TL Infobits

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About INFOBITS

Infobits is an electronic service of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ITS Teaching and Learning division. Each month the ITS-TL's Information Resources Consultant monitors and selects from a number of information and instructional technology sources that come to her attention and provides brief notes for electronic dissemination to educators.

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IS EMAIL NOW ONLY FOR "OLD PEOPLE"?

According to an article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (vol. 53, issue 7, p. A27, October 6, 2006), "College officials around the country find that a growing number of students are missing important messages about deadlines, class cancellations, and events sent to them by e-mail because, well, the messages are sent to them by e-mail." The article cites research reported in a 2005 Pew Internet & American Life Project called "Teens and Technology," which found that while college students still used email to communicate with their professors, they preferred to use instant messaging, text messaging, and services such as MySpace to interact with their peers.

The *Chronicle* article is available online at http://chronicle.com/free/v53/i07/07a02701.htm.

The complete Pew report is available at no cost online at http://www.pewinternet.org/report_display.asp?
r=162.

The Pew Internet & American Life Project "produces reports that explore the impact of the Internet on families, communities, work and home, daily life, education, health care, and civic and political life. The Project aims to be an authoritative source on the evolution of the Internet through collection of data and analysis of real-world developments as they affect the virtual world." For more information and other reports, see http://www.pewinternet.org/index.asp.

The Chronicle of Higher Education [ISSN 0009-5982] is published weekly by The Chronicle of Higher Education, Inc., 1255 Twenty-third Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037 USA; tel: 202-466-1000; fax: 202-452-1033; Web: http://chronicle.com/.

MORE FUN AND GAMES

Continuing last month's topic on using games in learning environments (*TL Infobits*, August 2006 http://its.unc.edu/tl/infobits/bitaug06.php#2), more can be read in the October 2006 issue of *ITALICS* (vol. 5, issue 3, http://www.ics.heacademy.ac.uk/italics/vol5iss3.htm). Papers include:

"Innovations in Learning and Teaching Approaches using Game Technologies -- Can 'The Movies' Teach How to Make a Movie?"

By Ryan Flynn and Nigel Newbutt

"Using A Virtual World For Transferable Skills in Gaming Education" By M. Hobbs, E. Brown, and M. Gordon

"Providing the Skills Required for Innovative Mobile Game Development Using Industry/Academic Partnerships"

By Reuben Edwards and Paul Coulton

ITALICS, Innovation in Teaching And Learning in Information and Computer Science [ISSN 1473-7507] is an electronic journal published by the Higher Education Academy Subject Centre for Information and Computer Sciences (ICS) to provide a "vehicle for members of the ICS communities to disseminate best practice and research on learning and teaching within the subject disciplines." Current and past issues are available at http://www.ics.heacademy.ac.uk/italics/index.htm. For more information about the ICS, see http://www.ics.heacademy.ac.uk/.

See also:

"Living a Second Life"

The Economist, September 28, 2006

http://www.economist.com/business/PrinterFriendly.cfm?story_id=7963538

The article describes how Second Life, a virtual world environment, is being used as an educational tool.

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF ONLINE LEARNING

"The ultimate question for educational research is how to optimize instructional designs and technology to maximize learning opportunities and achievements in both online and face-to-face environments." Karl L. Smart and James J. Cappel studied two undergraduate courses -- an elective course and a required course -- that incorporated online modules into traditional classes. Their research of students' impressions and satisfaction with the online portions of the classes revealed mixed results:

- -- "participants in the elective course rated use of the learning modules slightly positive while students in the required course rated them slightly negative"
- -- "while students identified the use of simulation as the leading strength of the online units, it was also the second most commonly mentioned problem of these units"
- -- "students simply did not feel that the amount of time it took to complete the modules was worth what was gained"

The complete paper, "Students' Perceptions of Online Learning: A Comparative Study" (*Journal of Information Technology Education*, vol. 5, 2006, pp. 201-19), is available online at http://jite.org/documents/Vol5/v5p201-219Smart54.pdf.

