, as needed.
3. Collect and organize your IM contacts within a contact list on the web site.
4. Share your IM account name with others.
5. Initiate a single person or group chat with members of your contact list.

Resources:

- AIM - <http://www.aim.com/>
- Yahoo! Messenger - <http://messenger.yahoo.com/>
- MSN - <http://get.live.com/messenger/overview>
- Meebo (web based) - <http://www.meebo.com/>
- Trillian- <http://www.ceruleanstudios.com/learn/>
- iChat (mac) - <http://www.apple.com/macosx/features/ichat/>

Web Meetings: Host live real time web meetings

Features:

Web meetings offer many real time communication features to support online meetings. The standard features include video conferencing, voice calls, instant messaging, file sharing, web co-browsing and desktop sharing.

Advantages and Challenges:

A key advantage of web meetings is the ability to provide live trainer and learner interaction. The live sessions offer greater spontaneity than asynchronous alternatives. However, as with any synchronous meeting, a defined meeting time may be difficult to coordinate. In addition, lack of participant familiarity with the web meeting interface and tools can stall a live session.

Training Application:

- Conduct web based lectures.
- Facilitate group discussions.
- Host project presentations.

Getting Started – The Basics:

While web meeting tools have slightly different features, the process of participating in a web meeting is fundamentally the same and includes the following steps:

1. Set up an account on the hosted web meeting site.
2. Schedule a meeting time.
3. Invite participants to the meeting by sending a link to the web site where the meeting will be held.
4. Anticipate possible participant technical problems and allow time to address them.
5. Enable the desired web meeting tools, including the session recording.

Resources:

- WebHuddle - <https://www.webhuddle.com/>
- iVisit – <http://www.ivisit.com/>
- Vyew - <http://vyew.com/>

Social Bookmarking: Save and share links to web pages

Features:

Social bookmarking tools allow users to save, categorize and share a list of web based resources on a hosted web site. Stored web pages can be shared by accessing either the bookmarking account or the RSS feed to the account. Most bookmarking sites offer the ability to import or export saved links for use with other bookmarking tools.

Advantages and Challenges:

A key advantage of social bookmarking tools is the ability to share stored web links over the Internet versus maintaining a private file of web page links on a personal computer. However, shared bookmarks can lack organization when the chosen categories (tags) differ across users. Further, while it is possible to share bookmarks across social bookmarking tools (via the import / export features available with most tools), it is far more challenging than when the same bookmarking tool is used by all participants.

Training Application:

- Share recommended web page reading lists.
- Store bibliographies for papers and research projects.
- Organize shared resources for group projects.

Getting Started – The Basics:

The process of setting up and storing web links on a social bookmarking site includes the following steps:

1. Set up an account with the hosted social bookmarking site.
2. Save or import the web page links to the social bookmarking site.
3. View or share links by accessing the bookmarking account or the RSS feed to the account.

Resources:

- De.icio.us
<http://del.icio.us/>
- Furl –
<http://www.furl.net/>
- Simpy -
<http://www.simpy.com/>
- Spurl -
<http://www.spurl.net/>

Group Space: Connect and share resources online

Features:

Group spaces are web sites that provide a central place to store a group's resources and to conduct asynchronous conversations. They typically offer group discussion forums, broadcast announcements, event calendars, file storage and links to other web sites. Most group spaces have privacy settings to allow open (public) or closed (private) access to the web space.

Advantages and Challenges:

A web based group space on a hosted web site is very easy to set up and access. The central storage of resources offers a convenient way to organize a group's projects, activities and asynchronous discussions. However, the asynchronous nature of the group interaction can lead to disjointed conversations. Active facilitation by a group space moderator is recommended.

Training Application:

- Distribute and organize resources for a training class.
- Facilitate group project work.
- Present content or comment on work of others.

Getting Started – The Basics:

While web based group spaces offer slightly different features, the process of setting up a group space is fundamentally the same and includes the following steps:

1. Set up an account on the hosted group space web site.
2. Complete the required registration steps.
3. Organize and configure the group space to meet the group's needs.
4. Activate the desired features and privacy settings for your group.
5. Invite members to join the group via an e-mail invitation from the site.

Resources:

- Elgg Spaces - <http://elggspace.com/>
- Google Groups - <http://groups.google.com/>
- Yahoo! Groups - <http://groups.yahoo.com/>