Title of Session: Web 2.0 Tools for Education
Moderator: Jeff Cooper
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Room: Web 2 Tools Group

JeffC: So... let's start with brief introductions and we'll get started.

JeffC: If you could write a couple sentences about yourself, what you'd like here today, and indeed (in especially Kathy and Emily's case) if you have something of interest that you'd like to share, just let me know.

BJB2: I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania and a helpdesk volunteer for Tapped In.

EmilyW: I am Emily, on helpdesk at TappedIn, and I have been playing around with web 2.0 tools for the past 2 years

KathySc: Kathy Schrock, Administrator for Technology, Nauset Public Schools, Orleans MA...and have been looking at a lot of Web 2.0 apps in preparation for an upcoming presentation.

KarenL: I'm Karen Lemmons, library media specialist in Detroit. Hi Kathy! I saw you at NECC!

KarenL: Awesome PSAs!!!

KathySc: Shucks...thanks!

KarenL: I am saddened to say that I haven't played around with web2.0 tools. . .

JeffC: cool

EmilyW: Karen, what brings you to this session?

JeffC: That's ok Karen. I'm actually going to start with something from the good old Web 1.0.

KathySc: Jeff, was Andy Carvin supposed to talk about his recent Web 2.0 presentation here tonight?

KarenL: I want to learn more about any and all web 2.0 tools.

JeffC: I'm old school on the Net, having started with a Unix shell connection and no windows... I multitasked with a telnet client called Tinyfugue, which allowed multiple connections all on one screen (this is pre-windows).

JeffC: The first site I'd like to share actually will give you a brief glimpse at 17 tools (some are already outdated).

JeffC: http://snurl.com/collaboration

JeffC: The first thing for you to note is the "snurl.com" domain. It's a redirecting site that allows users to register (free) and edit their redirects to something manageable.

JeffC: The site that this links to is a Trackstar page I created some time ago, with 15 sites.

JeffC: Although I'm a little blurry on what differentiates Web 1 from Web 2.0... I feel that one of the major pluses to Trackstar is the ability to collaborate.

EmilyW: and Jeff brings up a very good point

JeffC: One of my mottos is "When I was a kid, it was called cheating, now it's called collaborating."

EmilyW: an advantage to all these web2.0 tools is to collaborate with each other

JeffC: So... on that Trackstar page, you'll see 15 sites that deal with collaboration... number 1 of course is Tapped In (yeah... I'm prejudiced).

EmilyW: I don't know if any of these links are web2.0

JeffC: Now... I haven't edited that site yet, but one of the sites I need to take down is Myschoolonline, which is an excellent site for teachers to build template driven class pages... unfortunately... I recently learned they're going out of business next year.

JeffC: Which raises one important point: What do you do when you start relying on one site, and that site then disappears? For example, what would we all do here if Tapped In ceased to be?

KarenL: I remember doing something on myschoolonline a few years ago. I didn't keep up with it.

KarenL: Oh, I don't even want to think about it.

JeffC: I'll pause now and let people look at that page, make comments on the sites I raised there, as well as discuss the question I just asked.

EmilyW: I don't either

EmilyW: that's a good point

KarenL: However, Jeff, you ask a good question. I'm thinking.

EmilyW: I can explain an experience, well short-term experience when applications are not working

JeffC: go for it Emily

EmilyW: one web2.0 tool is del.icio.us

EmilyW: which I can explain more in a few minutes

EmilyW: actually I can start with that now

KathySc: Jeff, Andy Carvin has a great presentation that people should look at later that really delves into Web 2.0 in the education field. I have studied it in depth, and only disagree with the Wikipedia stuff. It can be found here. Do you want me to go over a very few key points?

KathySc: http://www.andycarvin.com/archives/2006/07/embracing_web_20_in.html

EmilyW: well nevermind, I might have to go, so I'll explain real quick

EmilyW: del.icio.us was down for one day

EmilyW: I used that to keep all my bookmarks

EmilyW: it was really hard to live without that site for a day

EmilyW: and I remember having a session here

EmilyW: where we were told to share some sites

EmilyW: and I couldn't get to my education links because the site was down with everything I saved

JeffC: ok... let's cover a couple things....

EmilyW: that's my quick story

JeffC: first... about delicious... then we'll move on to Kathy's points re: Andy.

KarenL: Emily, I had a similar experience with Backflip.

JeffC: I have always used Mybookmarks and Backflip (as a backup).

JeffC: Only recently did I start using Delicious.

JeffC: One *major* problem I have with Delicious is that all bookmarks that are imported default to being private.

JeffC: on my Mybookmarks site http://www.mybookmarks.com/public/coops I have over 2000 educational links.