Current and back issues of the *Journal of Information Technology Education (JITE)* [ISSN 1539-3585 (online) 1547-9714 (print)] are available free of charge at http://jite.org/. The peer-reviewed journal is published annually by the Informing Science Institute. For more information contact: Informing Science Institute, 131 Brookhill Court, Santa Rosa, California 95409 USA; tel: 707-531-4925; fax: 480-247-5724; Web: http://informingscience.org/.

PAPERS ON INTERNET CENSORSHIP

The theme for the September 2006 issue of *First Monday* (vol. 11, no. 9), is "Who Supports Internet Censorship?" Some of the papers of interest to higher education faculty include:

"Publishing Cooperatives: An Alternative for Non-Profit Publishers" By Raym Crow http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue11_9/crow/index.html

"Publishing cooperatives can provide a scaleable publishing model that aligns with the values of the academy while providing a practical financial framework capable of sustaining society publishing programs."

"A Privacy Paradox: Social Networking in the United States"
By Susan B. Barnes
http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue11_9/barnes/index.html

"Teenagers will freely give up personal information to join social networks on the Internet. Afterwards, they are surprised when their parents read their journals. Communities are outraged by the personal information posted by young people online and colleges keep track of student activities on and off campus."

"Puppy Smoothies: Improving the Reliability of Open, Collaborative Wikis" By Tom Cross http://www.firstmondav.org/issues/issue11 9/cross/index.html#c6

"In spite of its problems, Wikipedia is an enormously important information resource, used by a community of millions of people all over the world. I believe the popularity of Wikipedia stems from the fact that it fills an important niche in the constellation of information resources that was previously unserved. Improvements to this technology can have a positive impact on how these millions of users think and collaborate."

First Monday [ISSN 1396-0466] is an online, peer-reviewed journal whose aim is to publish original articles about the Internet and the global information infrastructure. It is published in cooperation with the University Library, University of Illinois at Chicago. For more information, contact: First Monday, c/o Edward Valauskas, Chief Editor, PO Box 87636, Chicago IL 60680-0636 USA; email: ejv@uic.edu; Web: http://firstmonday.dk/.

NEW TAKE ON PEER REVIEW OF SCHOLARLY PAPERS

The Public Library of Science will launch its first open peer-reviewed journal called PLoS ONE which will focus on papers in science and medicine. Papers in PLoS ONE will not undergo rigorous peer review before publication. Any manuscripts that is deemed to be a "valuable contribution to the scientific literature" can be posted online, beginning the process of community review. Authors are charged a fee for publication; however, fees may be waived in some instances. For more information see

http://www.plosone.org/.

For an article on this venture, see:
"Web Journals Threaten Peer-Review System"

By Alicia Chang

Yahoo! News, October 1, 2006

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20061001/ap_on_sc/peer_review_science

RECOMMENDED READING

"Recommended Reading" lists items that have been recommended to me or that *Infobits* readers have found particularly interesting and/or useful, including books, articles, and websites published by Infobits subscribers. Send your recommendations to kotlas@email.unc.edu for possible inclusion in this column.

"State of the Art Smart Spaces: Application Models and Software Infrastructure" By Ramesh Singh, Preeti Bhargava, and Samta Kain *Ubiquity*, volume 7, issue 37 (September 26, 2006 - October 2, 2006) http://www.acm.org/ubiquity/views/v7i37_smart.html

Abstract:

"Smart spaces are ordinary environments equipped with visual and audio sensing systems, pervasive devices, sensors, and networks that can perceive and react to people, sense ongoing human activities and respond to them. Their ubiquity is evident by the fact that various state of the art smart spaces have been incorporated in all situations of our life. These smart space elements require middleware, standards and interfacing technologies to manage complex interactions between them. Here, we present an overview of the technologies integrated to build Smart Spaces, review the various scenarios in which Smart Spaces have been incorporated by researchers, highlight the requirements of software infrastructure for programming and networking them, and mention the contemporary frameworks for interaction with them."

INFOBITS RSS FEED

To set up an RSS feed for Infobits, get the code at http://lists.unc.edu/read/rss?forum=infobits.

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