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Social Media in the Classroom

In this book, we will explore the value of using social media in the classroom. Social media encourages high engagement from students, motivating them, which results in learning at a higher level. The social web provides educators with tools that allow for the creation of online communities, as an extension of the classroom, in order to share resources. Students learn to collaborate with others, presenting more opportunities for peer learning. Using social media applications in the classroom gives teachers an opportunity to model and teach digital ethics and digital citizenship. Students have anytime and anywhere access to social media that can become an extension of the classroom. Further, competency in managing social media will give students a competitive advantage in the real world by learning to create and control their own brand. It is an avenue to true technology integration, as technology becomes a tool to enhance learning.

Popular sites such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter are already widely used by most students. Therefore, it is an easy process to transfer those skills to the classroom. Using platforms that students are already comfortable using encourages them to use social media to create their own personal learning networks.

Social media can give students a competitive advantage. The business community has discovered social media as a way to communicate and connect with customers. Companies extend offers and discounts to customers and potential customers who 'Like' them on Facebook. For many companies, social media provides an avenue for listening to customers' needs and wants and further build brand loyalty. Therefore, students who understand social media and how to use it effectively will have an advantage as they become part of the business community.

This book explores ways to incorporate social media in the classroom. Each topic will include an introduction, examples of ways to use the application in the classroom, suggested sites for educational use, and instructions on how to use major sites to support social media in the classroom.

About the Book

This book is intended to introduce teachers and students to social networking and ways to incorporate it into the daily curriculum.

- This book covers a wide range of social applications.
- It serves as an introduction to social networking applications.
- Included are suggested uses for classroom use for each application.
- There are suggested sites for each application.
- It includes instructions for how to get started using specific applications.
- It covers most popular applications.

About the Author

Charlotte Haley has an MAT and an MBA from Texas Woman's University. Currently, she is the Technology Coordinator and a teacher at Gold-Burg I.S.D. For the last seven years she has been a convention presenter. Nationally she has presented at ISTE, ACTE, NBEA, TCEA, TBTEA and TCEC, and at state conventions in Utah, Oklahoma and Virginia. She has conducted professional development workshops in Alaska and Texas. During this time, she has written and/or co-authored 15 project-based lesson plan books published by Visions Technology in Education.

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Blogging

Introduction to Blogging

A blog is a combination of the word ‘web’ and ‘log’ shortened to ‘blog’. A blog is an online journal similar to a diary. Blogging allows for discussion through posting and user comments. Microblogging is similar but accomplished with fewer characters and words. For more on microblogging, see the dedicated section in this book. Blogs are usually created and modified by one person but can have multiple contributors. Blogs become a social tool when others contribute by commenting.

Teachers use blogs to inform students and parents about assignments and school events as well as engaging students and parents in classroom activities. Videos, presentations and other files can be added to the blog. Blogs engage students, who use them to connect, collaborate, create and discuss ideas and projects along with reflecting on learning.

There are many benefits of blogs in the classroom.

- The ease of use.
- It encourages effective communication – particularly microblogging as students must learn to communicate in fewer words.
- Through journaling, students are reading and writing.
- Students learn collaboration skills.
- There are opportunities to discuss and thus review class information.
- Peer learning is taking place.
- Blogs provide an opportunity for parents to see student work and open the conversation for further learning at home.
- Blogs provide the opportunity for teachers to model and teach digital ethics and digital citizenship.
- Templates are available to make blog account creation easy.
- Digital images, text, audio, videos, calendars, etc. can be added to a blog.
- Teachers can post lecture notes.
- Teachers can post links to websites and documents or articles.
- Blogging can be helpful for ESL learners.
- Blogs encourage reluctant students to participate.
- Students have anytime, anywhere access.

Social Photo Sharing – Sites

Teachers should create an account and make sure it fits the needs of the class before allowing students to participate as each website is different. Many of these sites have a profit motive and sell prints. Flickr is very popular and allows users to store and tag photos and then share links with other users.

Website	Web Address	Cost	Benefits
DropShots	http://www.dropshots.com/	Free	Web-based
eSnips	http://www.esnips.com/	Free	Download
Flickr	http://www.flickr.com/	Free	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Web-based 2. Monthly upload limits 3. Mobile app
Fotki	http://www.fotki.com/us/en/	Free	Web-based
Photobucket	http://photobucket.com/	Basic Free – Pro costs per yr.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Web-based 2. Photos and videos 3. Create photo mashups 4. Mobile apps 5. Photo editing
Picasa Web albums	http://picasa.google.com	Free	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Download 2. Peer-to-peer sharing 3. 1 GB limit
Piictu	http://piictu.com/	Free	Download
Shutterfly	http://www.shutterfly.com/	Free	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Download 2. Share photos by sending link 3. Purpose of site is to sell prints, etc. 4. Create a site for secure sharing 5. Website tips for digital photography
Snapfish	http://www.snapfish.com/snapfish/	Free	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Web-based 2. Share by links 3. Share through Facebook 4. Account required for viewing shared photos 5. Unlimited storage 6. Online photo editing tools
Windows Live Photos	http://explore.live.com/windows-live-photo-gallery	Free	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Download 2. Share online 3. Editing tools