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

ALT-C 2006 review

Following another successful ALT-C in Edinburgh, this review presents a summary of the four main themes of the 2006 conference. We look at the next generation of learners, learning, providers and technology, under the strands led by Phil Candy, Gilly Salmon, Chris Yapp and Terry Anderson.

Cathy Ellis and Frances Bell provide their own perspectives on the conference. Both Cathy and Frances highlight the

emerging importance of the "Social Networking" phenomenon, including podcasting, and the likely implications these new technological affordances have for Higher and Further Education providers. We are also pleased to be able to provide extracts from, and links to three of our conference bloggers, Marc Dupuis, Steve Warburton and Russell Dyas.

To continue reading go to **newsletter.alt.ac.uk**

Delegates networking during the Monday evening reception

Dr Diana Oblinger presenting her keynote address

Prof Stephen Heppell raises a smile during the closing keynote

Case study

Interactive game-based learning

Maria Fasli and Michael Michalakopoulos

It is widely accepted that students learn better and retain more when they are actively engaged in the learning process. A prerequisite for engagement is motivation: motivated students learn better and consequently progress faster and retain more knowledge. This case study examines how online games may provide the means to

increase student motivation and engagement and how they can even make the learning experience enjoyable and fun.

Project update

Federated Access Management: a new framework for accessing online material

Henry Hughes

On 30 November 2006 UKERNA will launch a new Federated Access Management Service for schools, FE, HE and research organisations in the UK. The Federation will provide a new framework for accessing online material and will help standardise access to online learning materials through the use of a common system, which will facilitate collaboration across the education sector.

A consultation exercise is running until 26 October to give participants the opportunity to offer feedback on the proposed technical and policy framework that comprise the Federation. Go to **www.ukfederation.org.uk/ConsultationDocumentation.html**

Further information on federated access management is available on the UK Federation home page at **www.ukfederation.org.uk**

NEWS AND REVIEWS

Executive Secretary's report

News from Seb Schmoller

New organisational and sponsoring membership tariffs: We have completed the transition to the new "banded" organisational and sponsoring membership tariffs. This means that membership fees for 2007 will all fall due on 1/2/2007, which is the start of ALT's financial year, with renewal invoices being issued towards the end of 2006. Meanwhile 8 organisations have now joined ALT for the first time, at the new, and for many organisations, substantially lower rates. You can check if your organisation is a member on the ALT web site. If you have any issues to raise regarding this, please email me.

ALT Strategy: I reported in ALT-N 54 that the Central Executive Committee has been in the process of completely revising the ALT three-year strategy. By the time you read this, the revised strategy should be accessible from the ALT home page at **www.alt.ac.uk**. In future years, we expect to involve individual, organisational, and sponsoring members more closely in the process of developing the strategy, than has previously been the case.

People who play a role in ALT, and the decisions they take: We recently added to the ALT web site a page of brief biographies of members of the ALT Central Executive Committee. You can review this at: **www.alt.ac.uk/cx.html**. By the end of this year, we will also include on the site a list of all past Trustees of ALT, as well as the memberships of each of our four main committees: Further Education, Membership Services, Research, and Publications. Alongside this, during 2007 we will start to publish the approved minutes of ALT committees.

Bob Green: You will be aware that we appointed Bob Green to cover for Marion Samler (neé O'Dea) whilst she was on maternity leave. Marion returned on 2 October, and Bob will finish with us on 13 October. I would like to place on record ALT's and my personal thanks to Bob for stepping into the breach as he did, and making such an effective job of things. Bob is now having a very belated "gap-year" of world travel, with his wife Jan. We wish him all the very best.

Consultation responses: Over the last few months we have produced three responses to public consultations on:

- JISC 2007-2009 Strategy;
- Pursuing Excellence: QIA's outline national Improvement Strategy for the further education system;
- the DfES consultation on the reform of higher education research assessment and funding.

All 3 responses are accessible from the ALT web site at **www.alt.ac.uk/ documents.html**, and if you have feedback on any of them, please email me.