JeffC: When I imported them into delicious, I couldn't make them public except one at a time.

KarenL: thanks, Jeff. You must have read my mind!!!

JeffC: When I wrote to them, they replied that they're working on allowing that, but the reason they don't is because of spam sites.

JeffC: This is a case of the few bad driving the majority good.

JeffC: Until delicious reconciles that fact... and indeed this becomes a much larger issue (for another time I'm sure)... the Net continues to be run on a foundation of paranoia, especially at the K-12 level.

JeffC: I'd like to hear your thoughts on this... we can spend a few minutes... then I did have one other major site to share, and want to hand the floor over to Kathy for the remainder of the session.

EmilyW: gotta go bye

EmilyW left the room (signed off).

KathySc: I am happy that I am the one in the district that is in "charge" of making sure the paranoia does not impact teaching and learning...

KarenL: I think the United States is running on paranoia, and thus impacts almost everything we do.

KathySc: It's all about teaching kids what is right and appropriate and help teachers design assignments that keep them on task.

KathySc: The kids on task, not the teachers!

KarenL: You are fortunate, Kathy. I'm not that fortunate. I can only recommend software, and then it has to go through some serious screening.

JeffC: I would hope that Kathy would have clout in her district. I've followed your site for a number of years now. But the unfortunate truth is that most districts really clamp down on virtually anything that might be even considered remotely objectionable or controversial... and it has a tremendous chilling effect on transforming curriculum through technology, let alone integrating tech with curriculum.

KarenL: Incredible.

JeffC: As I said though... this raises a huge ball of wax that is best discussed at another time.

KarenL: True. . .I was interested in implementing an online book discussion with my students.

JeffC: Because we're all preaching to the choir here... we all face what Kathy correctly points out as a nation of paranoids.

KathySc: We do filter, but I shopped around for a LONG time until I found a filter teachers could unlock at the desktop level if something they needed or students needed was blocked.

KarenL: No was my answer. I won't even ask about blogging. . .

KathySc: Well, blogs are a prime example of a Web 2.0 app!

JeffC: What filter do you use Kathy, and did you find a good way to give teachers a quick way to unblock for students?

KathySc: We use a small device call a SonicWall and the teachers simply type in the URL of the router and they use a common UN and PW, and the filter is unblocked on that machine for 30 minutes or until they close the browser.

KathySc: It's very simple.

JeffC: sounds great

KarenL wishes it was that simple in her school district.

JeffC: my district is enmeshed with Dans Guardian and they still don't have any way for teachers to unblock a site except to send an email requesting a specific site to be unblocked...

SusanR . o O (Sorry, I am just lurking here, Jeff. I have company here as a result I am unable to actively participate.)

KathySc: Kathy's mantra: "It's all about the students."

JeffC: that's ok Susan

JeffC: exactly Kathy

KathySc: Show us your other site, Jeff.

JeffC: ok... you probably have seen this one: http://snipurl.com/TechWebBlog

KarenL: Kathy, I believe that and I know many of my colleagues believe that, too. The school district, sad to say, does not believe that. . .

JeffC: that is not my snip btw... it's been done before.

KathySc: Great starting point...I used it when I first started, too!

JeffC: My hope was at this site, which lists a number of award winners of Web 2.0 sites, that we could investigate a few and come back and discuss. But I don't think I want to spend that much time on it.

JeffC: This is why I would like to hand the virtual ball over into your court Kathy, and ask that you take over the group for the last half hour.

KathySc: (Okay...guess you know I have trouble keeping my "mouth" shut everywhere I go, eh?) It actually gives me a chance to try out the presentation parts that I am giving in Australia in a month...

KimballH joined the room.

JeffC: That sounds great Kathy.

BJB2: hi, Kimball. Welcome

KathySc: I am going to cut-and-paste from the notes on my PPT slides...

KimballH: Hi

JeffC: sounds good... unless you want us to look at an online presentation somewhere.

KathySc: Not online yet...

KathySc: The discussion of Web 2.0 (Read/Write Web) is best understood when comparing it to Web 1.0 (Read Web).

KathySc: Web 1.0 is the Web we have known and loved since 1993– it is made up of static Web pages the user visits to get information, search engines that the user utilizes to find information, and the random "surfing" on the information superhighway and hope for some serendipitous discovery.

KathySc: Web 2.0, in the simplest sense, has a few separate parts– Web 2.0 applications are Web-only applications, the information is served automatically to the user by the use of new technologies such as RSS, and the user has the ability to interact with, and add to, online information.

KathySc: (Okay so far? Any questions?)

JeffC: nope

JeffC: I mean... yup, nope.

