View metadata, citation and similar papers at core.ac.uk

brought to you by CORE

provided by CSUSB ScholarWorks

California State University, San Bernardino

CSUSB ScholarWorks

Theses Digitization Project

John M. Pfau Library

2007

Engaged: A teacher resource based on fun factor

Jay Marcus Jones

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd-project

Part of the Instructional Media Design Commons

Recommended Citation

Jones, Jay Marcus, "Engaged: A teacher resource based on fun factor" (2007). *Theses Digitization Project*. 3271.
https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd-project/3271

This Project is brought to you for free and open access by the John M. Pfau Library at CSUSB ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses Digitization Project by an authorized administrator of CSUSB ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@csusb.edu.

ENGAGED: A TEACHER RESOURCE BASED ON FUN FACTOR

A Project

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

in

Education:

Instructional Technology

---

by

Jay Marcus Jones

March 2007

ENGAGED: A TEACHER RESOURCE BASED ON FUN FACTOR

A Project

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

---

by

Jay Marcus Jones

March 2007

Approved by:

[redacted]

Dr. Sylvester Robertson, First Reader — 3-15-07 Date

[redacted]

Dr. Thom Gehring, Second Reader

[redacted]

Dr. Brian Newberry, Third Reader

© 2007 Jay Marcus Jones

ABSTRACT

At risk youth are in danger of being left behind, not only in schools, but by society as a whole. One way to address this problem is to make the learning experience pleasant or "fun." The absence of a resource for teachers presenting standards based academic content that is evaluated and ranked based on students perception of fun strongly indicates the need for such a resource. Classroom teachers were interviewed as potential project users. These interviews support the need for the project. After extensive site research on the internet the design and development of the project was undertaken. During implementation the conclusion was reached that the resource needs to be a suite of web pages linked to a presentation and evaluation database with a much larger storage and processing capacity than is currently available for a masters project.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The mentoring and editing help provided by Dr. Sylvester Robertson on this project, as well as my entire time at CSUSB, has been invaluable. Thanks "Doc" for always trying to steer me toward the right choices.

DEDICATION

With thanks and love I dedicate this project to my best friend, my lover, my wife Roslyn. Without your understanding, compassion, and drive this would not have been possible. I love you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT iii

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS iv

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND

Introduction 1

Context of the Problem 2

Purpose of the Project 4

Significance of the Project 4

Delimitations 6

Definition of Terms 7

Organization of the Project 7

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction 9

The Digital Divide and Accessibility 9

At-Risk-Youth and Technology 12

Web Page Design and Usability 14

Summary 17

CHAPTER THREE: PROJECT DESIGN PROCESSES

Introduction 18

Analysis 18

Design 20

Development 22

Implementation 23

Evaluation 23

Summary 24

CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction 25

Conclusions 25

Recommendations 26

Summary 27

APPENDIX A: CD OF PROJECT 28

APPENDIX B: INITIAL TEACHER FEASIBILITY SURVEY 30

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE CONCEPT WEB PAGES 35

REFERENCES 38

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND

Introduction

In California the first experience most students have with at-risk youth education is attending a continuation high school. These facilities and the teachers who work in them are responsible for providing such youths, ages 16 to 18 years, with access to the State mandated core curriculum. For most of these students these schools become credit mills, packet factories, or boredom centers. Being bored, frustrated, or uninspired by education can wear down even the most determined student. The direct approach to counter these situations is to make learning fun.

Chapter One presents an overview of ENGAGED, a web-based site that attempts to provide teachers with tools. These tools come in the form of labs and lesson plans that have been classroom tested, evaluated and rated by students and teachers for fun quotient. The contexts of the problem are discussed followed by the purpose, significance of the project, and assumptions. Next, the limitations that apply to the project are reviewed with

key terms defined. Finally the organization of the project is discussed.

Context of the Problem

The problem defined in this project can best be expressed by three separate statements. The first, with all the associated connotations is, "At risk youth are entitled to the same educational opportunities as everyone else." This statement contains within it recognition of all the ills inherent in the systems that attempt to address "at risk youth;" limited time or new, inexperienced teachers, low investment in these programs, inadequate resources at these school sites, and inadequate student access to modern technology in the form of computers and the Internet. Many school districts in California spend as little of their resources on these school sites as possible leading to "continuation schools [that] are satisfied with providing packets of work for their students. There is little opportunity for the students to have any interaction with their teachers." (Knoeppel, 2002, p.2) This situation produces a downward spiral for more and more of these "at risk youth."

