

Title of Session: Next Vista for Learning - Getting NextVista Certified

Moderator: Rushton Hurley

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RushtonH: BJ, I think what I'll be covering could be appealing as a Tapped In topic, so I look forward to your thoughts.

RushtonH: Let's get started.

RushtonH: Y'all ready?

BJB2 nods

MidgeF: Did you make any contact with the TeacherTube guys?

TerryMcp joined the room.

RushtonH: Not yet - time issue.

RushtonH: Welcome Terry!

TerryMcp: Hey

RushtonH: You significantly increased the number of participants!

MidgeF: That's funny

BJB2 waves hi to Terry

RushtonH: Everyone, please introduce yourselves.

TerryMcp: Hi Bj. Sorry. Been on the road.

MidgeF: Oh, no..the introductions.

BJB2: I teach remedial communication in Pennsylvania

BJB2 nods to Terry

MidgeF: I am a writer, genealogist and teacher educator in Massachusetts

TerryMcp: I provide technical assistance to & evaluate alt. ed program in Oklahoma and provide professional dev to teachers

RushtonH: Good deal! My name is Rushton Hurley, and I teach Japanese language and video production. I also run the nonprofit Next Vista for Learning (<http://nextvista.org>), which is working to help students and teachers around the globe. Please let others know about our site and its resources!

RushtonH: So you know, from time to time I'll ask for a response to see how we're moving along; that way if I lose almost everyone to reruns or similar, I can better focus on the one or two I didn't put to sleep!

RushtonH: I'm guessing most of you are familiar with NextVista.org, but I'll do a quick review to fill in any gaps you may have.

RushtonH: Next Vista is a young public charity focused on building a free, online library of video resources. It has three collections:

BJB2 listens

RushtonH: The first is Light Bulbs, which gathers academic presentations. These are introductions to topics by students and teachers. We believe they are another avenue for exploring what students learn, useful for students having difficulty, for teachers looking for ideas, and for parents wanting to help their children with their studies.

RushtonH: The second is Global Views, which we want to fill with descriptions of life and activities in schools and communities around the world. We think that if you are learning about some other part of the world and have the chance to see a person from there introduce it, the study will become more alive for you.

RushtonH: The third is Seeing Service, with profiles of those who in a big or small way make life better for others. One goal is to inspire young people to see the joy and meaning that comes from giving of one's time to improve one's community.

RushtonH: Have all of you seen the site before? (please type yes or no)

MidgeF: yes

BJB2: yes

TerryMcp: yes

RushtonH: The underlying goal of this session is to shape ideas on what it would mean for a teacher to become 'certified' by Next Vista as a Next Vista Distinguished Content Creator (DC-squared, we may call it).

RushtonH: First, the name ("Distinguished Content Creator") is tentative. Do you like it? What does it make you think of when you hear it? (We'll delve into some details in a minute, but I'm interested in your first impressions.)

RushtonH cocks his head with a quizzical look

BJB2: I like anything that recognizes participants ...especially if they are distinguished!

RushtonH: Cool.

TerryMcp: works for me

RushtonH: Does it bring forth any particular impressions?

MidgeF: Teachers like to feel special but it does imply experienced which may scare people

JeffC joined the room.

RushtonH: Hi Jeff!

BJB2 waves to Jeff

TerryMcp waves

JeffC hopes he didn't miss the exciting news.

RushtonH: The news...

RushtonH: Actually it's more of a brainstorming session on a new program we have to certify teachers as 'Distinguished Content Creators'.

RushtonH: Hopefully some TI folks will find that appealing.

RushtonH: The goal for the certification program is two-fold. One, we want to recognize teachers (and others) who create good content that helps people learn. Two, we want to provide incentives for those who can to create more content for our library.

JeffC is interested if he can get a free masters out of it.

RushtonH has that 'we're not accredited' look on his face

RushtonH: Looking at both of those, I'd like to prompt you for ideas on ways to reward content creators, and also how to make the certification meaningful.

BJB2: also might want to check with school districts to see if this award will be something that is recognized as part of prof dev

TerryMcp: Good idea, Bj

RushtonH: I do think we'll be able to tie it to PD issues.

RushtonH: We're working now to get certified by the state of California to provide PD programs, somewhat like what I do at conferences.

MidgeF: Teachers can be shy about making the videos themselves.

RushtonH: You're right - mostly because they think of themselves as having to be in the video, which isn't necessary.

TerryMcp: AND not have the tech needed

RushtonH: I find that I spend much of my time demystifying the perceived complexity of videos.

RushtonH: There's an SAT sentence.

MidgeF: Lots of talk around me about having specialists teach the tech skills like the old days

RushtonH: The initial benefit to the participating creator would be a certificate and a nice piece to add to the resume. We are further thinking about extras for especially good videos, such as funding to get more equipment, or even to have those who create the best materials gather here in California for a ceremony honoring their work.

MidgeF: Kids=video

BJB2: teach to whom, Midge?

MidgeF: Teachers=text

RushtonH: Nice point, BJ.

