

**Title of Session:** SIGTC - Wiki: Unleashed

**Moderator:** Karen Connaghan

**Guest Speaker:** R. Thor Prichard

**Title of File:** 20060925sigtewiki

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Room: SIGTC Group

**KarenConna:** Tonight's topic is the new SIGTC Knowledge Wiki...

**KarenConna:** SIGTC has been very fortunate linking with Thor Prichard who has been a wonderful in helping SIGTC learn how to use a Wiki

**DavidWe** smiles

**KarenConna:** Tonight's speaker is Thor Prichard...

**KarenConna:** President and CEO of Clarity Innovations

**KarenConna:** Thor's area of expertise is in helping transform educational processes

**KarenConna:** and of course, wiki is just one of many Web 2.0 tools...

**KarenConna:** that have the potential to transform the way students learn.

**KarenConna:** Let's start with introductions from our guests. I'll go first

**KarenConna:** I'm Karen Connaghan, President Elect of SIGTC. I live in the Philadelphia PA area and am an educational technology consultant for an Intermediate Unit.

**LoriBu:** I'm Lori Burch, an instructional tech specialist in upstate, western NY (between Rochester and Buffalo along Lake Ontario)

**BJB2:** I'm a communications teacher in Pennsylvania and on Tapped In helpdesk

**JeffC:** I'm on Helpdesk here, in Forest Grove Oregon and will be afk and lurking through this session.

**KarenConna:** Any other introductions before we start?

**ElaineGa:** sure

**ElaineGa:** I am my own consulting business, TLT Consulting

**ElaineGa:** and from Amherst MA

**MichelleLM:** I'm a middle school math teacher is So Cal returning to work on Tech-Math Masters

**ElaineGa:** my major gig is as MAT Program director

**ElaineGa:** at the Marlboro College Graduate Center, VT

**DavidWe:** I'm David Weksler. I am one of the Help Desk volunteers and I lead a math education and technology discussion in Tapped In - I'm in New Jersey, near New York City

**JenniferJo:** I'm Jennifer Jones, Web Programmer at ISTE. I'm checking out the tools available to our SIGs. I'm in Eugene, Oregon.

**KarenConna:** Ok, Thanks for the introductions. I'll now turn over the virtual podium to Thor

**ThorP:** Righto. Welcome folks.

**ThorP:** First things first... a group activity! Everyone bring up a browser window and go to the SIGTC Knowledge Wiki: <http://sigtc.ciservers.net/>

**ThorP:** Most/some may have been here before, but before diving in, I want ya'll to click on the "Learn More..." link about tonight's program.

**SusanR:** K to 3+ OT (Occasional Teacher) from Ottawa, Ontario

**KarenConna:** keep an eye on this chat window so we can "stay" together

**ThorP:** And if anyone gets lost, just shout out and I'll copy and paste a URL to catch up.

**ThorP:** Alrighty, if you've clicked on the "Learn More" link in the upcoming events list, you'll see a page about tonight's program and in the middle of that page, a big link that says, "Take this Survey!"

**KarenConna:** If you don't see the link...let us know

**ThorP:** It's a quick survey of 20 questions about emerging technologies, Web 2.0, etc. to gauge everyone's level of familiarity with these things. After completing the two questions, it'll show you the results of the whole group.

**KarenConna:** Let us know when you're finished with the survey by a show of "done"

**ThorP:** I'll wait here to give folks a chance to go through the survey. (Thanks Karen!)

**MichelleLM:** "done"

**ElaineGa** done

**KarenConna:** done

**ThorP:** some good data being collected! If you clicked away from the survey results, here's the URL to see them again:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/Report.asp?U=229936067684>

**BillCon:** done

**LoriBu:** done

**KarenConna:** Nice way to incorporate the survey into the wiki!

**ElaineGa:** actually I like that too

**ThorP:** soon, with some more tweaks, the survey will show results on the wiki too... all in good time...

**ThorP:** meanwhile, taking a look at the results and I can see some good trends/patterns, and will use this to shape how I'll approach our topic tonight.

