

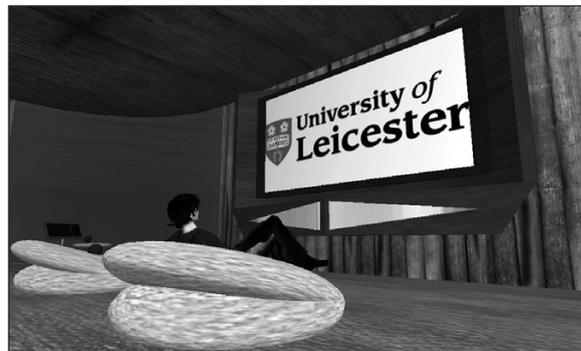
For full versions of all the articles here go to the ALT Online Newsletter at newsletter.alt.ac.uk

How avatars learn together: an immersive experience

Matthew Wheeler, Ming Nie and Gilly Salmon

The University of Leicester has had a Second Life (SL) presence known as The Media Zoo since April 2007. The Media Zoo was developed as part of the SEAL project in collaboration with TwoFour Learning. Currently its JISC funded demonstrator project, MOOSE centres on training materials and in developing learning activities (SL-tivities) to take place 'in-world'.

We are focussing our efforts enabling groups of students to establish their in-world socialisation and engagement for more productive information and knowledge exchange. In this article we explain our initial research findings and provide some recommendations for productive in-world group work.



Web2Rights project

Alice Gugan

Do Intellectual Property rights exist in a virtual world and, if so, who owns them? What happens if you can't find the rights holders? How can risks associated with content reuse be sensibly managed?

The JISC-funded Web2Rights has developed a practical IP toolkit to support projects funded via the JISC Users and Innovation Programme. Projects likely to find the Web2Rights tools useful are those which are adapting and deploying pre-existing tools, technologies and software, developing new ones, adapting and using their own content, or using that created by a third party.

The toolkit can be found at www.web2rights.org.uk or through the JORUM repository.

*The MOOSE project (above)
and Web2Rights project (below)*

In this edition:

- Matthew Wheeler, Ming Nie and Gilly Salmon report on the MOdelling Of Second Life Environments (MOOSE) project, which has developed training materials for teaching and learning 'in-world'.
- Alice Gugan provides an update on the on the JISC funded Web2Rights toolkit, which aims to make navigating the intellectual property rights maze a little easier.
- Matt Chilcott reports on an e-resource designed to raise awareness of green social enterprise developed by the Institute of Digital Learning at the University of Wales, Newport.
- The LEAP project is investigating provision of support for interactive journal articles that provide readers with access to the research data underpinning articles. As Julian Richards points out, this new mode of publishing raises important questions regarding the future of e-journals.
- Can a university's social networking system compete for students' attention with established sites such as Facebook and Bebo? Federica Oradini and Gunter Saunders investigate.
- Educational podcasts have been popular for some time now, yet is listening to a podcast essentially a passive, solitary activity? Cheryl Reynolds and Liz Bennett explain how they apply constructivist learning approaches to the use of podcasts.

Would you like to contribute to ALT-N?

The ALT-N team welcomes articles that pertain to learning technology, including case studies demonstrating good practice, reviews of software, project updates, book reviews and conference reviews. ALT-N is published quarterly online. A print edition containing summaries of the online articles is distributed to all ALT members via postal mail.

For further information and guidelines, please contact the Editor, Morag Munro: morag.munro@dcu.ie.

Chief Executive's Report

Staffing changes

Louise Ryan, who has a background in journal and educational publishing, started in the new role of Publications Officer (Web and Print) on 15 July.

There is a brief biography about Louise on the ALT web site at www.alt.ac.uk/team.html

Election of Trustees and Vice Chair

From the end of July onwards individual members and the representatives of organisational and sponsoring members will receive by post voting papers and election addresses for the election of two Trustees, and the Vice-Chair of ALT. The election will be handled for ALT by Electoral Reform Balloting Services (ERBS). The closing date for voting will be 3 September 2008 and members will be able to vote either by post or online. The result will be communicated to members prior to the ALT Annual General Meeting in Leeds on 10 September 2008. This is an important milestone for ALT, it being the first time that the Trustee and Vice-chair vacancies have been contested since we decided to organise voting amongst our membership as a whole rather than just amongst those attending our conference.

