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ALT Conference

Athina Chatzigavriil, Kris Roger and Matt Lingard

More than seven hundred delegates descended on Leeds last month for ALT-C 2008: *Rethinking the digital divide*. Hans Rosling's captivating keynote provided an excellent start and a buzz that lasted well beyond the first day. The conference featured two successful ALT-C firsts: an enormously popular conference-focused social networking site and a number of fringe meetings.

We were treated to some excellent presentations, alongside plenty of opportunities to network: both formally and informally, offline and online. Tom Franklin echoed the view of many delegates in calling ALT-C 2008 'a huge success' and rating it as 'the best ever'. For many it's the networking element that makes conferences such a worthwhile format and many would agree with Anne Dickinson, who obtained most enjoyment from 'chance encounters with people and the fruitful exchange of conversations'.



Ian Pearson MP, Minister of State for Science and Innovation (second from left)



ALT-C Workshop

Helen Keegan



Hans Rosling

In this edition:

- Athina Chatzigavriil, Kris Roger and Matt Lingard provide highlights from ALT-C 2008: *Rethinking the digital divide*. During the conference many delegates took part in an 'Alternate Reality Game' (ARG); Andrew Middleton provides an overview of ARGs for the uninitiated!
- Maria Toro-Troconis reviews the latest version of the Articulate Rapid E-Learning Studio and provides examples of material developed using the suite at Imperial College London.
- Emma Anderson provides an update on the projects funded via the JISC Users and Innovation Programme, while Norbert Pachler reports on another JISC-supported project: Scoping a vision for formative e-assessment.
- Finally, Terry Mayes and Derek Morrison reflect on the Pathfinder programme: a large-scale e-learning development programme funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

Would you like to contribute to ALT-N?

The ALT-N team welcomes articles that relate to Learning Technology, including case-studies demonstrating good practice, reviews of software, book reviews and conference reviews. ALT-N is published quarterly online and a print edition containing summaries of the online articles is distributed via postal mail. For further information and guidelines contact the Acting Editor, Julie Voce: j.voce@imperial.ac.uk.

In memory of Keith Duckitt

John Gray

ALT members have been saddened to learn of the death of Keith Duckitt early in October. Keith, after pioneering IT roles in the private sector, worked for the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) and Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in the years before his retirement and was an amazing champion for learning technology. His work within and between national agencies and departments provided the detailed basis for all the investment in technology in the Further Education (FE) system which has taken place over the last twenty years. In the full online article, Keith's close colleague and former college principal John Gray, reflects on why Keith was such a worthy ALT Honorary Life Member.

Chief Executive's Report

Keith Duckitt

Many members will be saddened at the death on 3 October of Keith Duckitt, who was appointed as ALT's first Honorary Life Member in September 2004. Keith, who was head of ICT at the Further Education Funding Council (and subsequently the Learning and Skills Council), was hugely influential from the mid 1990s onwards in ensuring that learning technology got the strategic attention it deserved in English Further, Adult, Community, and Work-based Learning, and in making the LSC a funding partner of JISC.

John Gray, who worked closely with Keith for much of this period, writes a more extended and personal reflection in the web-based version of ALT-N at <http://newsletter.alt.ac.uk>. If any reader wishes to contribute to either of the charities nominated by Keith's family, these are The Alzheimer's Society www.alzheimers.org.uk and the South Warwickshire Carers' Support Service www.swcss.org.uk. Donations can be sent c/o John Taylor Funeral Service, 9 St Johns, Warwick, Warwickshire CV34 4NE.

Staffing changes

Maren Deepwell, who recently finished her PhD in Anthropology at University College London, and who has been covering Mel Fox's Administrator role during the latter part of Mel's maternity leave, will be filling the new role of Membership Services Manager from 1 November until the end of April 2009. Mel returns from maternity leave from the same date. There are brief biographies of all ALT staff on the ALT web site at: www.alt.ac.uk/team.html.

New Trustees, Vice Chair, Chair, and President

We welcome Carol Higgison, from Bradford University, whose election as Vice Chair of ALT was announced at the Annual General Meeting on 10 September. Steve Ryan, from the London School of Economics, becomes Chair of ALT, having served a year as Vice Chair. Cathy Ellis, from Becta, becomes President, having served a year as Chair. Also elected as Trustees of ALT were Nicola Whitton from Manchester Metropolitan University, and Linda Creanor from Glasgow Caledonian University.

New Chair of the ALT Publications Committee

As reported in ALT-N 62, Paul Bacsich stood down as Chair of the ALT Publications Committee, after the maximum six year period as a Trustee of ALT. Dick Moore, from Ufi/learndirect, who was elected as a Trustee in September 2007, has been appointed in Paul's stead.

