

Getting wired with Web 2.0 ~ an information sharing

Introduction

Web 2.0.... what is this “new” phenomenon? Web 2.0 encompasses Internet technologies such as blogging, wikis, swickis and podcasting. Web 2.0 is the second generation Internet that can facilitate collaboration and sharing between users such as teachers and learners.

Definition

Web 2.0, a phrase coined by O'Reilly Media in 2003 and popularised by the first Web 2.0 conference in 2004, refers to a perceived second generation of web-based communities and hosted services — such as social-networking sites, wikis and folksonomies — which facilitate collaboration and sharing between users. O'Reilly Media titled a series of conferences around the phrase, and it has since become widely adopted.



The mind map pictured above (constructed by Markus Angermeier [1] on November 11, 2005) sums up some of the themes of Web 2.0, with example-sites and services attached.
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Web_2.0_Map.svg

Although the term suggests a new version of the World Wide Web, it does not refer to an update to Web technical specifications, but to changes in the ways software developers and end-users use the web as a platform. According to Tim O'Reilly, "Web 2.0 is the business revolution in the computer industry caused by the move to the internet as platform, and an attempt to understand the rules for success on that new platform." [Source: Wikipedia entry *Web 2.0*]

“Some technology experts, notably Tim Berners-Lee, have questioned whether one can use the term in a meaningful way, since many of the technology components of "Web 2.0" have existed since the early days of the Web.” [Source: Wikipedia entry *Web 2.0*]

Has the web changed?

The web itself has *not* changed. The way in which software developers design applications for the web has changed *and* the way people use the web as a platform has changed.

With Web 2.0...

- Users own the data
- Users control the data
- There is a climate of participation
- Users value add as their needs evolve
- The interface is friendly

Virtual professional development

Powerful learning practice ~ <http://plpnetwork.com/>

PLP is a professional development model that immerses educators into environments and practices that allow them to learn and own the literacies of 21st Century learning and teaching.

Certificate of Educational Technology & Information Literacy ~ <http://www.coetail.asia/?t=anon>

This is a course run by Jeff Utecht and Kim Cofino of the International School of Bangkok. Attendees are both real and virtual

Online Professional Development ~ <http://tinyurl.com/waters-hart>

Sue Waters and Jo Hart of TAFE, Western Australia regularly conduct online professional development via Elluminate. Sue's blog: <http://aquaculturepda.edublogs.org/>

The Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration (CILC) ~ <http://www.cilc.org/>

The Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration (CILC) is a great resource for not only identifying and/or announcing classroom collaborative projects, but also for finding professional development providers for your school and district who present over video.

For example the CILC is now hosting PD conducted by **Wes Fryer** that is also available at his own site: <http://www.wesfryer.com/teaching/>

Personal Learning Networks

Blog posts, articles and presentations regarding Personal Learning Networks (PLNs). They are also referred to as Personal Learning Environments.

Stephen Downes ~ The beginnings of PLN ~ <http://www.downes.ca/cgi-bin/page.cgi?post=48282>

Sue Waters ~ Setting up a PLN ~ <http://suewaters.wikispaces.com/>

David Warlick ~ Grow your Personal Learning Network ~ <http://tinyurl.com/warlick-pln>

Lucy Gray ~ Personal Learning Network Workshop ~ <http://www.slideshare.net/elemenous/wemta-pln-workshop-lucy-gray>

Connectivism ~ A learning theory for the digital age ~ <http://www.elearnspace.org/Articles/connectivism.htm>

Jenny Wood ~ How to get a grip on your Personal Learning Network ~ <http://tinyurl.com/pln-manage>

Jeff Utecht ~ Connecting people or connecting content? ~ <http://www.thethinkingstick.com/?p=928>
~ RSS is about content, Twitter is about people ~ <http://www.thethinkingstick.com/?p=927>

New Media Consortium ~ <http://www.nmc.org/>

The New Media Consortium (NMC) is an international 501(c)3 not-for-profit consortium of nearly 300 learning-focused organizations dedicated to the exploration and use of new media and new technologies. Horizon Reports ~ <http://www.nmc.org/publications>



Observed trends during recent months and the past year

A number of trends dominated the previous twelve months. The most notable is the impact of the quirky social networking tool Twitter and the rise of the unconference. Perhaps, some argue, teachers are becoming *too* connected.

Twitter

Twitter has become one of the main forms of communication between connected educators. It has eclipsed commenting on blogs and blogging in general for many educators. Blog subscriptions, blog rankings and comment numbers have been dropping.

