

**Electronic Mail Discussion as a
Technology Integration Resource:
In the Pursuit of a Virtual Community of
Practice**

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EDC 730-02, Fall 2002
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Introduction

Computer mediated communication has become a regular part of most teachers' professional daily routines. In a relatively short amount of time (a mere heartbeat when compared to the speed with which many other media came into regular use), email has emerged as the primary method by which administrators disseminate important information to a school's teachers, by which appointments are made and notices posted, by which educational professionals maintain a professional connection with each other and the outside world. Not surprisingly, teachers involved in on-line education have embraced computer-mediated communication as the method of choice for providing class interaction and opportunities for knowledge construction within the course context. For all teachers, an extensive network of communication existing for the sole purpose of social interaction and entertainment has also arisen, and exists sometimes superimposed on top of, or, perhaps more accurately, just beneath, the professional task-assumed discourse.

Within many of these contexts, the potential for a melding of social/personal interaction and professional discourse into an active attempt at community building through electronic discourse seems a very real possibility, a natural outgrowth of the capabilities of this medium. Unfortunately, there are few stories documenting the

successful use of such tools in creating, structuring, even encouraging teacher communities with a shared sense of identity and purpose, and even fewer studies of such potential instances. With much professional interaction now happening in an instantly archivable source of data, the motivation to try such community-building activities, and thereby, not incidentally, contribute to the closing of this research gap, has never been higher. In this paper we will examine one such activity. In the process, we hope to contribute to an expansion of the analytical approaches which might be brought to bear in assessing the success by which this activity contributes to, or reflects, a community of practice amongst teachers with a shared purpose across a school district.

The Need for Teacher Community, and the Context of Computer Mediation

A sense of professional community amongst teachers can be a pivotal part of the educational landscape. Teacher communities can reinforce negative stereotypes and poor habits, but more likely they will allow a joint development of teacher practice, and a sharing of resources and traditions (Barab, MaKinster et al. 2001; Beck and Kosnik 2001; Grossman, Wineburg et al. 2001; Hara 2001; McLaughlin and Talbert 2001). At the high school level, existing communities of practice tend to coincide with disciplines or departments, and "...how traditions of teaching play out in the classroom depends on the strength and the character of [these communities]" (McLaughlin and Talbert 2001, 64). However, it is entirely too easy to assume the existence of professional communities of practice for teachers, where there may be little that is observable of what we normally

ascribe to the phrase (Grossman, Wineburg et al. 2001). Teachers may very well want to connect to each other, but such connections do not always develop naturally, and the natural groupings present in schools – departments, grade levels, shared space, even the school itself – may not successfully create a sufficient sense of community to be useful to, and influential on, classroom practice (Carver and Neuman 1999).

Of course, the reasons for this lack of connection may be as sinister as poor preparation in preservice training for the process of teacher community, or as pedestrian as a simple lack of time or physical context for community-building interaction. It is in this context that we look to computer connectivity and text-based computer mediated communication to step forward. Although LISTSERV-style email discussion forums and other communications formats nearly span the history of computer connectivity, there are few examples of how such interaction might work with an informal connection between teachers within a district who share a commonality of purpose and responsibility across school boundaries. Barab, MaKinster, *et.al.* (2001) included the possibility of on-line forum interaction into their electronic Inquiry Learning Forum, a web-delivered entity which deliberately attempted to establish a community with a plurality of purpose – an exploration of shared interests as well as an exploration of the concept of online communication and community itself. However, of the three initiatives from this project (“Visit the classroom metaphor,” “Knowledge Creation–Management–Networking,” and “Commitment to Community”), the latter – the encouragement of a community of practice between participants - proved to be the most challenging of the goals of the project. Participation in the interactive aspects of this initiative often depended on

structured relationships, such as class requirements. The designers despaired of ever reaching the “critical mass” required to achieve the goals of community amongst veteran teachers (Barab, MaKinster et al. 2001, 92).

Threaded online discussions are a regular feature of online courses, but even within the context of structured relationships through class participation and required interaction, one cannot assume that such communication will lead towards connections associated with community. In a graduate course for inservice teachers, Merryfield (2001), discovered that “...teachers wrote about highly valuing the online technologies for creating a place for frank discussion, and then, even within the same message or on the next day, they described those same technologies as barriers that kept them from ‘knowing’ one another or having ‘real’ relationships” (p. 295). Herring (1999) notes such a dichotomy of attitude as well while examining synchronous chat and other text-based computer mediated communication. Although such media remain incredibly popular, a cursory analysis often shows little useful communication and meaningful interaction which might imply community building. One might assume that a designated topical purpose in an asynchronous environment might encourage more useful and cohesive discourse, but, as Herring further remarks, “[such forum] discussions also tend towards topic decay” (Herring 1999, 13).

There are, of course, lots of examples of the successful use of computer mediated communication in course structures (Sujo de Montes and Gonzales 2000; King 2001), but overall, the use of such media to build community within a district or school context

through a free discussion of issues and interests is extremely rare, or at least rarely examined, since there is a substantial lack of research.

The FCPS-TRT-L Discussion List

The focus of the research for this project is the email discussion list FCPS-TRT-L, a LISTSERV-style forum implemented through capability provided by Fayette County Public Schools (Lexington, Kentucky) Office of Technology. The forum consists of technology resource teachers (TRT) – both those hired by and based in schools, and those hired by the educational support arm of the Fayette County Office of Technology to float between schools. School-based Microcomputer Resource Technicians (MRT) - a position found in many elementary schools, and a few middle schools – were also included, even though MRTs are not generally certified teachers. However, because of their primary responsibility as lab managers, they often are called upon to perform instructional support duties, making their interests much the same as TRTs.

The issue of successful integration of technology into instruction is important to Fayette County, as well as the Kentucky Department of Education and its Educational Professional Standards Board, as reflected in the latter's New and Experienced Teacher Standards. In addition, Fayette County initiated a set of technology curriculum standards for students, which were passed by the School Based Decision Making councils of all district schools during the end of the previous decade. The Office of Instructional Technology is the single largest district-supplied resource for Fayette County schools and

teachers, further illustrating the commitment of the district towards the importance of technology integration into the classroom. Connecting and supporting school-based front-liners such as TRTs and MRTs was viewed as an important function of the Office of Technology.

The FCPS-TRT-L discussion list was piloted in the fall of 2002 to fill this educational technology integration support niche. Previously, this need was addressed by bi-monthly face-to-face meetings, but since participation in the meetings was sparse (many had only one or two in attendance), it was decided to try another format, and a new email discussion list capability put on line a few months before was selected. Unlike most email discussion lists, FCPS-TRT-L is a closed forum – that is, membership was pre-loaded (all TRTs and MRTs were identified and included in the membership of the list in advance), and members have to request to be added or leave the group. As the list's creator, I served as its moderator, and initiated many of the threads for discussion, although the need for that role began to drop off as the list began to develop.

Conceptual Framework for Research

One goal of the email discussion list was to attempt to establish a community of practice between educational technology integration front-liners. For the purpose of this study, “community of practice” will follow the description outlined by Wenger (1998), that is, we would expect a successful community to exhibit:

- ✓ **mutual engagement** – specifically, the ability of members of the community to interact in such a way that it displays complementary participation and provides for specialization, as an extension of practice rather than ideas or structures,
- ✓ through the reflective process of negotiation, evidence of an indigenous **joint enterprise** with mutual accountability, and
- ✓ a **shared repertoire** of actions resulting from engagement.