A note of thanks to Paul Bacsich and John Slater

In September, Paul and John (who are respectively Chair of the ALT Publications Committee and Honorary Treasurer) will cease to be ALT Trustees under our rules, each having completed six year stints as Trustees. I place on record ALT's thanks to them for their efforts.

New Honorary Treasurer for ALT

Last month, Fred Pickering, who is currently Chair of the ALT Further Education Committee was elected ALT's Honorary Treasurer designate by the Trustees. He will take over from John Slater (see previous item) in September, and is working in tandem with John over the summer. Fred was until recently a Director of Barnsley College.

Consultation responses

Since ALT-N 61 we have responded to:

- the DIUS informal adult learning consultation;
- the Higher Education Academy consultation on its strategic plan;
- the e-Skills UK consultation on its strategic plan, in collaboration with the E-Learning Network;
- the DIUS consultation on HE at work.

Nearly all our consultation responses are published at www.alt.ac.uk/documents.html.

Harnessing Technology Strategy

In early July, Becta published a new version of the Harnessing Technology Strategy. The strategy makes new and positive references to learning technology and contains some extracts from the Tangible Benefits of eLearning Report that we distributed to members earlier this year.

ALT-C 2009

We are proud to announce that Professors Gilly Salmon and Tom Boyle will co-chair ALT-C 2009 in Manchester between 8 and 10 September 2009. A call for programme committee members will be issued in the next month.

Getting directly involved in ALT

We delayed issuing a call for people to express an interest in serving as member of one ALT's four operational committees (Further Education, Membership Services, Publications, and Research) until the summer whilst we clarified the number and focus of the vacancies on each committee. Please be on the look out for it.

CMALT

We are making steady progress in enrolling applicants onto CMALT at the 50% preferential rate supported with our thanks by a generous grant from JISC. The official closing date for registrations is 31 July 2008 and we are able to extend this in the first instance until the end of September. Those registered will then have until 31 December 2008 to submit their CMALT portfolios for assessment. While there may be further offers in the future, we would strongly encourage you to take advantage of the significant saving and support available under the terms of the current offer and not to delay your own or colleagues' registrations. The best way to keep informed about the JISC-supported scheme – the aim of which is to build up a critical mass of CMALT-recognised members – is to join our low volume jiscmail list from www.alt.ac.uk/cmalt.

Success in ESRC/EPSC bid

The London Knowledge Lab (a collaboration between the Institute of Education and Birkbeck) in a multi-partner consortium that includes LSE, NIACE, London Metropolitan University, and ALT, has won a £1m+ ESRC/EPSC award in Technology Enhanced Learning. The aim of the project is to develop a Learning Design Support Environment to enable teachers to lead the discovery of innovative pedagogical designs that exploit the potential of Technology Enhanced Learning. ALT's role will be as a dissemination channel for the project, including updates in the ALT Newsletter and Digest, and as a participant in the project's Advisory Group.

seb.schmoller@alt.ac.uk 14/7/2008

Bridging the Digital Divide in the UK's Greenest City

Matt Chilcott

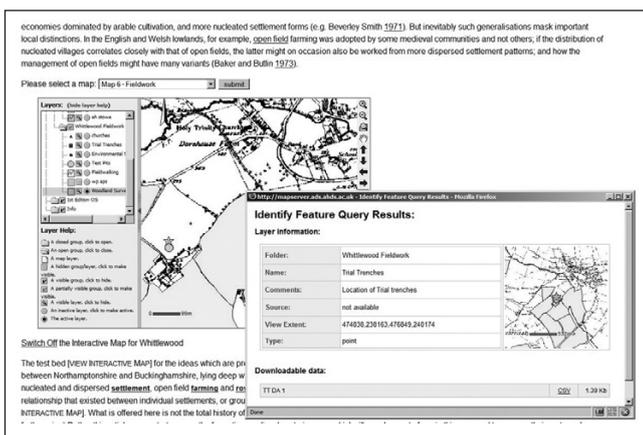
The Institute of Digital Learning at the University of Wales, Newport, has recently released a free access e-case study resource that shares some of the secrets of the UK's Greenest City. The case study focuses on the e-Inclusion Computer Recycling Community Interest Company. It highlights the roles that active citizenship, social enterprise and technology have played in making the City of Newport in South Wales a leader in green social enterprise and digital inclusion. **The e-Inclusion resource**



Making the LEAP: Linking Electronic Archives and Publications

Julian Richards

The LEAP project (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/leap/>) has been investigating ways in which electronic publication can provide broad access to research findings in the Arts and Humanities whilst also making the underlying data available. The aim is to enable readers to 'drill down' seamlessly into online archives. The project utilises the existing publishing infrastructure of the e-journal Internet Archaeology and preservation systems of the Archaeology Data Service. It provides four sustainable exemplars of multi-layered e-publications and e-archives. This article reviews these four exemplars and addresses the issues raised by their implementation.



