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WED: Learning Acitivity Selector: a visual aid and tool for staff (Kiran Gawali)

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Kiran Gawali
18 January 2016

This presentation will cover the workshop in which there will be a demo of the Learning activity selector, a multimodal resource constructed in Articulate Storyline. The project falls under the theme of implementation and will be included as part of a wider project in which the aim is to revamp some of a Dentistry School's Post Graduate Programmes . The institution desires and have committed to these changes through strategic goals. Bearing in mind Salmon points on the need to communicate the reasons and benefits change can bring (2008), creating resources and staff workshops can be tricky. The teaching methods incorporating a student centeredness, openness and increased use of technology enhanced learning is yet to be fully implemented. It is thought that a chance of success is increased by using Learning Design as the method to achieve these wider attempts. Learning Design is defined by Conole (as cited in Mor, 2012):

 'A methodology for enabling teachers/designers to make more informed decisions in how they go about designing learning activities and interventions, which is pedagogically informed and makes effective use of appropriate resources and technologies. This includes the design of resources and individual learning activities right up to curriculum-level design. A key principle is to help make the design process more explicit and shareable. Learning design as an area of research and development includes both gathering empirical evidence to understand the design process, as well as the development of a range of Learning Design resource, tools and activities.'

Beetham (2014) and Mor (2012) both argue for a close collaboration and visualisation of the learning design. The learning activity selector has to bespoke for this Dental School. However it may be useful to others in the industry and so by sharing in Open Studio, the OU conference, on the blog I hope it may inspire other institutions as well.

The resource also attempts to take the visualisation a step further and ease 'non academics' with low interest in pedagogy in its literal sense, to gain some understanding of the pedagogical approaches they are using. By providing some underlying pedagogical frameworks it is hoped that the gap between design and learning identified by many in the field of learning technology and learning design (Mor, 2012), is narrowed.

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Chris Gray
9:36am 22 January 2016 Permalink

Kiran

I haven't used Articulate before so will be interested in how intuitive you have found it to achieve your objective. Are you able to share the Salmon (2008) reference please?

I've found, as I'm sure many others have, that pitching learning material at the right level for the intended audience can prove quite challenging due to people's requirements and expectations. Another challenge is the available resources, especially time, to create the content in the first instance.

You mention about 'close collaboration' in the learning design; do you have any guidance on a 'typical' (if there is such a thing) timescale for designing and delivering a learning resource. I did read somewhere that for one-hour of good online learning material it may typically take 30 - 40 hours of design, review and implementation, but can't remember where I saw this.

I'm looking forward to hearing about the process you have undertaken in your project to pick up tips for implementing myself.

Anna Orridge
3:50pm 26 January 2016 Permalink

Hi Kiran,

I've used Articulate to create learning objects in my previous job. I found that it was particularly good for individual study, but did not work quite so well for encouraging collaborative learning. Do you feel this is true?

What was it about Articulate that appealed to you or your organisation in particular. Was it the potential for customisation and the many interactive options?

Anna

[Kiran Gawali](#)
9:11am 27 January 2016 [Permalink](#)

Dear Chris,

I will try to share any useful insights and keep your questions in mind when presenting. I have added the references I used for my abstract/poster. As you pointed out already, 'typical' timeframes does not apply when designing and delivering resources. However just to illustrate with an example it took me a working week(approx 40hrs) to produce a resource that it took an author around 40 hours to write. Study time allocated for students using this resource is 5 hours. It would be good to find that research you had seen , please share if you come across it again.

[Kiran Gawali](#)
9:16am 27 January 2016 [Permalink](#)

Hi Anna,

Once the new modules have been implemented , we will be looking very closley at student interaction however at this stage I am not in a position to comment so much on the effect of Articulate.

Yes Articulate fitted some tencincal requirements (SCORM) but also gave me an option to work with current content as most lecturers have produced a powerpoint already it supports the tranisition to Storyline and makes sense not to start from scratch but repackage the content as part of the updates.

[Lesley Hamilton](#)
10:56pm 8 February 2016 [Permalink](#)

Hi Kiran,

I'm Interested is seeing your 'learning design tool'. I'm trying to do something similar but with a specific focus on how video can be used in learning and teaching. Instead of a technology first approach, I believe the emphasis should be on the underpinning pedagogy and learning design. Lets decide the method then we can decide on the best medium in which to achieve the learning goal.

I'm an Adobe Captivate user – but recently got a licence for Storyline. So I'm also interested in hearing about your experience of learning to build a fully interactive resource using Storyoine. How steep is the learning curve learning curve for Storyline?

I agree with Anna in that Articulate Storyline and Adobe Captivate based e-learning resources are individualistic although through branching you can to a degree personalise the resource and one student's learning journey can be quite different from another. Hyerlinking can extend the resource to VLE activities such as Forums.

Kiran Gawali
5:45am 17 February 2016 Permalink

Hi Lesley,

I absolutley agree on focusing on the pedagocial aspects first. But what do you do with staff with no teaching background and very little time. The Learning Activity Selector will I hope illustrate what it means to design something in a linear didactic in instructive fashion and something using a more collaborative approach.

Any software we will work with will have it's limitations. The reason I chose Storyline was that it's interface is based on Power Point and the learning curve should not be too steep. It is also SCORM compliant. I have found it easy to work with but haven't fully utlised all features I think. So I will be using the Articulate community to check more examples of what can be done.

Yes I think bracnhing, scenarios and 'simulations' are the parts that excite me most too. You can also use the Resources tab avaiable in Storyline to link to external websites or back to the VLE and a Notes to provide further guidance or transcripts of audio.