Educators use Twitter to:

- Connect
- Share links to resources and web sites
- Become aware of trends
- Search
- Obtain news links
- Group members of their PLN (Via tools like TweetDeck)
- Announce events
- Announce blog posts
- Keep up to date

Prior to the popular adoption of Twitter by educators the main avenues for communication was via commentary on blog posts and within the discussion areas of Nings for example. Twitter is also receiving widespread coverage in mainstream media. <http://twitter.com/>

Informal networks and PLNs

Teachers are now also setting up their own informal networks online via tools such as Nings and FlashMeeting. The networks are designed to arrange gatherings and provide online professional development.

Like-minded teachers are setting up groups focused on a certain topic such as History, TESOL, etc or perhaps linked to a geographical area.

- Weaving technology group: <http://weavingtechnology.ning.com/>
- History web 2.0 <http://historyweb2point0.ning.com/>
- Classroom 2.0 <http://www.classroom20.com/>
- OZ/NZ Educators <http://oznzeducators.ning.com/>
- OZ/NZ Educators archived FlashMeetings: <http://edhouse.wikispaces.com/Meeting+topics>
- EVICTS <http://evicts.ning.com/>

TeachMeets

With the advent of developing and strong teacher networks alternatives to conferences are evolving. The conference is being replaced by the “unconference”.

One of the most successful of these formats is the TeachMeet. <http://teachmeet.pbwiki.com/>

Cloud computing and mobile technologies

Educators are now using tools such as Google docs, wikis and DropBox to host their materials and content online. It is shared and available via mobile technologies as well. In addition video is becoming ubiquitous. Anyone can easily create video and publish. Refer to the following horizon report for more details: <http://www.nmc.org/publications/2008-horizon-report>



Are teachers *too* connected?

It was observed that at times teachers were too connected and that it was simply a collection of people that all agreed with each other. Blog posts echoed or simply mimicked the writings of others.

Thousands of teachers have adopted these communication technologies in the past 12 months and it is simply not possible to keep up with all of the posts, tweets, webinars, flashmeetings and various other online events.

One of the major conferences on the education conference is the NECC. Last year's conference was interesting to observe online. Many educators met their online counterparts for the first time yet they had already communicated whatever it was that they wished to share online. They all thought the same. Some felt that very little new was learnt. They enjoyed the face-to-face meetings but the conference itself was anti-climactic.

The best approach to adopt with respect to managing all that is happening out there in the connected world of Web 2.0 is to *rationalise* your connections.

Determine those teachers or educators that are genuinely interested in what you have to say or feel. Once you have achieved that collate their blog feeds or Twitter threads into a single group. Focus on their posts, bookmarks, etc and reciprocate,

This identified group will form the basis of your own **Personal Learning Network**.

Group other educators according to their background or focus. For example,

- Higher education
- K-12
- Consultants
- Commercial
- Researchers
- Social commentators

You may not always read their blogs or comment upon their posts and you should not really feel the need to as your own personal learning network will probably raise or point to significant posts, tweets or events in the 'blogosphere' or 'twittersphere'. You will not miss the important 'stuff'.

Remember:

Manage your time online.

Limit your time online.

Family, friends, colleagues and real people are important. Pets too.

The Internet will be there tomorrow.

Your network will still be there tomorrow. Some members will drop out and new ones will appear.

Allow this new sense of connectedness to enrich your life and professional growth. Avoid allowing this growing world of web 2.0 tools and their associated linkages to dominate your life.

Managing your life and work: <http://www.lifehack.org/>

Web 1.0 ~ the web is simply a repository for information

Web 2.0 ~ the web is a platform for participation

The concept of Web 2.0 is often criticised...

*The technologies are not new
It is simply a Buzzword
Self-promotion
Means different things to different people*

The tools of Web 2.0

1. **Blogs** ~ legs ~ walk the talk
2. **Flickr** ~ eyes ~ see the results
3. **Podcast** ~ ears ~ hear the ideas
4. **Wiki** ~ hands ~ construct it all
5. **Twitter** ~ making connections...
6. There are *many* more...

Characteristics of blogs...