Software patents: Members will be aware of the work ALT did, and in which Paul Bacsich, Chair of the ALT Publications Committee, played a key role, with Blackboard and with Desire2Learn (both of which are sponsoring members of ALT) to clarify their positions in relation to Blackboard's US Patent Number 6988138 "for technology used for internet-based education support systems and methods". The notes of our teleconference with Matthew Small, Blackboard's General Legal Counsel – see **www.alt.ac.uk** – have to date been accessed nearly 2000 times. Interestingly both companies point to the notes of this discussion from their web sites; and Desire2Learn references them in its initial court response to Blackboard's patent infringement claim. Currently ALT has no policy on software patents, and over the next few months we will be deciding whether or not to develop one.

sschmoller@brookes.ac.uk   4/10/2006

Conference review

EuroCALL goes virtual: from Granada to Cyberspace

Lesley Shield

This year the European Association for Computer-Assisted Language Learning (EuroCALL) conference offered a Virtual Conference Strand (VS) to those unable to attend the conference in Granada. Using a conference blog as the hub for its activities, the VS offered a blog-related chat tool and presence indicator, a wiki and limited access to streamed versions of plenary presentations. Go to **www.eurocall-languages.org/news/items/ 2006virtualstrand.html**.

Case study

Rapid development of media-rich, interactive e-learning

Niall Watts

This case study describes an e-learning action research project carried out by the University College Dublin (UCD) Audio Visual Centre (AVC) and School of Medicine and Medical Science. The project started with an investigation of current practice using a questionnaire, interviews and the examination of learning materials. Based on recommendations from this investigation, a new development tool for the rapid development of media-rich interactive e-learning was developed based on XML and Flash Companion.

To continue reading go to **newsletter.alt.ac.uk**

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Case studies

The end of handwriting and the next generation of traditional exams?

Nora Mogey

Do your students do most of their work using a computer? Do your students do most of their exams using pen and paper? If you answered yes to both those questions, do you feel just a little bit uneasy about that? At the University of Edinburgh staff have been concerned about this for some time and feel that they have now identified an appropriate solution. The project starts from the assumption that essay-exams will continue to be used for some time and simply attempts to introduce a keyboard and computer into the process, to replace a pen and paper.

Game On for learning

Sara de Freitas

Since the earliest times, games have been used to support training and learning objectives. The earliest games and simulations, for educational purposes, were in fact war games and this may partly explain the number of 'first person shoot 'em up games' available in the leisure games market today. The development of computers and the Internet has increased interest in how leisure games and simulations can be used to support educational practices such as 'immersive learning.' Learning in Immersive Worlds: a review of game-based learning (commissioned by the JISC) provides a scoping study of current usage of games for learning in the higher education and post-16 sectors in the United Kingdom.

To continue reading go to **newsletter.alt.ac.uk**

Director's report

News from Rhonda Riachi

ALT-C 2006: biggest and best yet! Having closed registration early, we still welcomed 650 to Edinburgh – our biggest conference to date. Many thanks to the ALT staff, the ALT-C 2006 helpers, staff at Heriot-Watt University, the programme committee, session chairs, our sponsors and exhibitors, and all the members and presenters who made it an inspiring and enjoyable event. The keynote and theme speakers' presentation slides can be found at **www.alt.ac.uk/altc2006/keynotes.html**. Audio files of the keynote and theme speakers will also be added shortly. Other presentation files are being uploaded to the web site by authors, and you can search for these at **www.alt.ac.uk/altc2006/timetable.html**.

ALT-C 2007 keynotes announced: We are delighted to confirm that our keynote speakers will be: **Dr Michelle Selinger**, Education Strategist, Cisco Systems; **Dr Peter Norvig**, Director of Research, Google; **Professor Dylan Wiliam**, Institute of Education; with a welcome keynote from **Professor Sir Colin Campbell**, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nottingham. Go to **www.alt.ac.uk/altc2007**.