Getting directly involved in ALT

We have further 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) due to the pressure of running the ALT Conference. The call will be issued shortly; please be on the look out for it.

CMALT

We continue to make steady progress in enrolling applicants onto CMALT at the 50% preferential rate supported, with our thanks, by a generous grant from JISC. By the end of September we were closing in on our target of 180 registrations. We are now turning our attention to supporting applicants through the certification process, with a view to everyone registered under the scheme submitting their CMALT portfolios for assessment by December 2008.

If you or your organisation wish to take advantage of the JISC-supported scheme, please contact the ALT office by email – admin@alt.ac.uk – by no later than the end of November 2008.

Memoranda of Understanding

During the 2008 ALT Conference ALT signed two revised memoranda of understanding: with JISC, and with **ascilite**, our sister organisation in Australasia. In both cases these agreements strengthen and formalise longstanding collaborations between ALT and two key partner organisations. Copies of each are available on the ALT web site at www.alt.ac.uk/documents.html.

ALT-C

A review of the 2008 ALT Conference appears elsewhere in this Newsletter. For ALT's staff, many of whom are new in post, our 2008 conference was a particularly demanding challenge. I place on record ALT's thanks to them, and to conference co-chairs Jill Jameson, from the University of Greenwich, and John Sandars, from the University of Leeds, and to the rest of the Conference Programme Committee for all of their efforts.

We are now turning our attention to ALT-C 2009, '*In dreams begins responsibility*' – *choices, evidence, and change*, which will be co-chaired by Tom Boyle from London Metropolitan University, and Gilly Salmon from Leicester University. The conference will be held in Manchester between 8 and 10 September 2009. Nearly 100 people (a record) have expressed an interest in membership of the 2009 Conference Programme Committee, which will begin its work over the next couple of months. Meanwhile, the call for organisations to sponsor the 2009 conference can be accessed at www.alt.ac.uk/altc2009. Proposals for inclusion in the ALT-C 2009 programme will be accepted, from www.alt.ac.uk/altc2009 between 1 December 2008 and 16 February 2009.

Seb Schmoller

seb.schmoller@alt.ac.uk 8/10/2008

NEWS AND REVIEWS

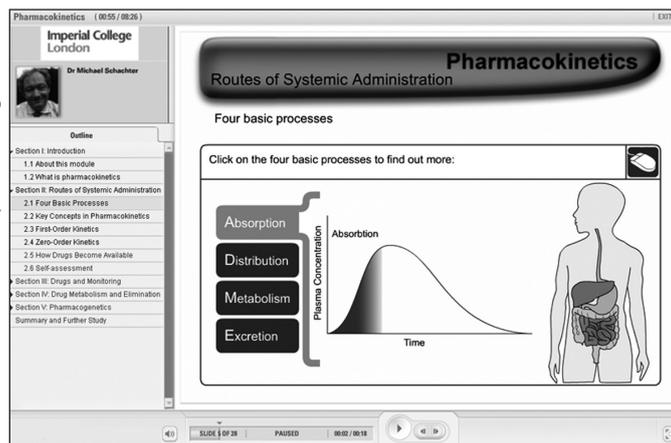
ARG @ ALT-C x PPP SIG

Andrew Middleton

The Podcasting for Pedagogic Purposes (PPP) Special Interest Group (SIG) wanted to find a way to encourage ALT-C delegates to find out about the creative opportunities offered by digital audio technologies in designing student-centred pedagogies. An Alternate Reality Game (ARG), run between sessions at ALT-C, seemed like the obvious answer: both educational podcasting and ARGs are flagships of academic innovation and, if used well, can engage students in immersive and productive learning opportunities. Many delegates took part in the ARG whilst learning about podcasting by chasing the seven clues that appeared on walls, badges, in the PPP wiki and, of course, in the PPP podcast.

Software review: Articulate Rapid E-Learning Studio Second Edition

Maria Toro-Troconis



Pharmacokinetics e-module

Articulate Rapid E-Learning Studio is a comprehensive e-learning authoring tool that integrates customisable Flash-based quizzes, interactions, assessments and surveys into e-learning courses. Using Articulate, non-technical users can create rich-media presentations and e-learning courses which integrate narration and interactivity. This article reviews the three tools within the E-learning Studio (Presenter, Engage and Quizmaker) and provides examples of material developed using the tools for Undergraduate Medicine at Imperial College London.