The result would be a community which can present and solve problems relating to its duties, to discuss policy and practice in the classroom and lab, to introduce new capabilities and examine resources, in a format that encourages collegiality and a sense of shared experience and purpose (Hunt 1999).

It was also the intent of the design of FCPS-TRT-L to have members participate in and explore the email discussion format itself, with an ultimate goal of encouraging its use directly in the classroom. In addition to this previously-mentioned purpose of the Inquiry Learning Forum (Barab, MaKinster et al. 2001), this duality of purpose matches very closely the definition of community illustrated by Grossman and Wineburg's work with Seattle English and history teachers (Grossman, Wineburg et al. 2001). In that work, another perceived benefit of such a building of community is the encouragement of instructional leadership, a further goal of FCPS-TRT-L.

Research Design

The data available for use in examining this on-line community were nine simple text files generated by the list management software, taken during the weeks between the 12th of September and the 15th of October 2002, constituting the first 8+ weeks of discourse for the list. Because of budget constraints, a free list management package was selected by Fayette County to support email discussion lists – David Harris’s Mercury Mail Transport System. This system produces raw text archives which are not in a format conducive to analysis, or even comfortable reading. Hence a simple Visual Basic routine was written to strip out extraneous header, inclusion, and formatting text, and to isolate and define important data fields (including date-time stamps and participants) for later processing (see Appendix D). The results were not as readably available and instantly useable as the on-line searchable list databases normally a part of commercial list management packages – text files had to be downloaded and converted locally – but the results were exportable to an Access2000 database, which allowed for a variety of queries and report formats not usually available on line. Even so, some direct handling of the data was still required – most notably because of configuration decisions made early on and subsequently corrected. The resultant data was then used to create two images of the interactive community of teacher participants - a collection of **gross descriptors** (time factors, number of participants, frequency of responses, length of threads, and the like), and **two threads examined as instances** which were analyzed informally in an attempt to ascertain the presence of characteristics of a community of practice through the application of Wenger’s theoretical framework.

An interest in establishing gross trends and descriptors implied the use of some broad categories for the contributions to the list. Rather than simply separating thread initiation postings from responses, postings were categorized by a somewhat more detailed assessment of function:

- ✓ Informational (not implying or requiring response, though some did),
- ✓ Question,
- ✓ Response on topic,
- ✓ Response off topic (“on” or “off” was determined through a simple matching of subject line to content), and
- ✓ Other.

This framework was an attempt to establish a structural relationship between postings and threads, and to supplement the natural time hierarchy of asynchronous interaction.

In addition to disaggregating and reporting by subject line, contribution content was categorized by general subject, including

- ✓ Instructional (applying to the classroom),
- ✓ List use (postings about the use of the forum itself),
- ✓ Technical (how-to and other technology-specific questions),
- ✓ Policy (having to do with school or district level technology integration policies and strategies),
- ✓ Personal (concerned with simple human interaction),
- ✓ Me too (one-line postings of simple agreement or thank-you’s), and
- ✓ Other.

This additional framework, it is hoped, would allow the data to paint a broad picture of how the list was being used by its participants. Through the use of both of these frameworks, it is hoped that a general characterization of the interests and abilities of the membership would arise, as well as the presence or absence of potential community-building interactivity.

A detailed examination of instances of or threads in the interaction did not easily lend itself to the use of an acutely analytic approach. Over the past three decades, a great deal of attention has been paid to the use of conversational analysis (CA) to describe human verbal interaction, and there are implications in this approach for computer-mediated communication (Mazur, in press). However, beyond the mediating effects of the technology itself, there are factors which tend to limit the direct application of CA tools in this context. Such concepts as turn-taking, repair, and adjacent pairs of exchange do not occur naturally in a setting where discussion participation takes place interspersed between other work responsibilities, and response times can often be measured in days. As we shall see, the emerging character of the list, and the nature of the interaction between its participants, produced a formality which more closely matches correspondence than conversation.

Gunawardena, Lowe *et. al* (1997) gives a review of several analysis models, and contributes one as well, which were applied to an on-line discussion occurring over a week. However, the focus of the studies cited there were concerned with constructed knowledge and learning rather than an assessment of community. Although an important part of the Wenger model, the construction of knowledge is beyond the scope of this

paper, and will be discussed in brief in “Implications for further research.” Hence, for the purpose of analysis in this context, two threads – one exemplary, one perhaps not – were simply compared to the Wenger model, and an attempt was made to assess the presence of indicators of the various components of that model.

Research Findings and Discussion – Gross Descriptors

During the time span of the data, the 86 members of FCPS-TRT-L produced a total of 164 postings by 43 members. These postings represented 39 distinct subject lines, with a mean thread length (postings with the same subject line) of 4, with a standard of deviation of 4.86 over a range of 1 to 27. As we shall see in our posting function data, there are a high number (18) of informational postings which did not imply the need for a response (although 5 did garnish responses anyway). If we remove the remaining unanswered 13 informational postings, the mean thread length, becomes 5.60 with a standard of deviation of 5.46, a mode of 3, and a range of 2 to 27. Of the 43 participants, the mean number of contributions from each was 3.42 with a standard deviation of 5.68, and a median and mode of 2 and 1, respectively. Since I was the list’s designer and moderator, I contributed a total of 37 postings to the list – more than triple the next most active contributor. Dropping this value as an outlier produced a mean of 2.61 with a standard deviation of 2.22.

In an attempt to ascertain the overall activity for the list as well as the engagement in specific topics, posting response times are reported in three categories. As is often the

case, the median time proves to be a better descriptor for describing the overall pace of the participation, since there were occasional long gaps between contributions (the maximum was 6.67 days).

Raw Response Times (time span between postings):

- ✓ Mean Response Time: 9:40 hours
- ✓ Median Response Time: 29.42 minutes

1st Response to Question (time between a question, and the first posted response):

- ✓ Mean Response Time: 13:28 hours
- ✓ Median Response Time: 2:28 hours

Response to Thread (time between thread contributions):

- ✓ Mean Response Time: 3:06 hours
- ✓ Median Response Time: 26.35 minutes

The postings were categorized as to their function within the discourse. The determination of “On Topic” versus “Off Topic” was done by simple inspection – if the content of the posting matched its subject line, it was considered on topic, hence many of the “Off Topic” postings may actually have contributed to the thread in some way, or have been “Me Too” or personal contributions.

Total postings by Type

- ✓ Response - On Topic: 87
- ✓ Response - Off Topic: 33

- ✓ Question: 20
- ✓ Informational: 18
- ✓ Other: 6

The broad topic categories proved to work reasonably well – there were very few “fence sitters” – postings which could have fallen into more than one category.

Total postings by Category

- ✓ Technical: 44
- ✓ Instructional: 40
- ✓ Policy: 29
- ✓ Personal: 15
- ✓ List Use: 21
- ✓ “Me too”/”Thank You”: 13
- ✓ Other: 2

The above gross descriptors paint a reasonable picture of the nature of the contributions, with implications for the participants themselves. Within the first two days of the list, I posted a “this is how to deal with lots of email from a list” remark, which defined list participation as strictly voluntary:

...you have permission to be cutthroat! If you don't have time, or your email box is full, just delete the FCPS-TRT-L email without reading! Nobody

will know, or care! If anyone really does not want to be in this forum, please let me know, and I'll remove you - no questions asked...