Dr Simon Ball
6:04pm 17 February 2016 Permalink

Hi Kiran

Here is a summary of the questions/comments from your presentation - please respond as you wish:

- Would you agree that Moodle is very unwieldy when it comes to incorporating interactivity? Because this is my experience.
- It seems that it is very important for management to support teachers when it comes to TEL. It's not something that ppl can power from below.
- Learning technologists are vital, but they're often very thinly spread.
- We are working on improving interactivity in Moodle. It is possible but you need someone who really knows how to develop it and train staff.
- Moodle is solid as a base platform with plenty of functionality, but is limited in deploying more interacive features - although these can be built onto a complementary platform.
- When I used it, you more or less had to learn basic programming language to have a hope. Our learning technologists tended to encourage us to use alternative platforms like Articulate, and embed activities.
- Do your staff receive training in these tools and methods?
- The current issue of JIME is about learning design (http://www-jime.open.ac.uk/) - free to access andpublished by an IET team but the authors of this issue are international
- I do like Moodle (just upgraded to v3) but found it's the initiative of the trainer to develop modules rather than organsiational policy to forward think and embrace technology

- 30 Authors! That must be quite some effort to co-ordinate! Is that mostly done online?
- Writing for VLE is v much a new skill for (most) academics (IET excepted). Do you find this a big hurdle with your authors? How do you overcome this? (Being a student was my favourite technique for explaining how good/poor VLE writing impacts students)
- Pleased to see a separate learning analytics project looking at students interactions and achievement

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[Kiran Gawali](#)

5:13pm 24 February 2016 (*Edited 8:11pm 24 February 2016*) [Permalink](#)

Hello everyone,

I found the conference a really rewarding experience and I learnt so much from you all. Thank you for your comments and questions.Below is my attempt to answer them one at a time.

> Would you agree that Moodle is very unwieldy when it comes to incorporating interactivity? Because this is my experience.

Yes it is not a complete solution but still a good starting point I would argue. It's strength comes from the community that develop various plugins. However the forums are not always so active. Compared with using other VLE systems that try to meet all requirements I found that they may be more graphically appealing but can't meet e.g. accessibility needs and slow in responding to individual institutions.

- It seems that it is very important for management to support teachers when it comes to TEL. It's not something that ppl can power from below.

Yes to a certain extent. However equally important to bring about a cultural change is finding your ' champions' . When staff see other good examples of TEL they are inspired or compelled to contribute.
- Learning technologists are vital, but they're often very thinly spread.

Thanks for recognising this :-) Some of my fellow collegues are supporting whole institutions on their own. If all students are now 'digital' as Beetham expressed in the conference(2015), it really makes no sense but that is the reality of things. .
- We are working on improving interactivity in Moodle. It is possible but you need someone who really knows how to develop it and train staff.
- Moodle is solid as a base platform with plenty of functionality, but is limited in deploying more interacive features - although these can be built onto a complementary platform.

We may be refering to Interactivity differentley here. There is that basic mourse interactvity requiring clicks. Personally the features allowing collaboration like wiki, blog, forums do fulfil my ideas on interactivity (students interacting to produce content) to some extent. So agree with above comment , it's a solid platform to start with and how you use complementary features can be very bespoke to the students and staff needs.

> ⯈ When I used it, you more or less had to learn basic programming language to have a hope. Our learning technologists tended to encourage us to use alternative platforms like Articulate, and embed activities.

Whilst teaching staff are definitely not required to code I do think the settings for the various features is rather cryptic and 'code' like. Thanks for sharing that others also discovered Articulate useful.I would not call it a platform though, it's known as an authoring tool.

> ⯈ Do your staff receive training in these tools and methods?

Yes and no. So far we have Moodle training and TEL showcases. Guidance and test spaces also exist for staff to use in their own time. My workshop is an attempt to close the gaps we have found and to ensure this particular project is implemented correctly.

> ⯈ The current issue of JIME is about learning design (http://www-jime.open.ac.uk/) - free to access andpublished by an IET team but the authors of this issue are international

Very useful thank you! :)

> ⯈ I do like Moodle (just upgraded to v3) but found it's the initiative of the trainer to develop modules rather than organsiational policy to forward think and embrace technology

Ha Moodle again is dividing opinions. Well I certainly see that as my role as a learning technologist, to support staff in creating engaging modules. So I try to work closely with teaching staff as much as possible. New TEL strategy on higher level has given me more 'clout'.

> ⯈ 30 Authors! That must be quite some effort to co-ordinate! Is that mostly done online?

Yes , its a bit daunting. I use a combination of things , Office 365 (Ondedrive, Outlook, Skype for business) Webex and Doodle is my new best friend.

> ⯈ Writing for VLE is v much a new skill for (most) academics (IET excepted). Do you find this a big hurdle with your authors? How do you overcome this? (Being a student was my favourite technique for explaining how good/poor VLE writing impacts students)

It depends on the author and academic.There is definatley a lack of understanding in how online learning can be experienced. I have relied on my experience from being an distance learner with other institutions , OU and MOOCs. We provide some guidance on general 'web writing.' Again I hope my workshop will demonstrate to authors why the writing needs to be different. However I am still experimenting and these are the first new modules being written in this way so agree this needs to be tackled better by me. Thanks.

> ⯈ Pleased to see a separate learning analytics project looking at students interactions and achievement

Yes I agree. So much work is going into this it is important to analyse what the changes will impact.

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