For full versions of all the articles here go to the ALT Online Newsletter at http://newsletter.alt.ac.uk

Editorial

Morag Munro

Welcome to the Spring Edition of ALT News.

- In an article reprinted with permission of ICT Skills Briefing, Peter Robinson provides a compelling account of Sugata Mitra's 'hole in the wall' experiments.

- Sarah Sherman discusses the Bloomsbury Colleges' APT STAIRS (Appropriate & Practical Technologies for Students, Teachers, Administrators and Researchers) project, an initiative aimed at bridging the 'Technology Gap' that may exist between lecturers and students.

- Deborah Haile provides a round up of some of the innovative uses of the UK Access Grid conferencing system.

- Sian Williams introduces NGfL Cymru, and the resources available via the repository.

- Steve Butler provides an update on the The Mobile Learning Network (MoLeNET), which is supporting and promoting mobile learning in the Further Education sector via supported shared cost mobile learning projects.

- In articles focusing on technical infrastructure and interoperability, Simon Grant introduces the LEAP2A specification for information portability and interoperability between electronic portfolio tools and related systems, while Dave Pickersgill and colleagues discuss the impact that increased student use of mobile devices for learning will have on The Sheffield College's technical infrastructure.

- Finally, we have three software reviews focusing on screen and lecture capture tools in this edition. Simon Davis reviews Camtasia studio, Graham McElearney evaluates Articulate Presenter and Adobe Captivate, while Kris Roger and Chris Fryer review Echo360's EchoSystem lecture capture system.

Would you like to contribute to ALT News?

The newsletter team welcomes articles that relate to Learning Technology, including policy focused articles, case-studies demonstrating good practice, reviews of software, book reviews and conference reviews. ALT News is published quarterly online and a print edition is distributed via postal mail. For further information and guidelines contact the Editor, Morag Munro: **morag.munro@dcu.ie**

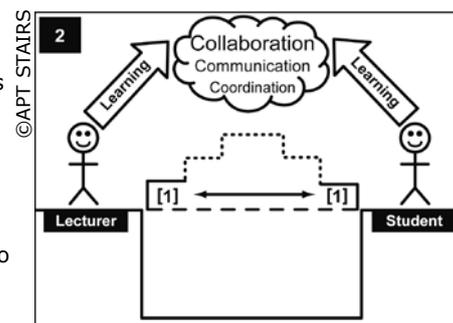# The man behind the hole in the wall

Peter Robinson

Sugata Mitra is Professor of Educational Technology at the School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences at Newcastle University. He is best known for the 'hole in the wall' experiments. Although this research has mainly been conducted with schoolchildren, it raises important questions about learning and ICT in general. Recently Peter Robinson had the pleasure of hearing Sugata Mitra talk and interviewed him about the 'hole in the wall' experiments.

This article originally appeared in ICT Skills Briefing

Stairway to Online Collaboration: The APT STAIRS project

Sarah Sherman

Next generation web technologies and practices present exciting opportunities to enrich teaching, learning and research in Higher and Further Education; however it is often difficult to get the majority of users signed-up to using these new technologies effectively. To respond to the barriers in adoption of new technologies, The Bloomsbury

Bridging the Technological Gap between Lecturer and Student

Colleges secured funding from the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), for the APT STAIRS (Appropriate & Practical Technologies for Students, Teachers, Administrators and Researchers) project. This project examines how a simple step-by-step model can be applied to introducing new technologies - such as Google Docs - to users.

The UK Access Grid

Deborah Haile

The UK Access Grid, operated by a team based at Manchester University, offers the chance for anyone involved in research or education to access a high quality virtual meeting, conference room or lecture hall. Similar to traditional video conferencing, the Access Grid also offers a guaranteed level of visual and audio quality, the ability to see the feed from more than one camera and enables users to share documents and other material. In this article, Deborah Haile discusses some of the innovative uses of the Access Grid to date.