Despite this, half of the members of the list chose to participate during the data time span, and only one person asked to be removed. With only 13 of the participants contributing once, most who chose to participate did so a number of times on a range of subjects. As indicated by this and the distribution of the members' contribution counts, one can clearly see that this list – still in its very early stages of development – displays characteristics of mutual engagement beyond the structure and function of the list itself.

The response time data paint a picture of participation which belies the physical positioning of this list in the professional workday of its participants. The overwhelming majority of the postings (133 of 164) took place from 7:30 am to 4:30 pm, a reasonable “normal working day” range, hence most postings came from members who were mixing their participation into their other responsibilities. This makes the median raw response time and median response to thread time quite remarkable.

The list can be characterized by a fairly formal and business-like mode of participation. Off-topic contributions to threads are the exception rather than the rule, and personal or simple “Me too” contributions constitute a very small percentage of the overall traffic. In addition, the use of a color-coded representation of the threads (see Appendix A) as they evolved on the list shows that the scattered nature of thread connections and adjacency of thread contributions gradually formalized over time, making adjacency of contributions only interesting as they continued the thread. This reflects the substantial difference between this style of online forum, and synchronous or

highly active forums in which adjacency contributes to the overall character of the discourse (Herring 1999). Hence an examination of this aspect of the data was discarded as uninteresting.

TRTs often worry that their working day will be filled with simple technical support issues, but with combined posting totals for “Instructional,” “Policy,” and “List use” subjects over 90 (well over half, with purely technical postings less than half that), it is clear that many of the participants of this list are seriously engaged in the defined purpose of the forum. Two factors tended to encourage the formality of this particular list community – the presence of a vocal moderator with a specific agenda and a large number of postings, and an early departure of a list member who complained of a high number of “chatty” personal postings on the first days of the list. Nevertheless, over the span of the dataset, the subject data seem to reflect the sense of joint enterprise through the reflective process of negotiation, an important part of the Wenger model.

Research Findings and Discussion – Thread Instances

For the purpose of this analysis, two threads will be examined: The Digital Storytelling thread (Appendix B) and the Mobile Lab thread (Appendix C). The former is the second longest thread in the dataset (16 contributions), and serves as an exemplary exchange on one of the district’s classroom technology integration initiatives. The latter, in contrast, actually comprises two threads. The original poster attempted to restart the thread with a second asking of essentially the same question. It had a total of 11 postings

- 4 in the first group, 7 in the second. Beyond this, there has been no attempt to quantify the nature of these postings. The analysis is merely descriptive - the nature of the contributions, and the overall character of each thread, are described as they potentially reflect the Manger model of a community of practice.

Digital Storytelling: The thread concerns itself with an instructional topic – the expansion of tools used in the process of rendering personal narratives (or other writing) as electronic multimedia. Initiated by the coordinator of this initiative, the question mentions the current technology being used (a video editing suite and digital imaging software), and wonders if any others are being tried. The responses occur in a solid time block over a four-hour period, with 9 list members contributing. The 16 contributions include three off-topic postings, all in reference to clerical errors in the posting process.

The contributions exhibit a great deal of interest and thoughtful participation. Although most of the contributors were attendees of the professional development offered on this subject, some were not. The postings are characterized by a problem-solving and divergent-thinking approach to the question, and exhibit directly a reflective process of negotiation with mutual accountability, as the contributors examine each other's ideas or volunteer past successes...

Joy, (and anyone else interested) The "talking books" I made were created with Microsoft Publisher. It's a really easy way to make a story with sounds. The info. about the PD I did is at:

http://dixie.fcps.net/Professional_Development/Making_Talking_Books.htm.

You can also use Front Page but I think Publisher is a little easier. It would be possible to do with Power Point as well. You are only limited by your imagination. (and time, of course, always a problem!) Jan

The contributions also clearly illustrate the fact that this forum serves to display complementary participation and provides for specialization, as the varieties of the participants' expertise and interest unfold. Although it is difficult to ascertain how much of the character of the postings is a function of the medium, its defined role, and the formal nature of the relationship between the participants, there is evidence that the interaction actually represents a community of practice (the following contribution follows one in which the participant failed to identify himself with an auto-signature)...

Nathan: You're on here as a courtesy...you better shape up! ;-)

Assessing the nature of the "...shared repertoire.... resulting from engagement" is difficult to assess. Obviously, it is not possible for a virtual environment to provide visibility for the results of the community in action, since the members of the list, by and large, are distributed one each to over 50 school sites. The actual repertoire of actions as they are made manifest in the classroom will not appear in the forum, except as they are described (Jan's example is one of several that does so). Nevertheless, the entire thread on its face implies the development of such a repertoire.

Mobil Labs: This thread, initiated by a district TRT who was doing some exploration in anticipation of a conference presentation, became a brief discussion

primarily between two individuals – the asker of the question, and one elementary school participant. The low overall level of participation in this thread may be evidence of the weakness of the community in supporting all discussed topics. It might also be evidence of the specialized nature of the topic and the relatively rare use of the technology being discussed – it is impossible to determine this from the dataset.

The first instance of the thread included two contributions from one participant, with a second expanding on the first's remarks (he was a floating TRT who included the same school in his rotation). Since the thread promptly died, it was reintroduced three days later by the original asker. The second instance of the thread produced two more postings from the first respondent, plus one new participant's contribution, plus two short remarks (one of which was off topic) and a further remark by the asker.

This thread was selected because of its contrast to the first, that is, the inability of this asker to extract a wide participation in the exchange. This illustrates one of the problems inherent in applying a theoretical definition of a hoped-for goal as a tool for analyzing the success or failure of electronic discourse in meeting or illustrating that goal. Obviously, the low participation level of the exchange means that the sense of community, specifically “complementary participation...as an extension of practice,” is not in evidence for the group as a whole. However, the nature of the individual contributions shows an insight and participation in the topic (and, by extension, the forum itself) which establish a joint enterprise and shared repertoire...

It's much cheaper too. The cart is available through Alpha Smart for about \$550.00 vs. \$5000 or more for the big cart. It has some drawbacks to be sure, but is very functional. I can send pics if anyone is interested...

Overall, the on-task contributions were very much longer than the norm for this forum –another potential explanation for the small number of contributions, since large postings often intimidate or overwhelm members who have insufficient time for lengthy thoughtful exchanges. This meant that, in several cases, a variety of scenarios, problems, and insights were included in a single posting, making the contribution to the community that much potentially stronger...

Kim, Today was the first day with the wireless lab at SMS. A 7th grade social studies class was the first to use the new wonders of technology. One problem we encountered was that we did not have enough computers with administration, Middle School Review , and a teacher having checked one out we were a few short for everyone to have one. The first activity was in the library which worked well with more space and large tables. I would encourage anyone who is considering this venture to have a in-service for the staff in utilizing the technology.

As in the Digital Storytelling thread, it is difficult to assess how much of the formality and “all business” nature of the postings are an extension of the structure of the medium, but it seems unlikely. Again, there were off-topic exchanges which showed that the structure provided for personal banter...

Great suggestion. so...John....when do you want us to come to SMS for
your PD session?

If I knew who, I could then invite!

This, again, was an exchange born of the lack of an identifying signature – when this technical problem was corrected through an improvement in the structure of the list, the banter didn't disappear. But the personal exchanges and collegiality associated with many online discussions remained at a relatively low level of occurrence.

