

Case study

E-Mentor Project 2013

Buchan Neighbourhood House

Background

I am working at Buchan Neighbourhood House facilitating ICT skills. Evelyn Schmidt, E-champion and Co-ordinator of BNH and Junita Lyon, E-mentor invited me to participate in the E-mentor Project in late February, 2013.

Buchan Neighbourhood House provides a variety of services to the local community and is very active in connecting the community using ICT. This website has been developed by Evelyn through the E-mentor Project to for the local community. <http://buchan.vic.au/>

I am not new to e-learning and have used various e-learning methods, ranging from online games to build literacy and numeracy skills to using wikis as e-portfolios, in training since 2006.

What was done

- a. Prepared a tutorial to be uploaded to Moodle
- b. Signed up to Microsoft Lync
- c. Presented an on-line session in Blackboard Collaborate
- d. Assisted Evelyn with various tasks such as creating a flyer for the Gippsland E-mentor Road Show

NB: Details below

Benefits experienced by [organization/ teachers and learners]

a. Facebook Tutorial

Evelyn asked me to write a tutorial re: Facebook pages for other E-leaders in the project and to add this to the Moodle. The tutorial has been completed but has not been added to the Moodle as yet (I'm not entirely happy with the quality of the tutorial). When it is added to Moodle, I will seek feedback 😊. I learned how Facebook pages can be used and how to use certain features. This was achieved by researching, setting up a page, which I will delete, and by collating information.

I have experimented with uploading different file types and embedding videos and images into Moodle and have mastered the basic editing tools such as adding internal and external links but feel I need training in using the more advanced features like adding a quiz.

I experienced a problem converting a power point file to flash using iSpring and was not able to upload the file to Moodle. After failing to trouble shoot this, I uploaded the power point to Slideshare so it can be embedded into Moodle.

I have learned how to create a book in Moodle and am working on the best way to add the tutorial to a book which is easy to read and to follow. I hope to add this tutorial before the end of the project. Learning to develop training and assessment activities in Moodle will be important in reaching a larger learner group.

b. Lync Project

I had no issues downloading Lync and didn't need to use the tutorials provided. Lync allows me to communicate easily with Evelyn and Junita and to collaborate on various projects. It also allows me to communicate with other users in the project. I have installed the mobile app which allows flexibility of use. A useful feature of Lync is the ability to share your desktop and work synchronously on documents. I have experienced group sessions in Lync and noted the various tools available for communicating and presenting information. I have noticed that Lync can sync with Office Outlook but because my computer is not synced to the exchange server, cannot explore the options available in Outlook.

c. Webinar: An Introduction to Wordpress

I facilitated an online session in Blackboard Collaborate on May 20. This session was presented to seven E-leaders in the Gippsland region as part of the fortnightly webinars on Facebook and Wordpress. I was supported by Evelyn Schmidt, E-champion and Junita Lyon, E-mentor. I am familiar with BBC and was comfortable using the communication and presentation tools. I have presented small sections in BBC, previously but not 'flown solo' for an hour long session.

I prepared for this by creating a slideshow with notes and by exploring moderator privileges in BBC. The slide show covered basic skills in using Wordpress and how to generate and use HTML tables to insert images into the table to provide a uniform display. The target audience was those new to using Wordpress. I was happy with the preparation for the session and comfortable with the subject matter. I included screen shots of the various tools and functions and demonstrated inserting images into HTML tables via App sharing. I planned for interaction with the audience through polling and questioning.

On reflection, I feel I hesitated a little and did not achieve audience participation to the level I would have liked. I didn't turn on participant's profiles and I didn't open the file with the HTML code to be pasted into Wordpress which meant it took a few seconds to copy this code before I could proceed with the App share. I also underestimated the time it would take to deliver this information and chose not to present the last slide as this would have taken the session overtime by five minutes.

Presenting online is not something I feel comfortable with. I feel disconnected from the audience and realised that in a face-to-face training session/presentation how much I rely on the visual cues from the audience. However, I feel I would be confident to undertake another online presentation in the future. Practice makes perfect ☺

I received feedback and some tips on presenting online from E-Champion, Christine Dix which has been valuable in reflecting on this experience and providing advice on how to engage learners online.

Lessons learnt

- a. Planning/mapping a website is important before adding content. This improves the readability and user experience
- b. Engaging learners online requires creativity
- c. Networking has many benefits for personal development opportunities

The results

- a. Gained knowledge in the use and development of Facebook pages
- b. Developed beginner's skills in editing Moodle
- c. Experienced online communication using Lync
- d. Consolidated skills in using Blackboard Collaborate as a moderator
- e. Received valuable feedback which changed the way I would approach online training in future

Reflections and suggestions

The E-mentor Moodle provides an opportunity to network, share information and ask questions through the forums. A collection of resources to support learning is available and participants have been granted editing privileges to develop learning and assessment activities in Moodle.

I would have appreciated more training in using Moodle (recordings available for webinars indicate I have missed this because I came late to the Project). It seems to be a complex system to edit and while I am experienced in using platforms like Wordpress, Googlesites, Blogger and Wikis, I have found Moodle takes more time to learn. I will allocate more time researching the resources on the E-mentor Moodle and seek further training in developing Moodle courses to better understand the intricacies.

The weekly webinars were a valuable learning activity as they provided information on specific topics, provided an opportunity to ask questions and to network with other participants.

The recordings of these webinars have not been added to the E-mentor Moodle since November 2012. Therefore, people have been unable to review or catch-up on webinars they have missed. It would be beneficial to add these recordings as review of them can be a valuable learning activity.

I participated in the E-mentor project for a short period of time. This meant that I didn't experience all the training available but was still able to consolidate skills because of access to resources in the E-mentor Moodle and from other participants in the project. Participating in this project has allowed me to network and to see how others use ICT in their organisations and in their training activities.

I have been given access to Moodle and Microsoft Lync to learn these tools which are new to me. I have experienced valuable personal development through the project as described above and am grateful for the opportunity to participate.

Links to tools and websites

<http://ramblinkatt.com.au/ecapability/>

<http://ramblinkatt.com.au/moodle/>

<http://mslyncproject.acfe.vic.edu.au/>

<http://gippslandregion.spruz.com/>

<http://community.articulate.com/tutorials/>

<http://susan-ng.hubpages.com/hub/facebookforbeginners>

http://www.ispringsolutions.com/free_powerpoint_to_flash_converter.html?ad=adw&c=aXNwcmluZ19nZW5lcmFs&gr=aXNwcmluZ19mcmVI&qclid=CLe42ret2LcCFQhipQod_XoA3g

For more information

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