RushtonH: Traditional teacher video is for an audience of teachers

MidgeF: Teach skills to kids and not to teachers. I am disagreeing with some of that.

RushtonH: Next Vista stuff is for an audience of students.

RushtonH: Exactly.

RushtonH: Does that sound interesting? What other things can we add to persuade people to take their time to create videos for NextVista.org?

JeffC: Is there a grant involved with this?

TerryMcp: Tell me again.....why 5 min. segments? Attention span?

MidgeF: I think an upload tool is the next thing you need to provide

BJB2 . o O (storage, Terry)

RushtonH: I'm optimistic that a grant is much more achievable with a program in motion.

TerryMcp: Website storage?

RushtonH: I'll address Terry's question quickly, because it's a good issue.

RushtonH: File size is an issue, as is attention span, but...

RushtonH: the larger reason is pedagogical. We want people to hone a message on the core of any given topic. What is it a student should absolutely, positively know about the topic in order to move forward?

MidgeF: Teachers do tend to give out too much information at the beginning instead of letting it be discovered

RushtonH: Word. (As the kids would say.)

RushtonH: A really good video lays the groundwork for confident exploration of the topic.

MidgeF: Videos are good discussion or story starters

RushtonH: Definitely. And I want to encourage folks to try their hand at making them, so hopefully this process will help.

RushtonH: So how would one become certified as a Distinguished Content Creator? The key elements would be the quality and quantity of videos accepted for inclusion in the library. For example, the initial level could come for those who create at least five videos that meet our rules* and are identified as creative and helpful. Those who create ten or twenty such videos would qualify for the Silver and Gold designations. One thing that would not be required is some kind of payment, by the way; like the library itself, there is no cost.

TerryMcp: Most of the math video looked like specific skills.....not exploration of that skill.

MidgeF: When you present, do you ask teachers how many have ever made a video production?

RushtonH: The math videos are very specific. It's my hope that people will see them, and make more creative pieces in order to build the material laterally.

RushtonH: I do, and probably about a quarter say yes, in some fashion.

MidgeF: That's better than I expected.

MidgeF: Good

RushtonH: (*Quick recap on the rules - videos should: 1) be five minutes or shorter, 2) not contain copyrighted content, 3) be appropriate for young audiences, even if they are for college-level content, and 4) be factually accurate - no conspiracy theory, flat earth pieces, please; rolled into this last one would be proper citation where appropriate)

RushtonH: While this has some obvious benefits for teachers, it's worth remembering that students would be able to earn these distinctions, too. Students who like editing video and particularly enjoy some subject (economics, geology, or anything else) might earn a DCC certification and parlay that into a good college application or scholarship essay.

RushtonH: Thoughts? (Comments or simply a 'nope' por favor.)

BJB2 thinks

TerryMcp: thinking.....I'm slow

BJB2: where would you publish your dcc list?

RushtonH: More specifically, are there other things we should require? What was your reaction to reading the above? Do you think your school would welcome having teachers earn this distinction?

MidgeF: I think teachers would be happy assigning videos and not making them themselves (as yet)

RushtonH: We'd publish the list online.

BJB2 . o O (people like to read their names online)

RushtonH nods in agreement.

JeffC: also... will there be corresponding webpages for online resources the teacher may allude to in the video?

BJB2: what about having the NV community vote for their faves?

MidgeF wonders how Google will rank that.

RushtonH: Good thoughts!

RushtonH: We're working on a ranking system asking how useful pieces are to the viewer.

RushtonH: Also, on the page now, you can comment on the piece in blog-fashion. This can also allow a teacher to say how he or she used the piece with students.

MidgeF: My concern is the effect that YouTube is having on how teachers look at video

BJB2: positive or negative, Midge?

MidgeF: at first positive until they actually look at the videos there

RushtonH: I think that seeing better stuff, like the Potential and Kinetic Energy (maybe titled, "Baby Energy") in the science section of our Light Bulbs collection, will get folks thinking along good lines.

MidgeF: Haven't looked at how many people have viewed mine yet.

BJB2: there are a bazillion videos on youtube! Some good and some not so good

RushtonH: <http://www.nextvista.org/2006/09/10/baby-energy/>

MidgeF: That's why I like the idea of a separate area for educators.

RushtonH: Of course, with videos more focused on a student audience, keeping the mix can be instructive.

MidgeF 389 Views

RushtonH: I'll shift gears a bit.

RushtonH: Another avenue we are exploring is having schools or college departments earn content creation awards. For such, we would look for having multiple teachers involved, as well as getting content created by students that we can post.

RushtonH: Such recognition for a school might be useful in working with community supporters. I can imagine a school going to a local business to say that they want to create videos to help students locally and all over the world, and ask for funding to get camera equipment or computers to help make it happen. Businesses/Philanthropists might be even more interested in providing some help up front and promising more when a school reaches a certain level of content creation.

RushtonH: Do you think that partnerships would be possible in your community? Next Vista could provide materials to help support that effort - letters describing what we do and how very noble the effort is, as well as the valuable skills and service-oriented thinking such an effort would help develop in students. What do you think?