There are several other threads in the dataset which serve to illustrate the cohesion, participation level, and other evidence of the possibility of a community of practice within the members. Especially revealing is the longest of the threads at 27 contributions on the subject of student use of teacher workstations in the classroom. This thread lead directly to a further discussion of computer workstation security, and resulted in the preparation and scheduling of a professional development class on the topic. Clearly this is evidence of the mutual engagement, the joint enterprise, and the shared repertoire of a potential community of practice. However, in informal discussion with some of the members of the list, the lack of face-to-face discussion was cited as a concern. Of course, the irony of these observations in the face of the previous year's lack of participation in meetings is not to be missed. But, overall, one might conclude that a

great deal of the benefits of a community can be obtained by this text-based medium, and this evidence can be, to a certain extent, derived directly from the text itself.

Implications for Design, and Further Research

With a goal of establishing a community of practice through the use of online discourse, and assessing its veracity through an analysis of the resultant archive logs, there are several limitations inherent in this research design. First of all, a more direct marriage of analysis and model is required, since a simple inspection for evidence leaves much to be desired. Also, a more formal delineation of the discourse using tools of analysis might give a better, more transferable method of assessing the ability of this medium in meeting its stated goals, and in describing its character in a way more easily compared to other such communities.

As mentioned previously, the Wenger model directly addresses the presence and importance of learning as an integrated part of the community of practice model, placing it at the center of practice, community, identity, and meaning (Wenger 1998, 5).

Assessing the process of learning in computer mediated communication has a more extensive history of practice (Gunawardena, Lowe et al. 1997), and the use of those tools in this study might have served to increase the accuracy of the community's description.

Another problem with the scope of the interests of a community as compared to a text-only dataset is the inability of the data to represent all of the membership. Although the participation level in this forum was really quite high, there is no way to extract from

the dataset the nature of *non*-participation, that is, why members failed to post or react to postings. An informal discussion with a list member revealed that she had information relevant to one of the threads, but did not bother to pass that information on to other members. It would be quite revealing to attempt to discover if non-participant members were “lurking” (watching without participating, as this member was) or simply taking the advice offered at the inception of the forum and deleting contributions without reading them, for reasons of time or other factors. One cannot realistically hope for 100% participation in an online forum, but the Wenger model attempts to describe the *entire* community rather than only the most visible and vocal members of it. An attempt was made to get at some of this information through an informal online survey, participation in which was solicited through the list. However, the survey enjoyed even lower participation than the forum itself – not surprisingly, since the participants in the survey were most likely to be participants in the forum, which is already a subset of the whole membership. Hence the expansion of the research that these interests imply must, by definition, take one away from the capabilities of the forum itself, and would require a great deal more effort than a simple analysis of text.

One of the difficulties with the numerical data, the “gross descriptors,” was a lack of data with which to compare. The overwhelming majority of the small research data on electronic discourse was on environments created to enhance the interactive nature of online courses, and most of the analysis was at the “micro” level (CA-styled analysis) or the “macro” level (overall effectiveness in enhancing class viability and achieving learning goals). Those few examples of research which were aimed at community

building amongst teachers gave no numeric data at all. Although every forum is different, without some purely statistical representation of participation it is impossible to establish expectations and norms for response, in the goal of painting a picture of the success or failure of a forum in enhancing the goals and interests of the community which it represents.

The final concern, of course, is for the encouragement of community itself. The application of the Wenger community of practice model to teachers is not without precedence (Crawford 2001; Davenport 2001), and it has great implications for a profession struggling under the burden of assessment, accountability, and classroom practice pressures. The interests of technology integration are diverse, and the front-liners in this battle are often disconnected and displaced. The need for community is strong, and the exploration and expansion of computer mediated communication in this support seems full of potential.

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Appendix A – Visual Representation of thread contribution adjacency (threads with no responses are in gray)

Subject

	<i>DATE</i>	<i>TIME</i>	<i>CATEGORY</i>	<i>TYPE</i>
No Test - please ignore	9/12/02	11:30:47 AM	List use	Other
No ...and Another thing!	9/12/02	11:37:13 AM	List use	Informational
Yes ...and Another thing!	9/12/02	11:50:05 AM	Personal	Response - off t
Yes...and Another thing!	9/12/02	12:46:58 PM	List use	Response - on t
Yes...and Another thing!	9/12/02	12:57:41 PM	Technical	Response - on t
No Savana Rowe - Garden Springs	9/12/02	12:59:29 PM	Personal	Other
Yes Savana Rowe - Garden Springs	9/12/02	1:05:52 PM	Me Too	Response - off t
No How to participate	9/12/02	1:07:16 PM	List use	Informational
Yes Savana Rowe - Garden Springs	9/12/02	1:10:19 PM	List use	Response - off t
Yes...and Another thing!	9/12/02	1:15:11 PM	List use	Response - off t
No Great Idea!	9/12/02	1:25:50 PM	Personal	Other
Yes Great Idea!	9/12/02	1:30:01 PM	Personal	Response - off t
Yes Great Idea!	9/12/02	1:33:00 PM	List use	Response - on t
No battery for a computer	9/12/02	2:05:53 PM	Technical	Question
Yes Great Idea!	9/12/02	2:05:56 PM	List use	Response - off t
No Thanks, Jeff!	9/12/02	2:10:15 PM	Me Too	Other
Yes Great Idea!	9/12/02	2:23:48 PM	List use	Response - on t
Yes battery for a computer	9/12/02	2:28:27 PM	Technical	Response - on t
Yes battery for a computer	9/12/02	2:31:29 PM	Technical	Response - on t
No ULTRA KEYS	9/12/02	2:34:37 PM	Technical	Question
Yes ULTRA KEYS	9/12/02	2:45:11 PM	Technical	Response - on t
Yes Great Idea!	9/12/02	3:07:22 PM	List use	Response - off t
No Sorry	9/12/02	3:13:01 PM	Personal	Other
Yes Great Idea!	9/12/02	3:17:03 PM	List use	Response - off t
No Count me in	9/12/02	3:17:37 PM	Me Too	Other
Yes ULTRA KEYS	9/12/02	3:22:26 PM	List use	Response - off t
Yes Sorry	9/12/02	5:00:47 PM	Personal	Response - on t
Yes ...and Another thing!	9/13/02	7:13:55 AM	Me Too	Response - off t
No FrontPage	9/13/02	7:50:21 AM	Technical	Question
No email rule for this list	9/13/02	9:16:32 AM	List use	Informational
Yes FrontPage	9/13/02	9:23:47 AM	Technical	Response - on t
Yes FrontPage	9/13/02	10:43:46 AM	Technical	Response - on t
Yes FrontPage	9/13/02	10:54:18 AM	Me Too	Response - off t
No Attention, schools with video announcements!	9/13/02	2:05:15 PM	Instructional	Informational
Yes Attention, schools with video announcements!	9/13/02	2:12:15 PM	Instructional	Response - on t

