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Embracing Technology in the Classroom   Manager's Choice

Anthony Sargon
Writer covering Government, Healthcare, Education, and
Commercial Tech. Movie Blogger at NOW Lebanon and Naharnet.

Digital Growth Insights Embracing Technology in the
Classroom » Digital Growth Insights
digitalgrowthinsights.com
A Digital Growth Insights post on the changes that
education technology, or edutech, is bringing to the
classroom.

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Michael Kim, Whitney Stohr like this   Jump to most recent comment

14 comments

Ben Lopez
Moodle Course Developer at Independent Contractor
I really like this article. What scares me is that just putting Tech in student hands is a start.
However, I have seen many classrooms where tech only functions as an elaborate word
processor. Teacher training is vital if this is to work.
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Anthony S. likes this

Mark Dilley
--Professional Educator
The "shiny object the other school has" phenomena has happened too often in school. The
mistakes described in Larry Cuban's "Oversold and Under Used" have not doomed the systemic
lessons they might have. Its a matter of starting with the purpose of the tool as much teaching the
balance of a staff of how to use it.
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Anthony S. likes this

Frank Sapp
Technology and Training Specialist at Touch The Future/ReBoot, Inc.
Too much technology is purchased with end of year money with no overall plan for implementation
or integration. User training is hardly ever bundled in and is rarely purchased afterwards.

I remember talking with an AT software company that followed up with a school system that had
bought a networked version of their product. They wanted to see how it was being used and
provide assistance. No body in the Administrative office knew they had the product. It was finally
found in the shrink wrapped box in a supply closet.
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Anthony S. likes this

Joel Kahn
Digital Artist
One way to investigate software without excessive wasting of money is to look at Free Software.
Look up SchoolForge and the Free Software Foundation for more info.
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Anthony S. likes this

A Cron
Instructor at PSJA North High School
Unfortunately, while I do use a lot of freeware in my class, IT directors are leary (fearful) of using
it...some has a bad reputation...

Tony
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Joel Kahn
Digital Artist
The term "freeware" is rather vague and ambiguous. Free Software is about a particular kind of
software covered under specific terms. Check out the details here:

http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/free-sw.html
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Clinton Knight
Computer Support Specialist II at University of Kentucky
True, but a lot of freeware is considered "questionable" because of who is installing it without
reading. Toolbars, add-ons, and additional software tend to come along with a useable product.
The end result down the road being lots of security loop holes and obstructed interfaces.

There are lots of great freeware and GNU licensed products that I promote but with lots of
warnings on how to install: iLivid, MyWebSearch, SearchQu, and various others are horrible
products that install themselves hidden in good products.
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Sal J. Rampelli
Corporate IT Recruiter at ATRCO.com
While free software as Moodle is impressive and works well, it does require experienced
developers, software specialists and trade expert instructional designers to install, maintain and
deliver a solid house system or cloud based. Check out http://SmartProcedures.com and you will
find that the LMS and CBT packages are ideal for ISD networks. They have been in business for
23 years and provide a turn key operation including hosting or they can install it on your system.
Support at all levels is included.
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Janet Wall
Career development professional, CDF e-learning instructor, online course developer,
trainer, teacher, author
NCDA is holding a webinar on free technology tools to help you work better, faster and
smarter.http://www.ncda.org/aws/NCDA/pt/sd/news_article/81124/_PARENT/layout_details/false
The free tools available to us are really amazing. The webinar will focus on free tools that we have
evaluated and used in our own work.
Like • Reply privately • Flag as inappropriate • 2 days ago

Clinton Knight
Computer Support Specialist II at University of Kentucky
We actually went away from Moodle, because so many of the packages and plugins are not free.
You get a very basic client that does not have the features we needed. Although, it is an excellent
pay for use product.
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Joel Kahn
Digital Artist
Here's a bit of my own experience, FWIW....

I've spent time with a couple of computers which ran into serious problems in their original MS
Windows operating systems but which improved considerably when I installed a Linux distribution.
The first machine was a desktop with WinXP; it got slower and slower until productive work
became essentially impossible. The second was a laptop with Win7 that stopped booting up
reliably and began displaying a wide variety of contradictory and confusing error messages. In
both cases, I put on each computer a Linux distro called Trisquel:

http://trisquel.info/

The overall performance of both machines improved vastly, and I had convenient access to a huge
library of Free (as in Freedom) software.

Clinton, managing any large-scale system for an organization requires that people know what
they're doing, whether we're talking Microsoft, Apple, Linux, or whatever. Do what you can to
ensure that users know the difference between "freeware" (in the loose and sometimes dangerous
sense) and GNU-licensed products specifically. Here's a starting point:

http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/categories.html
Like • Reply privately • Flag as inappropriate • 2 days ago

Frank Sapp
Technology and Training Specialist at Touch The Future/ReBoot, Inc.
@Clinton Knight - even "respected" software tries to install other software, especially toolbars and
search engines during updates. Microsoft and Adobe come to mind right away.

There's a number of good programs (free and/or open source) which are gaining in usage.
LibreOffice Writer is one. .R is becoming the preferred statistical tool for statisticians and big data
analysts. My NGO uses a number of free software programs to replace or supplement commerical
programs we use for people with disabilities.
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Justin William McCreary
Quality Specialist at JPMorgan Chase
I recently returned from a conference on this subject, and how a number of schools solution to
distracting technology is to simply ban it from the classroom since it distracts the students. He
then went on to "suggest" banning another dangerous item...the PENCIL! You can doodle with it,
poke someone with the pointy tip, write yourself some cheat notes for a test! The excuse that
technology is a distraction in the classroom is just that...an excuse. Children have always been
distracted in class, long before such advancements in technology were made. Many other
teachers asked how to compete for their students attention with such tools at their fingertips, how
do you keep the students entertained? The point of the lecture was not asking ourselves how do
we keep the students entertained, but how do we keep them engaged?
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Philip R. likes this

Mrs Stephanie L.
Specialist Educational Psychiatrist / Lead Auditor ISO 4001 Environmental Management
(ISTE®) Self Employed
It was identified major concerns with the quality of provision in the Learning and Skills sector,
especially in colleges, which are not adequately preparing young people for the world of work UK
perspective major debate:
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