Trends in e-learning: education versus entertainment?

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Registered Charity number 1063519
http://www.alt.ac.uk
Association for Learning Technology

- promotes good practice in the use of learning technology in education and industry
- represents the members in areas of policy
- facilitates collaboration between practitioners, researchers, and policy makers
Promoting good practice

Conferences and workshops
- **ALT-C 2006**: the next generation
  Edinburgh, UK
  5-7 September 2006.
  13th International Conference
- Spring Conference in collaboration with SURF and ILTA
  Leiden, Netherlands
  6-7 April 2006

Annual Policy Forum
- 2004: developing our Learning Technology Research Policy
- 2005: institutional strategies for successfully embedding learning technology. Producing an ALT guidance document, which we will publish in 2006.
Publications for practitioners and researchers

- ALT-J – leading journal with an international focus for the study and application of learning technology
- ALT-N – keeping members up to date on ALT’s activities, news, and how we are influencing key policy decisions: http://newsletter.alt.ac.uk
- Email digest – a fortnightly news digest summarising key developments in the field
- Conference proceedings and books
Influencing policy

- HEFCE 2003-2008 Strategy
- DfES e-learning Strategy Consultation
- the 21st Century Skills White Paper
- RAE 2008 panel configuration and recruitment
What is learning technology?

www.alt.ac.uk/learning_technology.html

...the systematic application of a body of knowledge to the design, implementation, management, and evaluation of teaching and learning... Thus:

- learning technology is the use of a broad range of communication, information, and related technologies to support learning and teaching;
- learning technologists apply or support learning technology in practice, and/or undertake research relating to learning technology.
Conflicting pressures

- Bespoke v off-the-shelf
- Open source v licensed
- Obsolescence v reusability
- Cost v time
- Learning at fixed location v global learners
- CEEFAX Generation v Net Generation
- Government targets v institutional policy
- Formal v informal
Trends in e-learning

- Tools for lifelong learning
  - e-portfolios
  - digital repositories
- Online assessment
- Reusable learning objects
- Ubiquitous computing: pervasive technology and social software
  - m-learning; podcasting; blogs, wikis
- Simulations and games
- Personalisation
- Professionalisation
E-portfolios

“tools for personal development planning in the context of lifelong learning”
http://www.alt.ac.uk/docs/ALT-SURFseminar_April_2004.pdf

● Other useful sites
  – http://www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=myworld
  – http://www.eportfolios.ac.uk/
  – http://www.careerswales.com/
  – http://vmap.gold.ac.uk
Digital repositories

“a content store of digital objects with metadata” (ALT/SURF definition)
http://www.alt.ac.uk/docs/ALT-SURFseminar_April_2004.pdf

- Institutional
- Regional
- National
JORUM is a JISC-funded collaborative venture in UK Higher and Further Education to collect and share learning and teaching materials, allowing their reuse and repurposing, and standing as a national statement of the importance of creating interoperable, sustainable materials. www.jorum.ac.uk
Online assessment

“allows the assessment of learning outcomes to be more flexible and can be used as a motivator”
http://ferl.becta.org.uk/display.cfm?page=189

● Other useful e-assessment sites
  – http://www.toia.ac.uk
  – http://www.reap.ac.uk/
Reusable learning objects

“a digital piece of learning material that addresses a clearly identifiable topic or learning outcome and has the potential to be reused in different contexts.”

(H806 "Learning in the Connected Economy" The Open University course team, Robin Mason, Martin Weller, Chris Pegler, IET, Open University, Oct. 2003)

Reusable Learning Objects CETL

www.rlo-cetl.ac.uk/
Ubiquitous computing names the third wave in computing... First were mainframes, each shared by lots of people. Now we are in the personal computing era, person and machine staring uneasily at each other across the desktop. Next comes ubiquitous computing, or the age of calm technology, when technology recedes into the background of our lives.


Pervasive technologies
- mobile phones
- digital TV on demand and PVR
- i-pods
- MP3 players
- wearable technologies

Social Software
- blogs, wikis, flickr
M-learning

Mobile learning projects in UK
www.m-learning.org/
Which technology? Useful definition page
www.m-learning.org/which.shtml

Research into use of PDAs at London Met U
Newsletter article on this project:
http://newsletter.alt.ac.uk
London Met University: teaching programming on PDAs
Podcasting

iPod + broadcasting = podcasting
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Podcasting

BBC download and podcast trial
www.bbc.co.uk/radio/downloadtrial/
Blogs, wikis, flickr

ALT Spring Conference social software list
http://altspring.jot.com/ToolBar/Technologies

Definition of blog (web-log)
http://www.unc.edu/~zuiker/blogging101/

ALT Spring Conference wiki and blogs
http://altspring.jot.com/Delegate+Blogs
Simulations and games

- Way to encourage hard-to-reach students?
- Trying to make learning more exciting?

Growing body of research:
http://altspring.jot.com/Digital+games

Simon Egenfeldt Nielsen’s home page:
http://www.it-c.dk/people/sen/
Personalisation

“The logic of education systems should be reversed so that the system conforms to the learner, rather than the learner to the system.”

'Personalisation and Digital Technologies' report

www.futurelab.org.uk/research/personalisation.htm
Professionalisation of learning technologists

- Certified Member (CMALT) scheme launched
- Principles and values
  - A commitment to exploring and understanding the interplay between technology and learning.
  - A commitment to keep up to date with new technologies.
  - An empathy with and willingness to learn from colleagues from different backgrounds and specialisms.
  - A commitment to communicate and disseminate effective practice.

www.alt.ac.uk/cmalt.html
Membership summary

- Over 500 individuals
- 101 Higher Education Institutions
- 70 Further Education Institutions
- 50 Corporate members
  including DfES, Epic Group plc, HEFCE, Higher Education Academy, JISC, LSC, QIA, NHSU, Question Mark Computing, Scottish Qualifications Authority, Toshiba, UKERNA
Membership

- Join as an individual (from £52 per annum)
- Join through your institution or organisation
Any questions?

Contact ALT
http://www.alt.ac.uk/
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Thank you for listening