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Welcome to our regular newsletter exploring the world of ICT in education, online training and development. In the last issue (October 2007), this issue (November 2007) and the next issue (December 2007) we offer you **A potted history of technology in teaching – past, present and future.** We hope this will give you an idea of how we got from paper to pixel over the past decade or so, of what kinds of technologies are being used, and how – and we aim to make some predictions as to what might be waiting around the online corner for us.

You'll find the following sections in this newsletter:

- **A POTTED HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING – PRESENT**
- **CONFERENCES**
- **COMPANY NEWS & UPDATE**
- **UPCOMING AND NEW ONLINE COURSES**

STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS!

November & December short courses! Our very popular **Wikis** short course is running at the moment (15 – 30 November), with participants from the UK, Turkey, Venezuela, Germany, Spain and Russia. We still have some places left on our **Podcasting** short course (1-15 December), which already has participants signed up for it, also from a great range of countries – England, Wales, Greece, Switzerland, Turkey, Venezuela, India and Italy! If you'd like to join us online in December, you can find out more about the Podcasting course on our website at <http://www.theconsultants-e.com/courses/shortcourses/>

Education@EduNation seminars! We are offering a series of **free seminars and workshops** to be held every month on one of our virtual training islands in Second Life - EduNation III. Our first seminar will be held on 1 December, with Gavin Dudeney showing us some useful teaching tools which can be used with learners in Second Life. Our December seminar is already full (we have a limit of 100 participants per seminar), but we will be recording the audio from the seminar and archiving the audio and slides in the archive space on EduNation II.

If you'd like to catch our **January seminar speaker Jeremy Harmer** keep your eye on our website, or visit EduNation III in Second Life and use the automatic sign-up boards from early December (<http://tinyurl.com/3awkys>).

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A POTTED HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING – PRESENT

Introduction

These days everyone is talking about the trend away from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0, and how this has sparked a revolution in how distributed technologies are used. But what exactly is Web 2.0?

Where Web 1.0 is largely flat, static and a 'pull technology' (i.e. something that one had to actively go and engage with) Web 2.0 is characterised by 'push', with information from a variety of sources arriving on our desktops every day in the form of blog content, news feeds, podcasts and more.

The Present: Web 2.0

More than anything, Web 2.0 introduces the concept of the 'prosumer' – one who both produces and consumes and this has played a key part in technology implementation in the classroom for the past few years. Once again we are all obliged to learn a new vocabulary. Suddenly our world is full of blogs and wikis, podcasts and vodcasts, social bookmarking, social networking, folksonomies, mash-ups and citizen media!

Web 2.0 perceives the transition of the World Wide Web from a disparate collection of websites to a fully-fledged computing platform, which delivers services and applications (software programs) to end users, wherever they may be. This is resulting in a vast collection of websites and services which are more social in nature, inviting people to share what they find, what they do and what they learn in a wide variety of contexts. I have already mentioned, for example, social bookmarking, where people keep their bookmarks or favourites on a website instead of on their own computer. These bookmarks are tagged and described, and anyone also using the site can benefit from your collection of useful addresses – as you can from theirs.

Web 2.0 sites – and particularly those concerned with sharing user-made content are rapidly becoming the most-visited sites on the Net. You can now find community-driven sites in many areas, from places where people share their music tastes and discover musicians recommended by other users, to collaborative online calendars and enormous collections of images and videos all uploaded, described and made available by the users themselves.

It is accepted wisdom that 'content is king' online, but what is truly interesting about this transformation from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 is that the content is now not necessarily the product of the commercial companies, who are in a position to charge for the resources they supply, but is increasingly supplied by users for users. A cursory glance at the number of public-produced videos and images making their way on to websites and news programmes will give some ideas to how the model is changing. MySpace, a social networking site primarily used by younger web users has recently been linked to the success of pop artists The Arctic Monkeys and Lily Allen, while similar social sharing sites have been the platform for musicians such as Sandi Thorn in attracting over 100,000 listeners to her online concerts. It is this long-haired democratisation of content, and user-driven sites, which is marking the change in the way that the Internet delivers content.

These sites would seem to have a part to play in language teaching. When the consumer also becomes the producer, shared knowledge and resources will take on a greater value, allowing teachers to pick and choose what they want to use in each class and promoting greater personalisation of the teaching and learning processes. In effect, the use of social websites should encourage a more eclectic approach to teaching, and it is to be hoped that the teaching experience will be further enhanced by the teacher's ability to provide tailored practice and personalised learning opportunities for each individual, without the effort this may have involved in the pre-digital age.

Not only will this shared approach inherent to Web 2.0 enhance language teaching, but it will also have an impact on continuous professional development, with teachers creating their own personalised pages, drawing together blog feeds, video materials, essays and articles from a variety of sources into an ever-changing personal development site of their own. A site like this will constantly evolve and update to suit the teacher's developmental needs at any given point, and as such will be vastly different from more formal learning situations, and be based on 'just-in-time' solutions to particular training needs which involve a wider collection of people, all working towards shared goals. In effect, Web 2.0 may well become the biggest training institution in the world.

At the moment it's anybody's guess as to which of these applications will survive, but as their numbers increase into the thousands one thing is sure – just as a company such as Google eventually comes out as the biggest search engine in the world, only one of each type of application in the Web 2.0 world will be the eventual winner, so it is worth investigating before adopting one, particularly if your project needs some longevity. A variety of Web 2.0 tools can be found at the [All Things Web 2.0](#) website.