The deadlines for ALT-C 2007 are similar to this year:
- research papers close **14 February 2007**
- all other streams close **28 February 2007**
- registration for presenters closes **29 June 2007**
- registrations close **10 August 2007**

CAMEL report published: Find out how the CAMEL exchange project went by ordering your copy of the report and CD-ROM from JISCinfoNet at **www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/news/camel-publication**. ALT is a partner in the next CAMEL project, CAMEL eLIDA, concerning tools and systems to support design for learning, which is being run by the University of Greenwich: **http://elidacamel.cms.gre.ac.uk/**.

ALT at Online Educa Berlin: Last chance to book your flyers for display on the ALT exhibition stand at Online Educa – contact Teresa Prochazka, Project Manager, for more details: **tkprochazka@brookes.ac.uk**.

EASA to close December 2006: The European Academic Software Awards are no more (go to **www.easa-award.net**), but a successor is planned. An announcement is expected at Online Educa Berlin (we'll keep you posted).

AGM news: Congratulations to **Cathy Ellis** (Centre for Excellence in Leadership), who was elected unopposed to the Vice-Chair of ALT at the Annual General Meeting in Edinburgh. **Linda Creanor** (Glasgow Caledonian University) is now Chair of ALT and **Jane Seale** (University of Southampton) is President for 2006-2007. Also joining the Committee are **Liz Bennett** (Huddersfield University) and **Gayle Calverley** (Manchester University). We gave our thanks to retiring President, **John Cook**, and also to **Jay Dempster** and **Barbara Newland**, who retired from the committee in September. Following the AGM, the Central Executive Committee made these appointments to committee chairs:
- Chair of FE Committee: **Cathy Ellis**
- Chair of Membership Services: **John Phelps**
- Chair of Publications: **Paul Bacsich**
- Chair of Research: **Robin Mason**

ALT-N Editor vacancy: Susi Peacock plans to stand down as Editor in 2007. We are grateful for all the hard work Susi has put in over the years first as Deputy, then as Editor. ALT advertised this vacancy on alt-announce in October. Contact me or Susi Peacock (**speacock@qmuc.ac.uk**) for more details.

Spring Conference 2007: The Spring Conference and Research Seminar will take place in Oxford **16 and 17 April 2007**. Note this date now!

rriachi@brookes.ac.uk

EVENTS

Workshop

Bidding and winning: the secrets of successful learning technology project bids

National College for School Leadership (NCSL), Nottingham

24 January 2007, 0930 - 1500

Project bids are time-consuming and should not be undertaken lightly; this workshop will give tips on how to avoid wasted effort and dashed hopes. Three experienced learning technology project managers, who have run projects with funds from the JISC and other sources, and who have judged bids written by others, will share their perspectives on writing convincing bids for funds.

For more information go to **www.alt.ac.uk/workshops.php**

Conference

ALT-C 2007: Beyond control
Learning technology for the social network generation

Nottingham, UK, 4-6 September

Keynote speakers:

Professor Sir Colin Campbell, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nottingham
Dr Michelle Selinger, Education Strategist, Cisco Systems
Dr Peter Norvig, Director of Research, Google
Professor Dylan Wiliam, Institute of Education

ALT-C 2007 will feature four areas, capturing the main strands of development current in the field:

- learning and internationalism
- designing learning spaces
- large-scale implementation
- learning technology for the social network generation

Each submission must address **at least two** of the following:

- theory of learning and technology
- innovative practice
- evaluation

The conference welcomes proposals for research papers for publication in the peer-reviewed Proceedings of ALT-C 2007, as well as short papers, symposia, workshops, demonstrations and posters.

Key dates

Research papers close: **14 February**　Other streams close: **28 February**
Presenters' registration deadline: **8 June**　Earlybird registration deadline: **29 June**
Registrations close: **10 August**

www.alt.ac.uk/altc2007

Association for Learning Technology

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Annual ALT subscriptions:

Individual UK	£52
Reduced rate (student, retired, unemployed)	£25
Individual non-UK	£65

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

www.alt.ac.uk