An interview with Diana Laurillard

Kevin Donovan

In July Kevin Donovan talked to Diana Laurillard at the London Knowledge Lab. Diana is well-known to ALT members as a leading thinker and enthusiast for progressive education and educational technology. The interview – available via ALT-N as a 30-minute MP3 podcast or as a transcript in PDF format – covers Diana's current role as well as her earlier work, including the development of the government's e-strategy.

JISC Users and Innovation Programme

Emma Anderson

The JISC Users and Innovation Programme is moving full steam ahead, with nine of the projects taking part having presented at the ALT conference in Leeds. Emerge, the project supporting these research teams was delighted with the presentations and responses to the work. The research currently being undertaken in our institutions in this fast moving area demonstrates to the learning technology world that this area is amongst the most important and innovative in the UK today. This piece gives a brief outline of the nine projects and showcases four of the presentations made at ALT-C 2008.

JISC-supported project: Scoping a vision for formative e-assessment

Norbert Pachler

This JISC-funded project, carried out by the Centre for Excellence in Work-based Learning for Education Professionals at the Institute of Education, London, aims to develop a domain map for formative e-assessment based on a review of relevant literature in the field of formative assessment and e-assessment, as well as an analysis of aspects of prevailing assessment practice in technology-enhanced contexts. Project outcomes will include a set of recommendations, a brief literature review and a set of case studies of existing practice in formative e-assessment.

Think first: the Benchmarking and Pathfinder Programme 2005-2008

Terry Mayes and Derek Morrison

Over the last three years the Higher Education Academy has coordinated a large-scale technology-enhanced learning development programme in English Higher Education. In contrast to comparable programmes in other sectors, institutions have been supported to carry out their own analysis of their e-learning development, and to base their 'Pathfinder' projects squarely on the outcomes of this analysis. Seventy-seven institutions participated in at least one of the programme's phases. Five 'network' projects have been funded to take some of the programme's key outputs to the wider sector. These are: building practitioner communities around the themes of course redesign; podcasting; quality assurance/enhancement; and researching the student experience of e-learning.

Conference

ALT-C 2009: 'In dreams begins responsibility': choices, evidence, and change

8 – 10 September 2009, University of Manchester, UK

Keynote speakers will include **Michael Wesch**, Assistant Professor of Cultural Anthropology at Kansas State University, USA and **Terry Anderson**, Professor and Canada Research Chair in Distance Education at Athabasca University, Canada.

Proposals for inclusion in the programme will be accepted between 1 December 2008 and 16 February 2009; bookings will open in early May.

Presenters booking deadline: 29 June 2009

Earlybird booking deadline: 6 July 2009

Bookings close: 14 August 2009

www.alt.ac.uk/altc2009

Workshops

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

(repeat due to popular demand)

Thursday, 27 November 2008

National College for School Leadership (NCSL), Nottingham

Presenters: **Jeff Haywood**, Vice Principal Knowledge Management, Chief Information Officer and Librarian at University of Edinburgh; **Seb Schmoller**, Chief Executive of ALT and **Mark Stiles**, Head of Learning Development and Innovation at Staffordshire University.

Booking deadline: Thursday, 13 November 2008

Costs: £150 members, £250 for non-members

www.alt.ac.uk/workshop_detail.php?e=316

Forthcoming workshop topics: **Second Life in real life** (*repeat due to popular demand*) and **Podcasting technology – planning and production**.

Dates, location and further information will be available from www.alt.ac.uk/events.php in due course.

ALT JOURNAL

A busy year at ALT-J

Frances Bell and Rhona Sharp

We took over as co-editors of the Association for Learning Technology Journal (ALT-J) in September 2007, succeeding the previous team of editors Grainne Co-nole, Martin Oliver and Jane Seale. We would like to take this opportunity to give Grainne, Martin and Jane a vote of thanks on behalf of readers, authors, reviewers and the Editorial Board. We have benefited from their generous support and advice during the handover period, and have a great opportunity to build on the many strengths they introduced at ALT-J.

Our first issue to go to press is 16(3), a Special Issue titled **Learning and Teaching in Immersive Virtual Worlds (IVWs)**, edited by Maggi Savin Baden and Robert Ward. We have 9 papers on subjects ranging from machinima, through the role of background music in IVWs, to uncanny spaces in higher education.

The call for papers for the next Special Issue 17(3), **Mobile and Contextual Learning**, edited by Agnes Kukulska-Hulme and Mike Sharples is now available at www.alt.ac.uk/documents.html, with abstracts due by 1 December, 2008 and full papers by 15 January, 2009. We look forward to receiving your submissions.



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>

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(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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