**ElaineGa:** again, nice way to find out where your audience is as part of your presentation

**ThorP:** anyway, looking at the data, anyone want to call out some trends they see in the data?

**ThorP:** (I'm happy to, but hey, this is about interactivity, right?) :D

**JenniferJo:** As I'm not an educator, I chose the middle option on all the choices for the second question.

**LoriBu:** Yes, I think I'm going to use a similar idea with some tech study groups I work with. Thanks for the idea

**ElaineGa:** no one consider him/herself a guru

**ElaineGa:** much higher rate of familiarity with tools than actual competence-not surprising though

**ThorP:** yup. bingo.

**ElaineGa:** highest % of "sure do" for the first question

**ElaineGa:** were for blogger

**ElaineGa:** wikipedia

**LoriBu:** part of that might be the role we are in also. I don't have students of my own, so I have to convince teachers to "play with me"

**ElaineGa:** moodle

**ElaineGa:** flickr

**ThorP:** it's positive to note, that with this group, the integration question is much higher than other audiences I've used this with.

**ElaineGa:** google maps

**ThorP:** Which tells me you're all what they call "innovators", "thought leaders" and folks that generally "get it".

**ElaineGa:** and RSS

**ThorP:** This is good.

**ElaineGa:** but those highest % change to the "Huh" column

**ThorP:** and, given our topic is about wikis, I'm going to focus on what they mean to education and frame my thoughts around instructional uses, strategies, etc...

**ElaineGa:** for many of the tools when it comes to

**ElaineGa:** actual use

**ThorP:** Yes, exactly, Elaine. This is one of the biggest challenges we face in educational technology.

**BillCon:** Blogging is at a tipping point

**MelodieG:** Have you already asked about how many are educators and at what level?

**ThorP:** It's easy to find the next Bright Shiny Object™, but it's a whole another story to put it into meaningful use.

**ElaineGa:** I think blogging as already tipped

**KarenConna:** Melodie, we've already made introductions, please feel free to introduce yourself

**ElaineGa:** because it is now getting so much spam

**BillCon:** Almost has to be accepted by curriculum admins

**MelodieG:** Sorry. I'm the tech coordinator for a private K-8 elementary school - about 295 students. I also teach 8th grade algebra

**ThorP:** <chuckle> Yeah, that's an interesting point... They used to say consumer technology trends would be come mainstream if they were offered in alternative colors... now it's whether or not the technology can be spammed.

**ThorP:** so, given these results, let's dig into what wikis mean for education and use the SIGTC knowledge wiki as our guide.

**KarenConna** rubs her hands together excitedly

**ElaineGa** waits with anticipation

**ThorP:** the SIGTC knowledge wiki was created to make it easier for us to share, publish, our content.

**ThorP:** The fundamental nature of wikis is that every page is a canvas and that anyone is an artist.

**ThorP:** And that means, sometimes, like art, beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

**LoriBu** smiles

**ThorP:** The SIGTC Knowledge wiki is just getting started, but the concept is the same as the grandmother of all wikis, Wikipedia.

**KarenConna** . o O ( collective, shared knowledge building )

**ThorP:** Wikipedia's engine (the software that makes it work) is the same that is powering the SIGTC Knowledge Wiki: MediaWiki.

**ThorP:** MediaWiki is like many of the popular tools out there: open source, free, and flexible for a wide range of uses.

**KarenConna** . o O ( Thor's company is graciously hosting the site as a service to the SIGTC community )

**ThorP:** The reason wikis are different than regular web pages is that anyone (and I really do mean anyone) can edit a page.

**ElaineGa** geeze, thanks Thor

**BillCon:** What binds the artist in the wiki together in your opinion

**BillCon:** ie gets them focused

**ThorP:** Ah, yes... That's slowly changing... the Writer's block of wikis is an issue... but in the last year has been an emergence of "structured writing" as applied to tools. So instead of just a blank slate, folks get pre-formatted writing prompts or content suggestions, which they can then edit as necessary.