The second statement is, "Every professional web site has an agenda and, that agenda may change as the people

maintaining that web site develop or change professionally." This statement recognizes that when content is agendized the primary result is service of the agenda. The sites with agenda driven content are almost too numerous to mention. Some examples include web sites for The National Education Association(NEA), The California Teachers Association(CTA), many charter schools sites, school district offices sites, and The California Continuation Education Association, among others. These are all education web sites and they each have their own agenda and their own slant on any content presented.

The third statement comes from an at risk student enrolled in a continuation high school; "Mr. Jones, why can't all my classes be as much fun as Science or P.E.?" Most students want to learn if it is a pleasurable or fun experience, even "at risk students." Taking these statements into consideration a teacher resource is called for, one that has as its only agenda the stated purpose of making learning fun for all students.

When these statements are considered in concert with the fact that several online searches of the internet produced no teacher resource that provided any type of rating or evaluation system based on the "fun" of the lab,

lesson, or unit, the demand for The project is unmistakable.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of the project was to develop a teacher resource in which content is both standards based and student demonstrated as "fun" in which to participate. The form of this resource is a website called ENGAGED. It will ultimately consist of several folioed and interconnected web pages. Academic content is to be all teacher supplied. The "evaluation" step of the process consists of colleagues downloading the content as labs, lesson plans, etc., using it in their classrooms and providing feedback on the student "fun" level. The more "student fun points" a content piece generates, the higher it will be rated on the website.

Significance of the Project

This project is significant in multiple ways. First, by providing a resource to all teachers of "at risk youth," it opens an opportunity to bridge the digital divide that threatens to leave these students disconnected from the information age. Students of low socio-economic status have a host of problems, including attendance, that are directly affected by the divide. The bridge in the

form of a resource with only one agenda is one way to provide fun learning materials/situations.

Second, since many teachers work in continuation schools not by choice(Knoeppel, 2002, p.2) and, since these continuation schools usually have a higher than normal percentage of inexperienced and/or first year teachers, this project provides an immediate resource of tried and proven curriculum materials on which these teachers can rely. Most new teachers spend their first, and sometimes their second, year searching for effective materials and techniques; if a supervising teacher, mentor teacher, or department head can provide these teachers with an immediate resource, they can spend more time teaching, creatively reaching students, and less time reinventing the wheel.

Third, because the learning is fun, this project gives teachers a chance to connect with their students on a more direct and intimate level. "Because of their flexibility, continuation school teachers often reach the most difficult students" (Knoeppel, 2002, p.4). A student who is involved in a lesson/activity/lab that is fun is much easier to reach, talk to, guide or help.

Fourth, and possibly most important, this project provides the promise of the ability to influence students

to become life long learners through moving "away from the textbook approach to teaching and involving students in their education. Continuation students are very creative and adept at making PowerPoint presentations, leading round-table discussions, teaching their peers a lesson, completing projects that dazzle their teachers, using the computer and writing." (Knoeppel, 2002, p.3-4) Like anyone, students respond to experiences that are pleasurable, or fun. They will attempt to repeat the fun they have experienced. If we as teachers show these "at risk youth" enough different ways and subjects that are fun, there is a more likely chance of them becoming life long learners.

Delimitations

During the development of the project, a number of delimitations were noted. These delimitations are as follows:

1. The project does not assure fun for students, better student-teacher communication, or that students will become life long learners. What it does do is provide increased potential for all these things to occur.

2. The project does not guarantee teacher participation; it makes available a resource for teacher use.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as they apply to the project.

Discussion Board (Bulletin Board) - Allows participants to post, read, and discuss contents electronically. For this project they are specifically linked to content and evaluation pieces.

Fun - Anything that provides amusement or enjoyment.

HyperLink (Link) - A text or graphic segment that will, with a mouse click, display, or link to, another web page or document.

Internet (The Net) - Network of interconnected computers that allow world wide transfer of information.

Uniform Resource Locator (URL) - A precise internet address that allows a computer to access a particular web page.

Organization of the Project

This project is organized into four chapters. Chapter One provides an overview of the project including

a discussion of the context of the problem, the purpose of the project, the significance of the project, project limitations, and definition of terms. Chapter Two presents a review of the literature in the fields of at risk youth, the digital divide, teacher resources, and student fun in learning. Chapter Three contains the project design including the design criteria and design protocols, and their justifications, used for the project. Chapter Four summarizes the project and presents conclusions and recommendations brought forward during the life of the project.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

There are three areas in the literature that yield significant results when considering Teacher Resources and The Digital Divide in the broader context of At-Risk-Youth. In the first area the focus is on "The Digital Divide and Accessibility." The second area explores the topic of "At-Risk-Youth and Technology." The third area is "Web Page Design and Usability." The Literature Review for this project is directed to these three areas.