Chief Executive's Report

Staffing changes
Louise Ryan, Publications Officer (Web and Print), went on maternity leave at the beginning of March following the birth of Ethan. We wish her well. Louise's post is being covered by Lucy Saxton. Marion Samler, Director of Operations, who joined ALT in early 2004, left for a new post at Abingdon and Witney College at the beginning of April. Marion has done a brilliant job for ALT and she will be missed by staff and members alike.

Consultation responses
During February we responded to the Intellectual Property Office's "The Future" consultation paper, and to the Learning and Skills Improvement Service's consultation on its National Improvement Strategy. All our consultation responses are on our web site at **http://www.alt.ac.uk/documents.html**.

ALT Open Access Repository
The repository is now open and you can access it at **http://repository.alt.ac.uk**. The repository has been developed with support from JISC as part of a project led by Cranfield University, and is managed by Maren Deepwell, ALT Membership Services Manager. Currently the repository's contents are limited to a complete set of post-prints from the ALT Journal, but we intend to use it eventually for all of the digital assets that are produced within ALT including conference abstracts and papers, and that members of the learning technology community generally will be able to put content into the repository. Questions about the repository should be sent to **repository@alt.ac.uk**, and there will be at least one session about the repository at the 2009 ALT conference.

The 2009 ALT Conference: "In dreams begins responsibility" - choice, evidence, and change
The conference will be in Manchester between 8 and 10 September. Over three hundred abstracts and research papers were submitted for inclusion in the ALT-C 2009 conference programme. During March and April our programme committee members complete the hard work of refereeing and reviewing, and during May we intend to issue the first cut of the conference programme. We are delighted to announce that Martin Bean, Vice-Chancellor Designate of the Open University, has agreed to join Michael Wesch and Terry Anderson as the third conference keynote speaker. We will open for bookings in early May. For more information about the conference go to **http://www.alt.ac.uk/altc2009**.

Election of ALT Trustees and the ALT Annual General Meeting
We will shortly be issuing a call for nominations for election to a three year term as a Trustee of ALT, which is open to individual members of at least 12 months' standing and aged 18 years or over on 9 September 2009. The closing date for nominations will be in early June. Election will be by ballot vote. The ALT AGM will be at 15.00 on 9 September, in Manchester.

Membership survey
We would like to thank all of our members for their participation in the ALT Survey 2008/9, which closed 16 January 2009. We received a total of 312 responses, well exceeding the target of 200 and providing us with a wealth of feedback, suggestions and comments. The dissemination of the data has shown not only how ALT members feel about the work ALT does but also provided a lot of inspiration for future developments. In general the feedback was very positive and particular highlights were our annual conference ALT-C, the ALT journal and the value of the member community. Constructive suggestions for improvement were mainly focused on the need for better online facilities, more regional opportunities for members, and overwhelming enthusiasm for the ALT Open Access Repository. We have posted a brief summary of the results of the survey at which will be formally launched at **http://www.alt.ac.uk/docs/survey_2009.pdf** [40kB PDF].

ALT awards
Details of all our awards, including the ALT Learning Technologist of the Year Award, and the new Epigeum Award for the Most Effective Use of Video, are or will soon be available on the ALT web site at **http://www.alt.ac.uk/awards.html**. The closing date for the entries for the Learning Technologist of the Year Award is 21/5/2009.

Seb Schmoller
seb.schmoller@alt.ac.uk 21/4/2009

Steve Butler

The Mobile Learning Network (MoLeNET) was established by the Learning and Skills Network (LSN) to promote mobile learning, primarily in the English further education sector. The Network is based upon a large number of supported and shared-cost mobile learning projects. Colleges and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) share the costs of project introducing or expanding mobile learning; the Learning and Skills Network provides a support and evaluation pro-gramme. This includes technical and pedagogic advice and support, material development, continuing professional de-velopment, mentoring, facilitation of peer-to-peer support, networking and resource sharing, research and evaluation.