**ThorP:** We'll show one of those shortly.

**ThorP:** For example, everyone go to [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Educational\\_technology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Educational_technology)

**ThorP:** Have it loaded in a window?

**LoriBu:** yup

**ElaineGa:** yup

**MichelleLM:** yes

**ThorP:** how many got a blank page?

**ThorP** smiles

**LoriBu:** not me

**ThorP:** For those that didn't get a blank page, try refreshing your browser. For those that did, you've just witnessed a little "booboo" I made.

**KarenConna** raises hand

**ThorP:** yes?

**MichelleLM:** do you want us to have a blank page? refreshing still doesn't give blank...

**KarenConna:** Lori, type the addy in and it will probably work

**ThorP:** Or, you might be on a web proxy server.

**ThorP:** in which case, the demo won't work necessarily.

**ElaineGa:** I'm confused

**ElaineGa:** should we have blank page?

**ThorP:** <chuckle> Sorry, the "vandibot" caught it.

**ThorP:** Let's try that again, shall we... just a moment.

**BJB2:** [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Educational\\_technology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Educational_technology)

**ThorP:** (thanks for pasting the link again BJ)

**ThorP:** Okay, instead of my more blunt approach of deleting all content (which was reverted quickly by the automated attendant at Wikipedia to prevent wiki abuse), I've edited the article to add a fake paragraph at the bottom. In the table of contents, there's a new subsection entitled, "Example".

**ThorP:** Okay, whew. So, as you can see, I've edited Wikipedia's article about Educational Technology. Obviously, the edit is not exactly helpful, but this page, like 95% of the entire encyclopedia, is open to anyone (logged in or not) to editing.

**MelodieG:** Which seems like it can be a good and a bad thing.

**ThorP:** This is the fundamental trait of wikis... that anyone can contribute their expertise, in however fashion of organizing their contribution.

**ThorP:** Yes, exactly.

**LoriBu:** I know it blew your demo point, but I'm heartened to see how fast it was being corrected when you tried to mess it up!

**ElaineGa:** that would be a good idea for me to do

**ElaineGa:** when I teach about wikis

**ThorP:** The freedom can be abused. Certain topics, generally those in the national media, or are highly controversial, are restricted from general public edits.

**ElaineGa:** thanks Thor

**ElaineGa:** I work with many public school teachers

**ThorP:** yes, Lori! And, if I did it a few more times, Wikipedia would freeze my account. They are very proactive about keeping spammers, vandals at bay.

**ElaineGa:** who are afraid of the abuse that some of their

**KarenConna:** wikis are wonderful tools to teach about both democracy and freedom of speech and responsibility

**ElaineGa:** students would levy on such a collaboration tool

**ElaineGa:** particularly given the oversight of school boards

**ThorP:** ah, well, here's where it gets interesting. What makes wiki's special is their ability to discretely and automatically track every edit, every change, to each article.

**ThorP:** If you're still on the Educational Technology article, click on the history tab at the top.

**MelodieG:** Does it also associate an "author" with those changes?

**ThorP:** Yup. And IP address. And Date/Time. And what other changes that user made. And pulls your credit report, etc... (Okay, just kidding about that last part.)

**KarenConna** chuckles

**ThorP:** Clicking on the history tab shows you the last 50 edits to this page and everything you'd want to know about them.

**ThorP:** It's more than most of us want to read or follow, which is why you can watch certain pages for edits instead of looking at the history every time to police problems.

**MelodieG:** I know this isn't part of the demo, but how are guys getting in the "side" comments, without the blue name first?

**LoriBu:** Thor, where it doesn't give a person's user name, does that mean they edited without logging in?

**MelodieG:** just gray like "**KarenConna** chuckles"

**ThorP:** That's the text summary of the edit made by that individual. Wikipedia appreciates/encourages you to comment on your edits.