MidgeF: I think talking to "schools of education" might be a good hook

RushtonH: That's actually our biggest effort at the moment.

MidgeF: Pre-service teachers should learn video skills and content mix

RushtonH: I'm working to convince certification programs that making these kinds of videos is a wonderful way to help preservice teachers practice getting to the core of topics.

RushtonH: In the process, they'll create a resource that will save them time for years to come.

RushtonH: If you know someone at an ed school who is technofriendly, please share our site and my contact info.

RushtonH: So, honestly - would you have an interest in getting the certification for yourself? If so, why? If not, what kind of barrier do you see?

BJB2: Rushton, you might want to join Teaching Teachers and post to their discussion board

RushtonH: One of the TI groups, yes?

BJB2 nods

RushtonH: Will do.

BJB2 . o O (they meet right after this discussion)

RushtonH: What's the topic tonight?

MidgeF: I have to go now....good discussion..see you next moth Rushton....

RushtonH: Take care, Midge!

MidgeF left the room (signed off).

BJB2: not sure, Rushton.

RushtonH: Jeff and BJ: how could something like this be of value to TI, do you think?

BJB2: always nice to be affiliated with awards...TI doesn't normally give out awards.

BJB2 . o O (except the certificates for the festival)

RushtonH: I make a point of taking a few minutes at the end of my presentations to tell about useful resources, and I've mentioned TI a number of times.

BJB2: thanks

RushtonH: Is there something that TI has been wanting to see happen or covered, but it just hasn't happened yet?

JeffC: Well... lots of things get *started*... but it's follow through...

BJB2: storage for video would be a nice feature...kind of like a TI youtube, but with monitored content

RushtonH: What was promising that didn't sustain?

RushtonH: Could you use teachertube for that?

BJB2: yes, we probably could

JeffC: oh... I'm thinking about the myriad groups and K-12 classes I've helped start here... but then the members don't come back...

RushtonH: So the difficulty is getting people to buy into the system longer term?

JeffC: well... it's like anything... educators in particular are time cramped...

JeffC: and Tapped In isn't part of their routine... neither is shooting 5 minute videos... so... how to change that?

BJB2: neither is podcasting, but a lot of teachers are doing that

BJB2 . o O (we just hang with the wrong crowd, Jeff)

RushtonH: Fair enough. I think that ultimately it will be students and preservice teachers that create most of our content.

RushtonH: Are either of you members/aware of Classroom 2.0, the Ning group Steve Hargadon began?

BJB2: lordy, I hope so. A LOT depends on the university teachers and what they do

RushtonH nods

JeffC: yup

BJB2: I'm familiar with ning

JeffC: one more site to spend time on... I'm there.

RushtonH: The interesting thing about this one is how many heavyweights in the ed-tech field were in the initial group.

RushtonH: Will Richardson, Miguel Guhlin, Chris Sessums, and a bunch of others.

RushtonH: I don't count myself as a heavyweight, I should note. 8^)

BJB2: what I'm seeing is a lot of activity in the new toys...then something newer gets introduced and off they go to the newer toy

BJB2: where is the sustainability? the continuity?

RushtonH: I hear you. My hope is that what we build at NV will continue to be useful over time.

BJB2: here's an interesting quickie anecdote

BJB2: uni prof sends undergrad students to TI to log in 8 hours of discussions

BJB2: undergrads drive us nuts

RushtonH: I'm guessing they're not really bought into being here.

RushtonH: Is that putting it mildly?

BJB2: I write a long and carefully thought out email to the prof, trying to tread lightly so as not to offend...

RushtonH nods

BJB2: explaining that there is some scaffolding required when introducing students to TI

BJB2: prof responds that she's brought in grad students and undergrads...

BJB2: undergrads don't understand a community of learning

BJB2: so she's not going to send any more undergrads to TI!

BJB2 feels like a failure

RushtonH: Not at all - you've got successes here!

RushtonH: It may not be in the quantity you want, but it's real.

BJB2: fortunately, there are other profs who do just fine in teaching the concept of a learning community

JeffC: the prof is like a lot of profs out there who dump students here.

BJB2 . o O (just was an annoying experience...and frustrating for the discussion leaders)

JeffC: she should create at least an office for her students to use (preferably a group room)... but instead they just sat in Reception and chatted about... uh... education.

BJB2: prof had required the students to attend tours

RushtonH: Such profs would probably get more interesting feedback asking their students to try getting an education discussion going in Facebook.

BJB2: but tours don't convey the learning community need for dialogue

RushtonH: Sloppy teaching won't end at a technological door, of course.

BJB2 sighs. I would imagine this is one of the topics that will be brought up in Teaching Teachers....which is starting now

RushtonH: I'll try joining for a while to see how it goes!

BJB2: Thanks, Rushton. I hope you got some suggestions and ideas you can use for your awards

RushtonH: Always do!

BJB2 heads to Teaching Teachers

BJB2 left the room.