- Web Logs ~ "Blogs"
- blog (noun)
- blog (verb)
- blogger
- Blogosphere
- Readers can leave comments
- Interactive
- Incorporate mixed media such as text, images, audio and video
- Commentary
- News
- Diaries
- Field Reports
- Travelogues
- Varying genres
- Vlog ~ video
- Linklog ~ links
- Photoblog ~ photographs
- Sketchblog ~ sketches
- Artlog ~ art

Flickr features

- Photo sharing
- Online community ~ groups
- Tagging ~ *folksonomy* ~ *tag clouds*

Characteristics of Wikis

- Software that allows multiple editors of web page content
- Collaborative writing
- Communities ~ private
- Security is an issue ~ vandalism

Characteristics of Podcasts

- A digital media file distributed via the Internet using a syndication feed
- The digital media file can consist of audio, video or even be an ordinary document such as a text file or a pdf file.
- The digital media file is *pushed* from a server to a client ~ such as a personal computer
- A podcast can be *subscribed* to by an individual
- The digital files are downloaded automatically to the subscriber's computer by dedicated software such as iTunes or Juice
- That digital media file can then be played by a portable media player such as an Apple iPod, iRiver flash player or a Creative Zen media player
- The podcast can be listened to **anywhere** and at **anytime**

Podcasts ~ How?

- Subject
- Media file
- RSS file
- Web server

Podcasts ~ What?

- Subject ~ news, music, sport, learning
- Media file ~ audio and/or video
- RSS file ~ “instructions” ~ xml
- Web server ~ no special configuration

What are Swickis?

- Combination of Wiki and Search
- A new kind of search engine
- The user community can determine the results
- The results can be more focused
- Search engine can be published on a blog or your own web site
- Results are organised
- Buzz cloud reflects key terms in the category

Web 2.0 in teaching and learning

- Encourages students to write
- Students will write even when they do not need to
- Reach out to world
- Feedback from peers, teachers and the world (possibly)
- Students link up with the writings of others
- Students realise that others can read their work ~ motivating
- Progress reports
- Project diaries
- Field reports
- Linkage to other Web 2.0 tools
- Collaboration

Flickr and learning

- Field report photographs
- Topic photographs
- Artwork
- Sketches
- Tagging ~ critical thinking
- Annotation ~ “hot spot” learning objects
- Time lapse view

Swickis and learning

- Focused research
- Critical thinking
- Mapping ideas
- Filtered search results
- Quality online resources

Wikis and learning

- Writing
- Publishing
- Collaboration
- Mind mapping
- Critical thinking
- Language learning
- Correct spelling
- Linking articles appropriately
- Check grammar
- Translation activities
- Wikipedia ~ learning activity for students
- Constructivist ~ Bring it all together

Podcasts and learning

- Inspire the student body:
 - Audio interviews
 - Audio portfolio reflections
 - Journalism styled tasks
 - Storytelling
 - Oral history and reports
 - Field reports
- Place the students in charge of media
- Sharing information
- Standardized presentation
- Study abroad programs
- Listening and responding
- Music appreciation
- Language instruction
- Dangerous experiments (video)
- Historical archives (video)

What about the technologies involved?

- Blogger ~ easy!
- Flickr ~ easy!
- Twitter ~ the easiest tool of all...
- Wiki ~ just like using a text editor
- Podcasting ~ easy with Posterous or Podcast Maker
- Easy to use
- Public or private
- Teacher led and student run
- Using technology that is...
- Friendly, Forgiving and Fun

Places to go on the Internet

Web 2.0 Links

Educause ~ 7 things you should know about... a brilliant collection of pdf documents
<http://www.educause.edu/Resources/Browse/node/33438>
Wikipedia definition ~ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_2.0
Learning and Web 2.0 ~ <http://plcmcllearning.blogspot.com>
23 Learning things to do with Web 2.0 ~ <http://plcmcl2-things.blogspot.com>
Back to school with Web 2.0 ~ <http://www.solutionwatch.com/519/back-to-school-with-the-class-of-web-20-part-3>
What is Web 2.0? ~ <http://www.oreillynet.com/pub/a/oreilly/tim/news/2005/09/30/what-is-web-20.html>
Go2Web2.0 ~ <http://www.go2web20.net/>

Web 2.0 Tools

eduBlogs	http://www.edublogs.org/
Blogger	http://www.blogger.com/home
Flickr	http://www.flickr.com/
Twitter	http://twitter.com/
PBWiki	http://pbwiki.com/
Wikispaces	http://www.wikispaces.com/
Yahoo Pipes	http://pipes.yahoo.com/pipes/
Feedburner	http://www.feedburner.com/fb/a/home
Bloglines	http://www.bloglines.com/
del.icio.us	http://delicious.com/
Swickis	http://www.eurekster.com/
Wordpress	http://wordpress.org/ (self-hosted blog)
Wordpress	http://wordpress.com/
Podcast Maker	http://www.lemonzdream.com/podcastmaker/
Posterous	http://www.posterous.com/
ProfCast	http://www.profcast.com/public/index.php
Newsgator	http://www.newsgator.com/
Diigo	http://www.diigo.com/

Web 2.0 Resources and workshop materials: <http://www.larkin.net.au/>