**ThorP:** yes, exactly Lori. Instead, it gives their IP address.

**KarenConna:** Melodie, I type a colon and then the action

**MelodieG:** Oops - sorry for the confusing, I'm talking about in the chat window not the wiki



**ThorP:** <chuckle> no worries.

**ThorP:** okay, refresh the history page again and you'll see I've made another edit to this page.

**ThorP:** (and this time I annotated my comments.)

**ThorP:** And, in a moment, we'll switch over to SIGTC's wiki and start creating our own pages...)

**ThorP:** the last thing I wanted to show here is how the history feature also tracks the changes (much like Microsoft Word does).

**ThorP:** If you've reloaded the page, and see the last two edits by me, they each have a radio button selected. Go ahead and click the "Compare selected versions" button to see the differences between the current page and the previous edition.

**MelodieG:** Am I the only one that doesn't seem to be getting a refresh to show the latest edit?

**KarenConna:** Mine are showing Melodie. Try holding down the control key and pressing the refresh button

**ThorP:** Or the shift key... or with one foot off the ground... I'm never sure about the right key sequence on any of the browsers on either platform...

**MelodieG:** That worked - thanks.

**ThorP:** alright, if you've clicked the compare button, you'll now see two columns, color coded, to show the differences in text.

**DavidWe . o O** ( you need to FORCE the refresh )

**MelodieG:** That was a new one to me - same browser I've always used...

**ThorP:** For classroom use, this can be pretty nice...

**MelodieG:** That really is nifty!

**LoriBu:** very cool

**MelodieG:** It has a way to "scroll" back through comparisons without having to go back to the history page!

**LoriBu:** do the little + s mean that was something that you added?

**ThorP:** imagine a group work project, where groups of three collaborate on writing a paper. Without some real finesse and effort, it's hard to know who wrote what sections, did what edits, etc. Now, if they composed on a wiki instead, they could each contribute, edit, and share, and you could have a record tracking each contribution, how much was contributed (did they just fix grammar or contribute an idea?), and all you did was click the "compare" button. :D

**MelodieG:** That is extremely useful!

**ThorP:** Yes, you'll see minuses and pluses to show which parts were deleted or added...

**LoriBu:** cool

**ThorP:** unfortunately, my edit was too complex for it, but I'll make another edit...

**ThorP:** okay, if you want to see my newest change, click the history tab again, (force a refresh if needed), and now click compare. You'll see that the individual words I changed are now highlighted...

**ThorP:** make sense? anyone need me to go over something before moving on? I'm happy to clarify or show another example.

**ThorP:** or are ya'll ready for more?

**MelodieG:** ready for more

**ElaineGa** more more

**KarenConna:** ready

**LoriBu:** ready

**ThorP:** Okay, let's bring everyone back to the SIGTC Knowledge Wiki, our own little sandbox.

**ThorP:** <http://sigtc.ciservers.net>

**ThorP:** First off, a few items of orientation...

**KarenConna** listens

**ThorP:** This is a customized wiki page where we've highlighted a few things I wish wikipedia made more obvious. For instance, in the side bar, there's a section called "Wiki Reference". Those two links are your best friends.

**ElaineGa:** that's a nice idea

**ThorP:** The tutorial is the best/easiest way to get oriented to how to edit/format links. We're going to refer to it often as you create your own page in the next few minutes here.

**MelodieG:** All of these wiki pages very much have the feel of Moodle. Are they both based on similar programming?

**ThorP:** oohh, that's a great question where I'd love to go on and on about.... but I'll spare you the details for now. They are related only by the programming language used in common: PHP.

**ThorP:** Second, if you scroll down a bit, there's a section of the page, pretty much in the middle, that is our own little homemade "make me a new page" feature.

**MelodieG:** okeydoke

**ThorP:** Last, you'll notice on the very bottom, two lists: New Articles and Updated Articles.

**ThorP:** Both of these are automatically generated by the software (but needed me to put them on the home page so anyone could see them).