And so this is where we find ourselves today, in the middle of Web 2.0 with a greater variety of tools than ever before, and a variety of engaging ways in which to use them. Teachers have become more comfortable with the Net in general, and even the 'silver surfers' or more mature members of the teaching community are finally coming round to the inescapable fact that really the Net wasn't much of a flash in the pan – it's here to stay, and it's an integral part of the lives of anyone under thirty years of age – much as it should be an integral part of their education.

One thing, however, is incontestable and that is that whilst we may dither and hesitate, technology doesn't stand still and so whilst we grapple with what is available today, we must also prepare ourselves for where technology – and education – will go tomorrow.

Note: Our December Newsletter will continue with our **A potted history of technology in teaching –the future**. Remember that you can download previous Newsletters at <http://www.theconsultants-e.com/newsletter/> on these topics:

- **A Potted History of Technology in Teaching: The Past** (October 2007)
- **Information Overload** (June 2007)
- **Second Life II** (February 2007)
- **Second Life I** (November 2006)
- **Interactive Whiteboards** (June 2006)
- **Tools for teaching a language online** (January 2006)
- **ICT Skills for educators** (October 2005)
- **VLEs: Virtual Learning Environments** (May 2005)

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CONFERENCES

You'll find members of **The Consultants-E** speaking at the following upcoming conferences, and giving the following workshops:

- **British Council & IATEFL Learning Technologies SIG, Milan**
November 26 – 26, 2007
<http://www.britishcouncil.org/me-saudi-arabia-news-events-link.htm>
- **Education@EduNation, Second Life**
October 2007 – June 2008
A series of free monthly seminars and workshops on teaching and training (both in Second Life and outside), held on EduNation III in Second Life.
<http://edunation.theconsultants-e.com>
- **English UK Training Days, London**
December 4 – 6, 2007
Topics covered in each of the 3 days include: Web 2.0, Moodle, and Young Learners and Computers
http://www.englishuk.com/training/events_calendar.php
- **Study Group / Embassy Conference, Cambridge**
11 – 12 January 2008
- **British Council ICT in Primary Education Conference, Kuala Lumpur**
3 March 2008

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COMPANY NEWS & UPDATE

- **January Scholarship**
- **New Webquests on our Website**
- **New 'Moodle Smarter' Course**
- **Second Life Update**

January Scholarship

We will be offering another scholarship for our 2008 ICT in the Classroom course - please keep an eye on the **Scholarships** page on our website if you would like to apply:

<http://www.theconsultants-e.com/courses/scholarships.asp>

New Webquests

We've just updated the webquests page on our website with new quests on the following

subjects:

- Soccer: The World's Passion
- The Perfect Place to Live Competition
- Madiba (produced by scholarship winner Seiyifa Koroye from Nigeria)
- Further Education College Evaluation

You can find the webquests here: <http://www.theconsultants-e.com/webquests/>

New 'Moodle Smarter' Course

To complement our basic Moodle training course for teachers (Moodle Starter) we have added a more advanced course which delves deeper into Moodle, and looks at the more complex teaching tools Moodle has to offer. This new course (Moodle Smarter) is ideal for those people who have already taken the Starter course, or for those with some experience of Moodle or other VLEs. The course will be offered for the first time in early 2008.

Second Life Update

Apart from organising the EduCation@EduNation series of seminars we've also been engaged in building a new island on the Teen Grid for a Scottish education project called vScotEd and helping some new residents to move into premises on EduNation III.

Joining us this month are:

- EuroCALL
- LIPS (a European Union Project)
- Kaplan University

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OUR NEXT ONLINE COURSES

Short courses: Podcasting, Wikis, Second Life - December 07, January 08

10 hours over two weeks (each course).

Podcasts, wikis, and Second Life are ICT tools which are being used by increasingly numbers of teachers in the classroom – these separate short courses will teach you how to use them with your own learners! Each of these short two weeks courses looks at one ICT tool (podcasts, wikis or Second life) in depth. You will learn not only how the tool works, but how to set up projects with and for your own learners. Each course is hands-on and practical. With plenty of tutor guidance and support, you will learn to set up a project with these free Internet-based tools for your own learners. You will leave each course ready to try out the tool with your own classes. [[more...](#)]

ICT in the Classroom: 9 January – 26 March 2008

50 hours over ten weeks.

The ICT in the Classroom course looks at a range of useful technology-related skills which are immediately applicable in the classroom. You will learn about various approaches to using technology in the classroom and have the opportunity to put them into practice over the duration of the course itself. Areas covered in the course include: lesson planning for using the Internet, using chat and blogs with learners, and WebQuests. Participants will be required to produce a final ICT-based lesson to use with their own learners. [[more...](#)]

in collaboration with [Trinity College London](#)



WINNER – British Council ELTONs Award 2007



E-Moderation: A Training Course For Online Tutors: 1 – 30 March 2008

30 hours over four weeks.

This course is aimed at teachers, trainers, tutors, facilitators, lecturers and mentors from any discipline and any level of education, who are interested in developing the skills necessary to become an effective e-moderator in online courses. [[more...](#)]

Moodle Starter: learn how to use Moodle: 9 January – 12 March 2008

40 hours over eight weeks.

This course is aimed at teachers, trainers, tutors, facilitators, lecturers and mentors from any discipline and any level of education, who are interested in learning how to set up and use Moodle to offer online courses. The course is run entirely online, in Moodle itself. [[more...](#)]

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That's it for this edition. We hope you've enjoyed the newsletter and would be happy to hear any comments or feedback from you, or any suggestions for topics you'd like to see in future newsletters.

**November, 2007
The Consultants-E Team**