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Technology Integration Resource
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Yes Attention, schools with video announcements!	9/13/02	2:43:36 PM	Personal	Response - off t
No scanning a document to edit	9/17/02	4:16:12 PM	Technical	Question
No Professional Development ideas	9/17/02	4:44:11 PM	Policy	Question
Yes Professional Development ideas	9/17/02	7:00:46 PM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes Professional Development ideas	9/18/02	7:21:03 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes Professional Development ideas	9/18/02	7:41:41 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes scanning a document to edit	9/18/02	7:54:17 AM	Technical	Response - on t
Yes Professional Development ideas	9/18/02	10:06:03 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes Professional Development ideas	9/18/02	1:59:45 PM	Policy	Response - on t
No The archives!	9/18/02	2:44:20 PM	List use	Informational
Yes Professional Development ideas	9/18/02	4:25:28 PM	Policy	Response - on t
No Question	9/19/02	10:06:51 AM	Technical	Question
Yes Question	9/19/02	10:03:10 AM	Technical	Response - on t
Yes Question	9/19/02	10:41:49 AM	Technical	Response - on t
Yes Professional Development ideas	9/19/02	3:16:19 PM	Policy	Response - on t
No MORE Professional Development ideas	9/20/02	8:06:47 AM	Policy	Informational
Yes MORE Professional Development ideas	9/20/02	8:06:48 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes MORE Professional Development ideas	9/20/02	8:12:56 AM	Policy	Response - on t
No MediaWorks: a new series on video-multimedia	9/20/02	11:59:57 AM	Instructional	Informational
No setting up a data base in excel	9/26/02	8:41:36 AM	Technical	Question
Yes setting up a data base in excel	9/26/02	9:11:03 AM	Technical	Response - on t
Yes setting up a data base in excel	9/26/02	10:11:17 AM	Technical	Response - on t
Yes setting up a data base in excel	9/26/02	11:04:00 AM	Technical	Response - on t
No mobile lab use	9/26/02	12:13:11 PM	Instructional	Question
Yes mobile lab use	9/26/02	12:55:58 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes mobile lab use	9/26/02	1:18:48 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
No problem in excel	9/26/02	1:20:31 PM	Technical	Question
Yes problem in excel	9/26/02	1:26:08 PM	Technical	Response - on t
Yes setting up a data base in excel	9/26/02	1:30:09 PM	Technical	Response - on t
Yes setting up a data base in excel	9/26/02	2:10:09 PM	Me Too	Response - on t
No Middle and High only- Editorial writing	9/26/02	2:19:05 PM	Instructional	Informational
Yes mobile lab use	9/26/02	2:35:38 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
No The Joy of Teaching september newsletter	9/26/02	2:48:48 PM	Other	Informational
No KTLN Session - KET Video Curriculum	10/1/02	9:41:40 AM	Instructional	Informational
No Instructions	10/8/02	3:18:27 AM	Technical	Question
Yes Instructions	10/8/02	3:33:17 AM	Technical	Response - on t
No Homework Web Pages	10/8/02	7:21:46 AM	Instructional	Question
Yes Homework Web Pages	10/8/02	1:44:09 AM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes Homework Web Pages	10/8/02	9:21:02 AM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes Homework Web Pages	10/9/02	6:11:57 AM	Instructional	Response - on t

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No Educational uses of the LISTSERV capability	10/10/02	4:19:23 PM	List use	Informational
Yes Educational uses of the LISTSERV capability	10/12/02	10:05:57 AM	List use	Response - on t
Yes Educational uses of the LISTSERV capability	10/12/02	11:25:17 AM	List use	Response - on t
No Mock Election	10/14/02	6:14:47 PM	Instructional	Informational
No The Royal Order of HYE!	10/17/02	2:10:25 PM	Personal	Question
No question	10/18/02	9:53:28 AM	Technical	Question
Yes question	10/18/02	10:15:55 AM	Technical	Response - on t
Yes The Royal Order of HYE!	10/18/02	12:23:27 PM	Personal	Response - on t
Yes The Royal Order of HYE!	10/18/02	2:55:59 PM	Personal	Response - on t
Yes The Royal Order of HYE!	10/18/02	3:20:27 PM	Personal	Response - on t
No Survey, and reminder	10/22/02	1:14:30 PM	List use	Informational
No Reading Counts	10/23/02	8:10:07 AM	Technical	Question
Yes Reading Counts	10/23/02	8:40:37 AM	Technical	Response - on t
Yes Reading Counts	10/23/02	9:07:10 AM	Me Too	Response - off t
No Stats on the survey	10/25/02	2:59:55 PM	List use	Informational
No Digital Story Telling	10/28/02	11:24:01 AM	Instructional	Question
Yes Digital Story Telling	10/28/02	12:13:27 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes Digital Story Telling	10/28/02	12:14:41 PM	Personal	Response - off t
Yes Digital Story Telling	10/28/02	12:14:58 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes Digital Story Telling	10/28/02	12:24:04 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes Digital Story Telling	10/28/02	12:27:53 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes Digital Story Telling	10/28/02	12:45:58 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes Digital Story Telling	10/28/02	12:48:18 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes Digital Story Telling	10/28/02	12:54:49 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes Digital Story Telling	10/28/02	1:02:22 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes Digital Story Telling	10/28/02	1:46:50 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes Digital Story Telling	10/28/02	2:05:43 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes Digital Story Telling	10/28/02	2:06:51 PM	Personal	Response - off t
Yes Digital Story Telling	10/28/02	2:13:07 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes Digital Story Telling	10/28/02	2:20:29 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes Digital Story Telling + an observation....	10/28/02	3:29:15 PM	Personal	Response - off t
No mobile labs	10/29/02	1:57:44 PM	Instructional	Question
Yes mobile labs	10/29/02	2:08:21 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes mobile labs	10/29/02	2:26:01 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes mobile labs	10/29/02	2:32:12 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes mobile labs	10/29/02	2:33:30 PM	Personal	Response - off t
Yes mobile labs	10/29/02	3:03:08 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes mobile labs	10/29/02	3:29:29 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
No From FCPS-TRT-L: Change in configuration	10/29/02	4:08:33 PM	List use	Informational
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Change in configuration	10/30/02	7:59:20 AM	List use	Response - on t

Electronic Mail Discussion as a
Technology Integration Resource
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No From FCPS-TRT-L: technology/literacy	11/1/02	12:20:37 AM	Instructional	Informational
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: technology/literacy	11/1/02	12:54:12 AM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: technology/literacy	11/1/02	1:15:33 AM	Instructional	Response - on t
No From FCPS-TRT-L: keyboard goals	11/6/02	3:48:59 AM	Policy	Question
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: keyboard goals	11/6/02	4:55:17 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: keyboard goals	11/6/02	4:56:45 AM	Me Too	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: keyboard goals	11/6/02	6:07:30 AM	Me Too	Response - on t
No From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/7/02	12:23:44 AM	Policy	Question
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/7/02	1:06:29 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/7/02	1:07:32 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/7/02	1:15:16 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: keyboard goals	11/7/02	4:09:47 AM	Me Too	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/7/02	5:43:14 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/7/02	5:46:24 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/7/02	6:15:49 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/7/02	6:20:40 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: keyboard goals	11/7/02	8:25:57 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/7/02	8:39:29 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: keyboard goals	11/7/02	8:45:15 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: keyboard goals	11/7/02	8:51:13 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: keyboard goals	11/7/02	9:06:54 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: keyboard goals	11/7/02	9:09:53 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/7/02	9:17:02 AM	Policy	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/8/02	12:05:25 AM	Me Too	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/8/02	12:19:28 AM	Technical	Response - off t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/8/02	1:41:56 AM	Technical	Response - off t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/8/02	1:43:26 AM	Technical	Response - off t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/8/02	2:49:01 AM	Policy	Response - off t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/8/02	4:14:33 AM	Technical	Response - off t
No From FCPS-TRT-L: Windows Security	11/8/02	6:20:22 AM	Technical	Informational
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/8/02	7:18:54 AM	Technical	Response - off t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/8/02	8:46:56 AM	Technical	Response - off t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/8/02	9:12:45 AM	Technical	Response - off t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/8/02	9:31:20 AM	Other	Response - off t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/11/02	9:07:58 AM	Technical	Response - off t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/11/02	9:30:38 AM	Technical	Response - off t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/11/02	9:34:34 AM	Technical	Response - off t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/11/02	10:52:04 AM	Technical	Response - off t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/11/02	10:58:54 AM	Technical	Response - off t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Classroom computers	11/11/02	1:22:34 PM	Technical	Response - off t