NEWS AND REVIEWS

NGfL Cymru Supporting Sharing

Sian Williams

In this article Sian Williams introduces the NGfL Cymru Repository, and the material available within it. NGfL Cymru is funded by the Welsh Assembly Government and managed by WJEC and has been supporting schools in Wales in the commissioning, development, support and dissemination of web-based teaching and learning resources for the last seven years. In a new three-year contract, awarded in June 2007, this remit was extended to support vocational and further education (FE). NGfL Cymru is currently undertaking a needs analysis in consultation with FE to support future development and the article invites involvement from sector staff.

LEAP2A: A specification for e portfolio portability and interoperability

Simon Grant

LEAP2A is a specification for information portability and interoperability between electronic portfolio tools and related systems. It has been developed through close collaboration between e portfolio system developers, to ensure immediate applicability and relative ease of implementation. It covers learner-owned or learner-focused artefacts, information and reflections that people are likely to want to use themselves or present to others, in the context of educational, personal, professional or career development. Including personal abilities, achievements, activities, plans and resources. The development projects are supported by JISC, and managed through JISC CETIS.

College strategies relating to learner-owned devices

Dave Pickersgill, Julie Byrne, Peter Harrison and Karen Sekula

In November 2008, Tthe Sheffield College was successful in secureding £300k in MoLeNET funding. The project is placing a wide range of mobile devices into the hands of teachers, technicians and learners across a wide range of curricula. In addition, an increasing number of learners are utilising their own Internet-enabled devices for learning. Dave Pickersgill, MoLeNET Project Manager at The Sheffield College discusses the impact that these changes will have on the college strategy and on its infrastructure.

New publication on learning technology from the Institute of Education

Learning, context and the role of technology is based on the inaugural professorial lecture of Professor Rosemary Luckin. It reviews twenty-first-century developments in technology, education and design which make it possible for learners to decide how, where and with whom they learn. Arguing that current technology-rich learning development models need further work in order to truly enable and engage learners. It also discusses the empirical grounding of a new model: the Ecology of Resources model of context. This offers the foundation for a design framework to support the development of technology-rich learning, to prepare learners to be able to take full advantage of all the resources available to them.

The booklet costs just £5 and can be obtained by contacting Hammicks Education Bookshop at 020 7612 6050 or **ioe@hammicks.co.uk**, or from Amazon. More information can also be found on the IOE Publications website: **http://www.ioe.ac.uk/publications**

Screen Capture

Simon Davis

In the second of three relates articles, Simon Davis looks at the use of Techsmith's Camtasia software for producing screen capture based screencasts. In this case study, based around the recording of two full semesters' worth of Electrical Engineering lectures, Simon reviews looks more specifically at the use of this software for real-time lecture capture, including the inclusion of audio, video, of the lecturer, PowerPoint presentations and equations that are written out on a tablet PC. during the lecture.

Screencasting using Articulate Presenter and Adobe Captivate

Graham McElearney

Screencasts may offer a relatively cheap and easy way of producing e-learning resources. However the term "screencasting" itself broadly refers to two different types of resources. In the first of three related articles, Graham McElearney looks at two different types of screencasting, and two popular commercial software applications for creating these. For the first, he reviews Articulate Presenter which creates audio narrated PowerPoint presentations. In the second, he reviews the use of Adobe Captivate for creating screen captured software demonstrations.

Lecture Capture using the EchoSystem from Echo360

Kris Roger and Chris Fryer

The EchoSystem from Echo360 is a complete hardware and software solution that automatically captures and processes lectures for web-based delivery. It enables you to capture multiple lecture elements such as audio, PC output, document reader output and video of the lecturer. The system can easily be extended from a small number of lecture theatres to a large number of venues. Captured lectures are made available as web pages containing Adobe Flash video or as podcasts and vodcasts. These can be automatically integrated into an institution's VLE.