**MelodieG** guess I'm showing my age and origin

**ThorP:** Earlier on, I think it was Bill that asked about how to organize the blank canvas. Well, I must admit, I borrowed a good idea from Wikipedia's home page and made a very simple table to organize the content.

**ThorP:** If you poke around later, and tinker with the wikipedia formatting syntax, you'll see how (relatively) easy it is to structure the content.

**ThorP:** So, to dig in, let's all create our own pages, shall we?

**DavidWe** wonders about the reasons for structuring the content

**LoriBu:** okay

**ThorP:** Ignoring the instructions listed for now, simply fill out your name (or tappedin username for example) in the box, and click go.

**MelodieG:** done

**KarenConna:** done

**ThorP:** And what you'll get is a very blank page. At the top though, you'll see a link, "Edit". Click it and I'll give you some quick orientation tips.

**LoriBu:** done

**MelodieG:** done

**KarenConna:** done

**ThorP:** So here is a page. If you don't have some content to use, I suggest opening a browser to <http://www.lipsum.com/> and using the generator to make up some placeholder text.

**ThorP:** or, just type whatever comes to mind.

**ThorP:** If you want to follow along with what I'm doing on a new page, open another browser window to <http://sigtc.ciservers.net/wiki/index.php/ThorP>

**MelodieG:** I finding all kinds of new resources tonight

**DavidWe:** That's a great comment, Melodie

**KarenConna** . o O ( ahh the value of SIGTC "live" events )

**DavidWe:** Indeed

**ThorP:** You may remember earlier on I mentioned your two best friends in the side bar... Well, now's the time to open a new browser window (hold down control on PC, command on a mac) and bring up that tutorial.

**ElaineGa:** ok

**LoriBu:** opened in the same window, but that's okay. Saved my page first

**ThorP:** You'll see in the tutorial, (section 1. Editing)

**ThorP:** or, err... try section 2. Formatting, for the parts about how to format.

**ThorP:** You'll see in the tutorial, (section 1. Editing)

**ThorP:** doh...

**LoriBu:** thanks Melodie

**ThorP:** interesting... don't use the up arrow folks, it' looses your eloquent prose.

**ElaineGa:** why can't I see where the others have created their pages?

**ThorP:** ah, just a sec, and you will.

**ElaineGa:** am I the only one who created her page on the home page

**ThorP:** oh, you might be, and that's okay too. there should be a web form near the middle, and by filling out your name and hitting 'go', it should create a page. The other way works as well (and is how most do it without this little time saver).

**ThorP:** so, wiki formatting is using a very simplified markup, much like WordStar, or AppleWorks on the old Iie... ah those were the days!

**ElaineGa:** yeah. I saw that, but it looked like that was for NECC

**ThorP:** (oh, it might still be labeled that way, but feel free to use it...)

**MelodieG:** okay - I saved a very simple page

**MelodieG:** I assume we can delete these pages as soon as we're finished this exercise?

**ThorP:** so, learning the wiki markup can be a bit of a pain, but the best part is, if you like how something else is formatted on the wiki, in most cases you can edit the page yourself to see its code.

**KarenConna:** The new pages are showing in the What's new section

**ThorP:** good eyes, Karen! Elaine, getting back to your earlier question, yes... all the pages being created are being archived by the software (mediawiki) and listed in the "new pages" section at the bottom of the main page.

**ElaineGa** says oohhhhhhhh, got it!

**ThorP:** now, the next exercise is to go click on one or two others, and add a sentence or two to their page. Don't worry about what to say, as if they (or someone else) wants to, they can go in and improve upon it again. It's about everyone helping everyone else.

**ThorP:** (bad grammar, thor, in these live chats... oy vay...)

**ThorP** smiles

**ThorP:** As you edit and save your changes, then those pages that are updated, then get listed in the updated articles list.