Electronic Mail Discussion as a
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No From FCPS-TRT-L: Microphones for use with	11/12/02	12:41:25 PM	Technical	Informational
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Microphones for use with	11/12/02	12:48:12 PM	Me Too	Response - off t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: Microphones for use with	11/12/02	1:25:58 PM	Technical	Response - on t
No From FCPS-TRT-L: Recharging Toner	11/13/02	2:03:45 PM	Technical	Question
No From FCPS-TRT-L: help with bucket buddies	11/14/02	1:07:22 PM	Instructional	Question
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: help with bucket buddies	11/14/02	2:59:51 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: help with bucket buddies	11/14/02	3:04:35 PM	Instructional	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: help with bucket buddies	11/14/02	3:49:11 PM	Me Too	Response - on t
Yes From FCPS-TRT-L: help with bucket buddies	11/15/02	8:09:37 AM	Instructional	Response - on t

Appendix B – The Digital Storytelling thread

SUBJECT

Digital Story Telling

DATE **TIME PARTICIPAN**

10/28/02 11:24:01 AM jbucking@fayette.k12.ky.us

In the Digital Story Telling pilot, we are using Pinnacle Studio 8 to create the stories. Also we are using Adobe Photoshop to enhance photos. I was wondering if any of you have created digital stories (taking a piece of writing and retelling it via a software format) using any other programs? If you haven't created stories, do you have a theory on possibilities? Would love to have your input :) Joy Lynn Cox Buckingham Technology Resource Teacher Fayette County Public Schools <http://itech.fcps.net/trt18> 859-983-3594 quick email response @ 8599833594@page.nextel.com This email originated from Fayette County Public Schools in Lexington, KY. Please report instances of abuse or inappropriate content to postmaster@fcps.net

Category Instructional

Type:

Question

10/28/02 12:13:27 PM koverstr@fayette.k12.ky.us

I think a cruder version of this could be done with PowerPoint, don't you? You can insert the pictures and even have multiple pictures on a slide and then have the sound bites attached to the slides also. It wouldn't be as polished, but I think it could work if that were all you had.

Category Instructional

Type:

Response - on topic

10/28/02 12:14:41 PM koverstr@fayette.k12.ky.us

Sorry, that was from me! Kim Overstreet District Technology Resource Teacher Fayette County Public Schools email: koverstr@fayette.k12.ky.us <http://itech.fcps.net/trt10> fax: 859.381.4763 "It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge."--Albert Einstein

Category Personal

Type:

Response - off topic

10/28/02 12:14:58 PM aaford@fayette.k12.ky.us

You could also do it in a web page using pictures and clickable sound bites. Amy Ford Technology Teacher Web ~ < <http://www.stonewall.fcps.net/> > Ph ~ 859.381.3083 Fx ~ 859.381.3080 Email ~ < <mailto:aaford@fayette.k12.ky.us> >

Category Instructional

Type:

Response - on topic

10/28/02 12:24:04 PM jbucking@fayette.k12.ky.us

Both are great ideas! I think Power Point would be a good stepping stone to Studio. Also would be useful for younger students. I seem to recall someone (Nathan) doing digital stories year before last. I think Jan Ross did a "How to Use the Library" book. Was that done with Front Page? Joy Lynn Cox Buckingham Technology Resource Teacher Fayette County Public Schools <http://itech.fcps.net/trt18> 859-983-3594 quick email response @ 8599833594@page.nextel.com

Category Instructional

Type:

Response - on topic

10/28/02 12:27:53 PM aaford@fayette.k12.ky.us

For primary students one could use Kid Works Deluxe. Come to think of it, any elementary student could use it. You can insert digital pictures (or have them illustrate them) and write. Also, it already has voice recording component. Amy Ford Technology Teacher Web ~ < <http://www.stonewall.fcps.net/>> Ph ~ 859.381.3083 Fx ~ 859.381.3080 Email ~ < <mailto:aaford@fayette.k12.ky.us>>

Category Instructional **Type:** Response - on topic

10/28/02 12:45:58 PM

I think you could use timeliner, also. The students could organize the story in steps and you can still put in text,pictures, movies and sound.

Category Instructional **Type:** Response - on topic

10/28/02 12:48:18 PM pwhitmer@fayette.k12.ky.us

The "talking books" that Jan did was with Publisher and FrontPage I believe. Paula Whitmer District Technology Resource Teacher Fayette County Public Schools 701 E. Main Street Lexington, KY 40502 Email: <mailto:pwhitmer@fayette.k12.ky.us> Website: <http://itech.fcps.net/trt12> Office: 859.381.4124 Mobile: 859.983.3586 Fax: 859.381.4763

Category Instructional **Type:** Response - on topic

10/28/02 12:54:49 PM jjones@fayette.k12.ky.us

All: PowerPoint is, actually, an even more flexible environment for DST than Pinnacle. It provides the possibility of movement for pictures and text, whereas Pinnacle has only transitions and text scrolling. PPT also provides voiceover capability - crudely, but it's there. The only thing it does NOT provide is a visual timeline - timing of sounds and slides has to be done through menu options rather than simple drag-and-drop and positioning on a timeline. But, in any case, I'd love to hear about folks who've selected PPT for this! Jeffrey L. Jones, District Technology Resource Teacher Editor, TIPS - the FCPS Educational Technology E-zine Fayette County Public Schools Lexington, KY jjones@fayette.k12.ky.us <<<http://itech.fcps.net/trt15/>>> <<<http://itech.fcps.net/tips/>>> Phone (859)381-4124 Fax (859)381-4763 "...Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic..." - Arthur C. Clark

Category Instructional **Type:** Response - on topic

10/28/02 1:02:22 PM gdrake@fayette.k12.ky.us

Has anybody used either ImageBlender or VideoBlender from Tech4Learning? Greg

Category Instructional **Type:** Response - on topic

10/28/02 1:46:50 PM

I have used this several times with children and it is very easy to use and the kids just love recording their voices with their pictures. It has worked beautifully. It may not be as polished as Pinnacle but it does the trick!

Category Instructional **Type:** Response - on topic

10/28/02 2:05:43 PM ncornett@fayette.k12.ky.us

PowerPoint 2000 works good for narrating a written story. It contains a feature called 'record

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narration' which times your voice with the progression in your slides. It's very quick and easy for teachers to do. Especially if they are just learning to use PowerPoint or other technology. We did this with third grade personal narratives last year here at Dixie. They turned out pretty well!