The LEAP website

Social networking: Connect-ing students and staff

Federica Oradini and Gunter Saunders

Since September 2007, students at the University of Westminster have been communicating with friends and classmates through a new social networking site called 'Connect'. Available to all Westminster students and staff, Connect allows users to: create their own profiles; upload photographs and documents; create and join discussion groups; send messages; and publish blogs and presentations. By November 2007, Connect had over 3100 student and staff visitors and over 100 communities had been established. This article provides an overview of the Connect social networking system and presents the results of an initial evaluation of Connect.



The Connect social networking site

A social constructivist approach to the use of podcasts

Cheryl Reynolds and Liz Bennett

Educational podcasts have become ubiquitous. But does listening to a podcast, perhaps once, perhaps multiple times, mean that the content is useful to students and that they can retrieve and re-use it in an appropriate context at a later date? This proposition seems to conflict with social constructivist theories of learning, which assert that learning lies in interactions between people rather than in the content itself. In this article, Cheryl Reynolds and Liz Bennett discuss the application of a social constructivist approach to the use of podcasts, where interaction and reflection based on the content of podcasts is encouraged.

ALT-C 2008: Rethinking the digital divide

9-11 September 2008, Leeds, UK

Keynote speakers:

David Cavallo, Dr Itiel Dror, Hans Rosling

Invited speakers will include:

Jane Hart, Gilly Salmon, Denise Kirkpatrick, Clive Shepherd, George Siemens, Richard Noss, Lizbeth Goodman and George Auckland

Registrations close: 15 August 2008

ALT-C 2008 is sponsored by: Becta • Blackboard • Department of Universities, Innovation, and Skills • Desire2Learn • Digital 2010 • Eduserv • Elluminate • Higher Education Academy • IMC (UK) Learning Limited • JISC • Learning and Skills Council • MyKnowledgeMap • Positive Internet Company Ltd • QIA • Ufi • University of Leeds • Wimba • Yorkshire Forward •

Further information is available from the conference web site:

www.alt.ac.uk/altc2008

Workshops

For full details, booking deadlines and fees for these workshops, please visit: www.alt.ac.uk/events.php

Forthcoming workshop topics:

- Podcasting technology – planning and production
- The Power of Wikis
- Make your own mash-ups
- Second Life in real life – repeat due to popular demand
- Bidding and Winning – repeat due to popular demand



School of Distance and E-Learning

Applications of Learning Technologies

Applications of Learning Technologies is designed for members of staff teaching or supporting students online and covers the following topics.

- An introduction to online technology and pedagogy
- Online and blended learning: rationale and applications
- Pedagogy and learning styles
- Information management
- Portfolio and professional development

The module will give you the opportunity to develop your knowledge and skills in relation to your professional context and will feature a guided exploration of learning technologies, an investigation of potential applications in your subject area and professional development planning to help you identify future skill or information needs.

This is the first module of the **MA in Online and Blended Learning**, and is accredited with the Higher Education Academy (HEA). Successful completion will lead to Associate status with the HEA and with the Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA). It also forms part of the **UEL Professional Standards Framework**.

All course activities happen online and are facilitated within UEL Plus, the UEL Virtual Learning Environment.

For further information, including fees, start dates and an application form please go to:

http://www.uel.ac.uk/dl/programmes/module_info/ma_obl.htm

Alternatively, contact the Distance Learning Advice Team on: distance.learning@uel.ac.uk / tel: +44 (0)20 8223 2564



ALT-N

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: **19 September 2008**

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Annual ALT subscriptions:

Individual UK	£54
(£48 if paid by direct debit)	
Reduced rate	£26
(student, retired, unemployed)	
Individual non-UK	£67

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

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