ICT Skills Briefing

ICT is an essential skill which has not been given sufficient prominence in recent years. There are debates to be had relating to the delivery and indeed the perception of what these skills are. ICT Skills Briefing is an independent publication aimed not only at people who teach ICT as a stand-alone subject but also those who use and wish to reflect upon ICT when teaching other subjects.

ICT Skills Briefing covers the vital areas of ICT at level 2 and below including: Skills for life; ITQ skill for life; ICT embedded in other subjects; Introductory IT courses; professional development approaches that work; and examples of innovative and successful practice that engage learners.

Examples of recent articles include: Beating the credit crunch - by John Spencer; New IT users' standards and the mandatory unit - e-skills UK; Counting sweets with spreadsheets - John Thompson; and The LSIS and eCPD programme - Markos Tiris and Seb Schmoller.

It is published 3 times a year. Further information is available at **http://www.basicskillsbulletin.co.uk/ICTskills/tabid/78/Default.aspx**

EVENTS

Conference

ALT-C 2009:
"In dreams begins responsibility" - choice, evidence, and change

8 – 10 September 2009, Manchester, UK

The 16th International Conference of the Association for Learning Technology returns to the University of Manchester. Themes include: learning from history, spreading innovation, cost effectiveness, developing research culture, and redesigning pedagogy.

Keynote speakers:

Michael Wesch, Assistant Professor of Cultural Anthropology at Kansas State University, USA

Terry Anderson, Professor and Canada Research Chair in Distance Education at Athabasca University, Canada

Martin Bean, Vice-Chancellor Designate of the Open University

Bookings open: May 2009

Presenters' registration deadline: 29 June 2009

Earlybird registration deadline: 6 July 2009

Bookings close: 14 August 2009

Sponsorship: Organisations considering sponsoring ALT-C 2009 should contact Seb Schmoller, Chief Executive of ALT: **seb.schmoller@alt.ac.uk**

Exhibiting: Organisations considering exhibiting at ALT-C 2009 should contact Hayley Willis, Events Manager: **hayley.willis@alt.ac.uk**

WWW.ALT.AC.UK/ALTC2009

One-day events, workshops and exhibitions

Lunchtime Webinars

Jointly with the E-Learning Network we will be running three free 90 minute lunchtime webinars, starting at 12 noon in each case:

Serious Games – 16 June

Sara De Freitas, Serious Games Institute, Coventry University

Christopher Brannigan, Caspian Learning

Video on a Shoestring – 15 October

James Clay, Gloucestershire College

Rob Hubbard, LearningAge Solutions

For more information on the above events see **http://www.alt.ac.uk/events.php**

ALT News

Articles, comment, reviews and previews are welcomed for the next issue. Please contact the Editor for further details and a style guide.

Please note that only summary versions are published in the printed newsletter. Full versions appear in the online newsletter at:

http://newsletter.alt.ac.uk

Advertising rates
£300 for quarter page advert or £400 to insert a one-page flyer (no VAT)

Deadline: **5 June 2009**

For editorial contributions please contact the Editor:

Morag Munro
morag.munro@dcu.ie

For advertising queries contact
admin@alt.ac.uk

Association for Learning Technology

For further information on ALT contact:
Hayley Willis
Acting Director of Operations, ALT
Gipsy Lane, Headington
Oxford, OX3 0BP
Tel: 01865 484125
Fax: 01865 484165
admin@alt.ac.uk

Annual ALT subscriptions:

Individual UK   £56
    (£49 if paid by direct debit)
Reduced rate   £27
  (student, retired, unemployed)
Individual non-UK   £69

For organisational membership and other details go to
www.alt.ac.uk/membership.html

The views expressed in this newsletter are the authors' own and not necessarily those of ALT.

© Association for Learning Technology Authors are granted the right to reproduce the contribution provided that advance notice is given to ALT.

www.alt.ac.uk

Registered Charity No 1063519