Category Instructional **Type:** Response - on topic
10/28/02 2:06:51 PM ncornett@fayette.k12.ky.us

sorry...that was from me (Nathan)

Category Personal **Type:** Response - off topic

10/28/02 2:13:07 PM jross@fayette.k12.ky.us

FROM JAN ROSS Joy, (and anyone else interested) The "talking books" I made were created with Microsoft Publisher. It's a really easy way to make a story with sounds. The info. about the PD I did is at:
http://dixie.fcps.net/Professional_Development/Making_Talking_Books.htm You can also use Front Page but I think Publisher is a little easier. It would be possible to do with Power Point as well. You are only limited by your imagination. (and time, of course, always a problem!) Jan

Category Instructional **Type:** Response - on topic

10/28/02 2:20:29 PM jbucking@fayette.k12.ky.us

Al and I have been playing with the new Sony Mavica--the one that uses a CD. Since it records sounds with still pictures or movies, we see some possibilities for DST with this piece of hardware. Question: Has anyone tried Hyperstudio? Jan, did you have any problems posting your Publisher piece to the web? Joy Lynn Cox Buckingham Technology Resource Teacher Fayette County Public Schools <http://itech.fcps.net/trt18> 859-983-3594 quick email response @ 8599833594@page.nextel.com

Category Instructional **Type:** Response - on topic

Total Digital Story Telling 15

SUBJECT Digital Story Telling + an observation....

DATE TIME PARTICIPAN

10/28/02 3:29:15 PM jjones@fayette.k12.ky.us

Nathan: You're on here as a courtesy...you better shape up! ;-) Folks: After the survey, I re-thought the signature stuff, and, fact is, I could just test some of the other options and see if y'all like 'em! I'll let you know before anything happens, and then ask for feedback once it does. Jeff

Category Personal **Type:** Response - off topic

Total Digital Story Telling + an 1

kindergarteners around, someone could get run over). Instead, we have a cart that was designed to hold 30 Alphasmarts and an AlphaHub. It has 30 slots and easily holds all of the laptops. It has enough space inside for the powerpacks and a projector, printer or desktop computer could sit on top. It's much more mobile than the bigger carts. Mike Johnson Technology Resource Teacher Fayette County Public Schools 701 E. Main Street Lexington, Kentucky 40502 Phone: 859-983-3606 Fax: 859-381-4763 mdjohnso@fayette.k12.ky.us <http://itech.fcps.net/trt20>

Category Instructional **Type:** Response - on topic

9/26/02 2:35:38 PM ctibbitt@fayette.k12.ky.us

It's much cheaper too. The cart is available through Alpha Smart for about \$550.00 vs. \$5000 or more for the big cart. It has some drawbacks to be sure, but is very functional. I can send pics if anyone is interested. Cliff Tibbitts STC Maxwell Elementary 859-381-3516 ctibbitt@fayette.k12.ky.us -----Original Message----- From: FCPS-TRT-L [mailto:FCPS-TRT-L@listserv.fcps.net] Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2002 1:19 PM To: FCPS-TRT-L Subject: RE: mobile lab use Another thing Maxwell did was to NOT purchase the big cart for storing them like I've seen at some schools. That cart is way too big and heavy for our needs (and with little kindergarteners around, someone could get run over). Instead, we have a cart that was designed to hold 30 Alphasmarts and an AlphaHub. It has 30 slots and easily holds all of the laptops. It has enough space inside for the powerpacks and a projector, printer or desktop computer could sit on top. It's much more mobile than the bigger carts. Mike Johnson Technology Resource Teacher Fayette County Public Schools 701 E. Main Street Lexington, Kentucky 40502 Phone: 859-983-3606 Fax: 859-381-4763 mdjohnso@fayette.k12.ky.us <http://itech.fcps.net/trt20>

Category Instructional **Type:** Response - on topic

Total	mobile lab use	4
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SUBJECT mobile labs

DATE	TIME	PARTICIPAN
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10/29/02	1:57:44 PM	koverstr@fayette.k12.ky.us
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I asked earlier if any of you had mobile labs and how they were being used effectively and I only got a response about Maxwell, so I'm asking again since you may have more time to respond now. How are they being used? (For example, every student has a laptop and they are word processing, or students are in groups and each group is using their laptop for a different task--research, publishing, webquest) What are the teachers doing that make the best use of the mobile lab? Kim Overstreet District Technology Resource Teacher Fayette County Public Schools email: koverstr@fayette.k12.ky.us <http://itech.fcps.net/trt10> <<http://itech.fcps.net/trt10>> fax: 859.381.4763 "It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge."--Albert Einstein This email originated from Fayette County Public Schools in Lexington, KY. Please report instances of abuse or inappropriate content to postmaster@fcps.net

Category Instructional **Type:** Question

10/29/02 2:08:21 PM ctibbitt@fayette.k12.ky.us

Kim, not to beat the drum, but we also have found that often times we are dividing the laptops between two or more locations. We have two laptops that spend most of their time running around the building attached to LCD projectors, acting out the "One computer

classroom, model." We have 16 altogether. Sometimes all 16 are in the same class, more often, students work in pairs or groups. One can search for information, others can document. We did use them some last year for portfolio. We hope to use them more to that end this year and free up more of the lab time. We run all the Office Applications on them. We use them in the younger classes with Kidspiration, older classes use Inspiration, and we use some of the Tom Snyder products. It's really up to your imagination. Cliff Tibbitts STC Maxwell Elementary 859-381-3516 ctibbitt@fayette.k12.ky.us

Category Instructional **Type:** Response - on topic

10/29/02 2:26:01 PM jzeigler@fayette.k12.ky.us

Kim, Today was the first day with the wireless lab at SMS. A 7th grade social studies class was the first to use the new wonders of technology. One problem we encountered was that we did not have enough computers with administration, Middle School Review, and a teacher having checked one out we were a few short for everyone to have one. The first activity was in the library which worked well with more space and large tables. I would encourage anyone who is considering this venture to have a in-service for the staff in utilizing the technology. The greatest problem many of the students faced was turning them on! Many did not hold the button down long enough. Other were amazed at the two different pointing devices. The wireless lab does have restrictions. For our Art teacher the students would be better suited to use a mouse than the glide point. Any application which is graphic intensive also would slow down and eat precious battery life. I would encourage you to have a P.D. on using a mobile lab for the teachers and STC. John Zeigler Southern Middle School

Category Instructional **Type:** Response - on topic

10/29/02 2:32:12 PM

Great suggestion. so...John....when do you want us to come to SMS for your PD session?

Category Instructional **Type:** Response - on topic

10/29/02 2:33:30 PM

If I knew who, I could then invite!

Category Personal **Type:** Response - off topic

10/29/02 3:03:08 PM koverstr@fayette.k12.ky.us

Cliff, I think that splitting the lab up for different classes to be able to use them is a great idea! If you get wireless access points throughout your school, then I could see mini-lab set ups in classrooms where *a few students are working in a writing lab center while others work with teacher or peer edit. *one laptop is assigned to each group (about 5 or 6 groups) who are working on researching a topic *groups of students a couple of computers to do a whole class program like one of the inspirer series from Tom Snyder. Planning ahead and getting the extra access points would make the mobile lab much more flexible than it already is! Kim

Category Instructional **Type:** Response - on topic

10/29/02 3:29:29 PM ctibbitt@fayette.k12.ky.us

Our school is rather compact and all classrooms with the exception of Art, Music and P.E. are on the same level. We have AP's at opposite corners of the building giving us adequate

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coverage for all the classes. We have a third AP that can travel with the cart for those times that we need to take the laptops down for Art, Music or PE. Works well. Cliff Tibbitts
STC Maxwell Elementary 859-381-3516 ctibbitt@fayette.k12.ky.us