KathySc: Comparison of Web 1.0 and 2.0 app: Netscape vs. Google; Hotmail vs. YahooMail, Ofoto vs. Flickr; mp3.com vs. Napster; Personal web sites vs. Blogger; MapQuest vs. Google Maps

KarenL: Got it. Need to know more about RSS

KathySc: What really separates it is that it is possible to combine data from various sources, even sources that you don't own control or even exist, and turn that into data that people can use.

KathySc: For example, an idea for a Web 2.0 site might be to combine a Flickr tagged gallery of restaurants with actual reviews that people have written about those restaurants and a connection to Google Maps to find the restaurants in your area. The Web site which put this up might not have any of the data for the reviews, none of the photos from Flickr, and only an interface to allow people to pinpoint where they are or where they are going and either read reviews of local restaurants or even post a blogged review and attach it to those already tagged.

KathySc: I will get to RSS in a moment...the above idea was not mine: http://webdesign.about.com/od/web20/a/aa021306.htm

JeffC: one change I'd suggest: hotmail vs. gmail

KathySc: Yes, that would work now, too...thanks!

KathySc: Technical jargon geek-speak alert...

JeffC . o O (we're all family here)

KathySc: Before we move on, I just want to make sure everyone is on the same page for some of the acronyms associated with Web 2.0.

KathySc: RSS stands for Really Simple syndication and it is a family of Web feed file formats, specified in XML, and used for Web syndication. Web feeds provide Web content or summaries of content with links to the full version of the content in the form of an XML file which also contains data.

KathySc: AJAX stands for Asynchronous JavaScript and XML, and is a Web development technique for creating interactive Web applications and exchanges only small bits of data with the server, so the page does not have to be reloaded each time the user makes a change.

JeffC: yup... it's all geek to me.

KathySc: Okay, off of the presentation for a minute and I will try to explain it.

SusanR listens

KathySc: When you create a blog, for example, you can register with an automated service (one such is Feedburner) which will know every time you update the blog.

KathySc: They give you a RSS feed address (mine is http://feeds.feedburner.com/**KathySc**hrock) which, if you go to it with a browser, looks geeky.

KathySc: However, if you use an aggregator (the two Web-based ones I like are Bloglines.com and Netvibes.com) when you put that Feedburner address in the aggregator, you are presented with titles of new posts which you click on and either go right to the blog or see it within the aggregator.

JeffC uses Bloglines, but since I don't blog much, I haven't used Feedburner.

KathySc: So, if you "subscribe" to a blog (and they all usually have chicklets on them that say RSS, Bloglines, etc.) every time the info changes, you can see it in your aggregator.

KathySc: Now, there is another interesting feature called tagging which is very helpful, too.

JeffC: oh... btw... Kathy's link is: http://feeds.feedburner.com/**KathySc**hrock (sans ending parenthesis).

KathySc: The current Blogger.com does not provide for tagging, but the new version will, but many of the other blogging sites provide tagging fields...

KathySc: So, at NECC, we were asked to tag any blog entry or Flickr (online photos) with the tag "NECC06". Anyone can then go to http://technorati.com/ and drop-down the menu to search for a tag and type NECC06 and you will get all of the pics and blog entries from the conference.

KathySc: So, one of the cool things about Web 2.0 is that people can create a hunk of information all from disparate sources, and you can be presented with it all at once...very powerful.

JeffC: Kathy... let me pause and ask you a question. I follow you, and buy what you're saying, but how do you feel this presentation would be received by the rank and file educator?

KathySc: The rest of the presentation talks about 2 or 3 Web 2.0 apps in each of these categories...

KathySc: To allow educators to:

KathySc: to find each other and mentors for help and support

KathySc: to be able to join groups and collaborate with others

KathySc: to be able to access, share, and contribute to lists of resources

KathySc: to allow easy access to information

KathySc: to be able to conference both in real time and asynchronously

KathySc: and to be able to allow users to reflect on the use of the information in their position

JeffC . o O (sounds like TI to me!)

KathySc: I went through hundreds of apps with an eye on the prize...ease of use and applicability to the support of teaching and learning. (TI?)

JeffC: How many applications are you talking about Kathy? TI= Tapped In

KathySc: Oh, I did not think you meant the calculator!

KathySc: You can see the list of the ones I chose here: http://**KathySc**hrock.net/web20/

JeffC: Well... looking at your list, that's one of the reason I'm a TI evangelist... I think all of that is possible here.

JeffC: Which is what brings me back to my original question... how will rank and file educators respond to these tools? If they are hit with a list... do you think they'll feel overwhelmed?

KathySc: I don't consider TI a Web 2.0 app...it is about real-time collaboration and sharing, which is more meaningful since there is give and take.

KathySc: That is that TI is about the real-time collaboration and sharing...