**ThorP:** likewise, the history file is automatically updated and the original author (or any of use too) can go and look at what changes we each made.

**ThorP:** now, you might bump into each other and create an editing conflict. no worries. that's just mediawiki asking to make sure it knows who's edits should be applied?

**KarenConna:** We are overtime tonight and should wrap up....

**ThorP:** the best part is, you can copy what edits you made below, hit the edit button again at the top, and try again... in most cases that resolves it.

**ThorP:** oh, whoops. I kinda lost track of the time.

**KarenConna:** As you can see, the SIGTC Knoweldge wiki will be wonderful tool for sharing...

**LoriBu** thinks about how time flies when you are really engaged!

**SusanR** . o O ( part 2 )

**SusanR:** ??

**KarenConna:** Thor, any closing remarks?

**MichelleLM** joined the room.

**MelodieG:** Thanks for doing this. Can we continue to use this site to practice in the days ahead?

**KarenConna:** Melodie yes....

**LoriBu:** Are there any expectations/guidelines for the kinds of things that we should or shouldn't add to this wiki?

**KarenConna:** I encourage all of you to join ISTE and choose SIGTC as your SIG...

**MelodieG:** Awesome - in all my free time

**KarenConna:** We will be communicating with the SIGTC list members of ISTE with hints and tips on how to...

**ThorP:** Yeah, certainly! There's not much to say as a wrap up, other than to explore, tinker, and don't worry about breaking/deleting anything.

**ThorP** smiles

**ElaineGa** thanks for the presentation.

**ThorP:** the history feature makes it easy to roll back.

**KarenConna:** get involved in building this knowledge wiki

**ThorP:** absolutely.

**KarenConna:** there's a link on in the SIGTC office of Tapped In

**KarenConna:** Also there is a link to Clarity Innovations -- check out their great work

**ThorP:** Last thing to think about is structured blogging, like this template:

**ThorP:** Use this template

**ThorP:** doh.

**SusanR:** o O ( great for building a course of study )

**KarenConna:** Yes, everyone is welcome to continue using the SIGTC Knoweldge Wiki

**ThorP:** [http://sigtc.ciservers.net/wiki/index.php/Capturing\\_notes\\_with\\_a\\_wiki](http://sigtc.ciservers.net/wiki/index.php/Capturing_notes_with_a_wiki)

**ThorP:** This is an example of how to use it for capturing notes in a class.

**ElaineGa:** I like the template idea a lot

**ThorP:** Thanks again folks.

**ThorP:** This was fun, and my fingers are tired.

**KarenConna:** thank you Thor

**LoriBu:** Thanks so much, Thor!

**KarenConna:** you guidance and ideas are so very valuable to all of us

**DavidWe:** Thanks, Thor

**ElaineGa:** Many thanks

**SusanR:** Thank you ever so much!!

**MelodieG:** yes - thanks all

**MichelleLM:** You all have great energy. Thank you

**LoriBu:** You've helped to expand my knowledge as well as giving me ideas for how to teach this to others

**ThorP:** thanks, Karen, for organizing these!

**ElaineGa:** I have used a mediawiki site in one of my courses

**ThorP:** <chuckle>

**ElaineGa:** but never did figure out how to upload images

**KarenConna:** Melodie...

**DavidWe** smiles

**ThorP:** exactly.

**ThorP** smiles

**ThorP:** David, if you haven't already, I definitely recommend checking out how mediawiki can be used for formatting math equations. Some great stuff.

**ElaineGa:** but what about uploading images?

**KarenConna:** I believe you have to create an account

**ThorP:** Elaine, your question about images... yes.. in the sidebar, you'll find a link for "upload image".

**ThorP:** errr... upload file (which it's assuming means an image)

**KarenConna:** thor, I'll be in touch via email. Thanks for your time tonight and sharing your knowledge

**ThorP:** Yeah, next time, let's stream some audio and video.

**KarenConna:** How about some skypecasting Thor? Have you done any?

**KarenConna:** bye