Category Instructional **Type:** Response - on topic

Total mobile labs 7

Appendix D: Visual Basic Routine

```
Private Sub Exit_Click()
End
End Sub

Private Sub FileProcess_Click()
SelFileLabel = "Selected File: " & CommonDialog1.filename
Dim dbArchive As Database
Dim rstPostings As Recordset
Set dbArchive = OpenDatabase("Archive.mdb")
Set rstPostings = dbArchive.OpenRecordset("Postings")
With rstPostings
.Index = "Date"
End With
Dim TextLine() As String
Dim counter As Integer
Open CommonDialog1.filename For Input As #1 ' Open file.
Do While Not EOF(1) ' Loop until end of file.
counter = counter + 1
ReDim Preserve TextLine(counter)
Line Input #1, TextLine(counter) ' Read line into variable.
If InStr(TextLine(counter), "-----Original Message-----") > 2 Then
counter = counter + 1
ReDim Preserve TextLine(counter)
TextLine(counter) = Right(TextLine(counter - 1), Len(TextLine(counter - 1)) - InStr(TextLine(counter - 1), "-----Original
Message-----") + 1)
TextLine(counter - 1) = Left(TextLine(counter - 1), InStr(TextLine(counter - 1), "-----Original Message-----") - 1)
TextLine(counter - 1) = Trim$(TextLine(counter - 1))
TextLine(counter - 1) = LineProcess(TextLine(counter - 1))
End If
TextLine(counter) = LineProcess(TextLine(counter))
Loop
Close #1 ' Close file.
Dim i, NewRecords As Integer, FirstRecord As Boolean, mdate As Date, mtime As Date, mtopic As String, mre As Boolean, mbody
As String
FirstRecord = True
i = 0
Do While i <= UBound(TextLine) - 6
If FirstRecord Or Trim(TextLine(i)) = "----- End of message -----" Then
If FirstRecord Then
i = i + 1
FirstRecord = False
Else
i = i + 2
End If
muser = ""
If Mid(TextLine(i), 8, 4) <> "FCPS" Then
muser = LCase(FindEmail(TextLine(i)))
End If
i = i + 2
If UCase(Mid(TextLine(i), 10, 2)) = "RE" Then
mre = True
mtopic = Right(TextLine(i), Len(TextLine(i)) - 13)
Else
mre = False
mtopic = Right(TextLine(i), Len(TextLine(i)) - 9)
End If
i = i + 1
mdate = Mid(TextLine(i), 12, 11)
mtime = Mid(TextLine(i), 24, 8)
Do While Len(Trim(TextLine(i))) > 0
i = i + 1
Loop
i = i + 1
```

```
If InStr(TextLine(i), "This message is in MIME format") > 0 Then
    i = i + 7
End If
mbody = ""
TextLabel.Caption = TextLine(i)
Do While (Left(TextLine(i), 5) <> "-----" And Left(TextLine(i), 5) <> "=====")
    mbody = mbody + TextLine(i) + " "
    If (LCase(InStr(TextLine(i), "@fayette.k12.ky.us"))) > 0 And Len(Trim(muser)) = 0 And InStr(UCASE(TextLine(i)), "FCPS-TRT-
L") = 0) Then
        If Len(Trim(muser)) = 0 Then
            muser = LCase(FindEmail(TextLine(i)))
        End If
    End If
    i = i + 1
Loop
'Stop
With rstPostings
    .Seek "=", mdate, mtime
    If .NoMatch Then
        NewRecLabel.Caption = Str(Val(NewRecLabel.Caption) + 1)
        .AddNew
        !Date = mdate
        !Time = mtime
        !Participan = muser
        !subject = mtopic
        !re = mre
        !Contents = mbody
        !Date = mdate
        .Update
    Else
        DupRecLabel.Caption = Str(Val(DupRecLabel.Caption) + 1)
    End If
End With
Else
    i = i + 1
'Stop
End If
Loop
Dim TopicList() As String, TopicTime() As Date, TopicDate() As Date
Dim TopicLastTime() As Date, TopicLastDate() As Date
counter = 0
With rstPostings
    .MoveFirst
    counter = counter + 1
    ReDim Preserve TopicList(counter)
    ReDim Preserve TopicDate(counter)
    ReDim Preserve TopicLastDate(counter)
    ReDim Preserve TopicTime(counter)
    ReDim Preserve TopicLastTime(counter)
    TopicDate(1) = !Date
    TopicTime(1) = !Time
    TopicLastDate(1) = !Date
    TopicLastTime(1) = !Time
    TopicList(1) = !subject
    mdate = !Date
    mtime = !Time
    .MoveNext
    Do While Not .EOF
        .Edit
        !resptime = !Date + !Time - mdate - mtime
        mdate = !Date
        mtime = !Time
        If Not !re Then
            counter = counter + 1
            ReDim Preserve TopicList(counter)
            ReDim Preserve TopicDate(counter)
```

```
ReDim Preserve TopicLastDate(counter)
ReDim Preserve TopicTime(counter)
ReDim Preserve TopicLastTime(counter)
TopicList(counter) = !subject
TopicTime(counter) = !Time
TopicDate(counter) = !Date
TopicLastDate(counter) = !Date
TopicLastTime(counter) = !Time
Else
j = 1
For j = 1 To counter
If TopicList(j) = !subject Then
!LASTRETIME = !Date + !Time - TopicLastDate(j) - TopicLastTime(j)
!LASTPTIME = !Date + !Time - TopicDate(j) - TopicTime(j)
TopicLastDate(j) = !Date
TopicLastTime(j) = !Time
End If
Next j
End If
.Update
.MoveNext
Loop
End With
End Sub
```

```
Private Sub FileOpen_Click()
' Set CancelError is True
CommonDialog1.CancelError = True
On Error GoTo ErrHandler
' Set flags
CommonDialog1.Flags = cdIOFNHideReadOnly
' Set filters
CommonDialog1.Filter = "All Files (*.*)*.txt|Text Files" & _
"(*.txt)*.txt|Batch Files (*.bat)*.bat"
' Specify default filter
CommonDialog1.FilterIndex = 2
' Display the Open dialog box
CommonDialog1.ShowOpen
' Display name of selected file
SelFileLabel = "Selected File: " & CommonDialog1.filename
NewRecLabel.Caption = "0"
DupRecLabel.Caption = "0"
Exit Sub
```

```
ErrHandler:
'User pressed the Cancel button
Exit Sub
End Sub
```

```
Private Function LineProcess(TextLine) As Variant
Dim k As Integer, NewTextLine As Variant
NewTextLine = ""
For k = 1 To Len(TextLine)
If Asc(Mid(TextLine, k, 1)) > 31 Then
NewTextLine = NewTextLine + Mid(TextLine, k, 1)
End If
Next k
LineProcess = NewTextLine
'Stop
End Function
```

```
Private Function FindEmail(TextLine) As Variant
Dim k As Integer, Email As Variant
NewTextLine = ""
```

```
For k = InStr(TextLine, "@") - 1 To 1 Step -1
  If FindEmailChar(Mid(TextLine, k, 1)) Then
    Email = Mid(TextLine, k, 1) + Email
  Else
    k = 0
  End If
Next k
If Len(Trim(Email)) > 0 Then
  FindEmail = Email + "@fayette.k12.ky.us"
Else
  FindEmail = ""
End If
End Function

Private Function FindEmailChar(ACharacter) As Boolean
  FindEmailChar = False
  If Asc(UCase(ACharacter)) > 90 Then
  ElseIf Asc(ACharacter) < 48 Then
  ElseIf Asc(ACharacter) > 57 And Asc(ACharacter) < 65 Then
  Else
    FindEmailChar = True
  End If
  'Stop
End Function
```