JeffC: nope

KathySc: Nope?

JeffC: TI isn't just synchronous.

JeffC: We have threaded Discussions, File sharing, etc.

JeffC: There are over 700 groups here, professional development groups, university and K-12 classes.

KathySc: I know that, but, IMHO, it is the real-time that makes this much more valuable than any other space.

KathySc: And real-time with like users that care about teaching and learning...not the whole world!

JeffC: Well... indeed, most professors who use TI use it only for chat, and never get beyond that.

KarenL: that's unfortunate.

KathySc: Not just chat, but the valuable events like this one that you put on.

KathySc: Just IMHO...

KathySc: Okay, back to Web 2.0

JeffC: Right... but the beauty of TI is that there are hundreds of groups at one site with one platform where you can collaborate... indeed, I set up my daughter's class last year here, and didn't use chat at all. The students ended up collaborating with another 2nd grade class, created powerpoint presentations based on sites I linked them to, etc.

KarenL: that is cool. . .

JeffC is done defending TI for now... awaits more from Kathy.

KathySc: However, in Web 2.0 they could work on the presentations together in the same space with a saving of each version so that each class could see the changes the others made (all versions) and then accept or move ahead. (See the difference? Not better, just different.)

KathySc: I don't mean separate files..think (shudder) Wikipedia. (Not my favorite site...at all!)

JeffC: Well... true.... like http://www.thinkfree.com ...I see your difference.

JeffC: Wouldn't you consider Wikipedia to be 2.0?

KathySc: Right...or writely.com (at Google). Try that one if you get a chance.

JeffC has used writely.

KathySc: Wikis are Web 2.0 apps in the purest sense. I like the wiki software...do not like Wikipedia.

KathySc: Wikis are powerful collaborative spaces for students. (http://www.wikispaces.com/)

KathySc: Teachers have to see how these tools can help them help students. Just giving them a list or a Web page of links can be overwhelming.

KathySc: I am thinking of sending out one a week to my teachers and giving them ideas on how it can be used to support teaching and learning and letting them experiment. None of them are hard to use.

KathySc: Okay, my fingers are tired. Did this clear anything up or confuse the issue more?

JeffC: I like your site, and am seeing new Web 2.0 tools I haven't used before.

JeffC: I'd like to spend the last minute on Wikipedia.

KathySc: I will be giving this presentation at FETC, too.

KathySc: Go ahead on Wikipedia..

JeffC: Personally, I prefer it over a site like Encyclopedia Britannica or World Book. Because it is created by *anyone*... educators know to start with a caveat about the site, i.e. "don't treat everything here as gospel." It's a starting point for further exploration, rather than a site like EB or WB where many students simply copy/paste into Powerpoint and teachers think that by doing that they are integrating tech with curricula.

JeffC: Wikipedia almost ensures that students will explore further and maximizes higher order thinking skills.

DavidWe: One would hope so, Jeff

KathySc: You really don't want to get me started on this. I disagree so much with all of that....(Kathy's claws come out.) This is an in-person discussion though. I cannot express my passion in type..sorry.

DavidWe: Please express your passion, Kathy

BJB2 thinks Kathy's passion comes through quite well!

DavidWe: We're nothing if not passionate about things here

JeffC: go for it Kathy, I can take it.

DavidWe: Jeff has teflon and kevlar on

JeffC: btw... Kathy will be glad to hear that Wikipedia is banned in my district.

DavidWe . o O (Beaverton, Oregon team is in the semi-finals of the Little League World Series)

JeffC: yup!

KathySc: I can't this late at night after a long day (and at an emotional low since I bring my only child to college tomorrow. It will have to wait to another night!

BJB2: perhaps this should be a discussion for a future web 2.0 tools?

DavidWe: Oh, my

KathySc: No, an information literacy discussion.

JeffC: I'm willing to go toe to toe with Kathy over Wikipedia next month (or whenever suits Kathy).

KathySc: I will get the library media specialists here en masse (sp?)

DavidWe smiles

JeffC: hmmm... that means I'll have to scrounge up a few profs on my side as well.

DavidWe smiles

BJB2: Kathy, if you would like to lead your own discussion I'd be happy to schedule that. email me when you have time

JeffC: Well... that wraps up another exciting episode of "As the Web 2.0 Turns" ... please turn in next month to see how it ends... or starts!

BJB2: bjb@tappedin.org

KathySc: Okay, gotta run. Thanks for letting me talk about Web 2.0. Night all!

BJB2: Thanks, Jeff, for filling in for Lynne

JeffC: Thanks a lot Kathy for coming and sharing.

DavidWe: Yes, Kathy. Thanks

BJB2 waves goodnight

KathySc: U R welcome!