The Digital Divide and Accessibility

Information Technology (IT) access can be broken down into the basic categories of "The Haves" and "The Have-nots" with the digital divide separating the two. This situation has led to widespread concerns about four broad themes: "educational advantages, future employment and earnings, opportunities for social and civic involvement, and equity and civil rights issues." (Eamon, 2004, p.92). Accessibility is the problem and it is perceived on many levels, "IT can provide students and teachers with a large body of easily accessible information; create opportunities to reinforce basic, new, and higher-order

cognitive skills; and in crease student interest and motivation, parent-school communication, and parent involvement. These advantages, in turn, are expected to produce positive educational outcomes such as increased student achievement and school retention (Center for Media Education, 1996; U. S. Department of Education, 1999; Wenglinsky, 1998)" (Eamon, 2004, p.93). Even the youth we are trying to help perceive the advantages and disadvantages. Eamon cites a 1997 Gallup poll in which more than 75% of teenagers rated owning a computer as "critically important" and over four-fifths thought "strong computer skills and IT knowledge were necessary for them to make a good living in the future.... placing youth who lack access to or skills in using IT at a social disadvantage" leading to the statement, "Inequities in IT access and use not only mirror existing patterns of social stratification, but can maintain and even widen current disparities between these groups" (Eamon, 2004, p.93-94). This means that accessibility is also the answer, "There is a mountain of documented evidence which proves that access to technology improves a child's education. From reading-comprehension skills to average wages when exiting college, students who are comfortable with computers are

given better chances and better results" (DiGiorgio, 2004).

There are, however, concerns that access is not the answer some see it to be. These include the concerns that playing video-games might promote social withdrawal as well as aggressive or impulsive behaviors, or supplant traditional academic activities (Eamon, 2004). Poor youth are singled out for playing more video-games than wealthier youth, and for having fewer resources available from their parents. These concerns are mirrored for low-resource schools with high student-teacher ratios and obsolete technology (Eamon, 2004).

These concerns are directly addressed by study results that suggest that low or limited computer usage is a result of not having a computer in the home and that as computer availability increases all types of usage increase, with the additional suggestion that non-academic computer use may have educational benefits (Eamon, 2004). Which indicates that access/exposure is a major key to bridging the digital divide. This is supported by the development of the eight(8) "sense-making strategies" described by Barbatsis et al (2004, p.46) and is further supported by, "Current research indicates a relationship between possessing computer skills and attaining or

maintaining employment (Groneman, 2000). Duranton (2000, p.1) state that 'technology and the way it has evolved are viewed by many as a very likely causal factor for this widespread rise in [wage] inequalities.' Such foreboding makes evident the value of computer access and skills" (Norris & Conceicao, 2004).

At-Risk-Youth and Technology

Closely allied to The Digital Divide and Access is At-Risk-Youth and Technology. When considered in this context the results of certain studies take on a direct significance to this project, "there is a 'digital divide' between poor and non-poor young adolescents in home computer access that is independent of any effects of the youth's age, gender, race/ethnicity, and the marital status and education of the youth's mother. However, when a home computer was present, poor youth were just as likely to use the home computer for academic purposes as were non-poor youth" (Eamon, 2004, p.107). In addition, users on both sides of the Digital Divide have been shown to have differing expectations for Web sites. Well-off users expect usability and clarity while those less well-off care most for the tone or feel of the site. They show a preference for sites that they feel speak to them. When

these types of sites are provided, the users do not notice the Digital Divide (Norris & Conceicao, 2004).

The systems put in place to address the inequalities of access are being minimized and cutback by the current administration, "the idea of a digital divide faced criticism from FCC Chairman Powell for being an ill-advised version of the "Mercedes divide" in the United States: Some people can afford expensive luxury cars, others cannot, but that is the American way" and, "The phrase 'digital opportunity' replaced the divide, putting a blandly positive spin on all things computer related" while, "Numerous programs funded in the late 1990s by the federal government (NTIA's Technology Opportunity Program, the Department of Education's Community Technology Centers programs, Housing and Urban Development's Neighborhood Networks Program) have been slashed" (All Strover, 2003, p.275).

There are bright spots that shine in direct opposition to the official policies. In Chicago a former Chicago Housing Authority project has been purchased and redeveloped by Don Samuelson, a 62 year old ex-assistant director of the Illinois Housing Development Authority. The project has all units wireless Internet accessible and the management is trying to provide refurbished computers

(Journal of Housing and Community Development, 2004, p.17). Also, "SimDesk offers cash-strapped schools and universities an affordable way to provide technology access to all students…SimDesk, eliminates barriers that today's companies-with their complex licensing schemes and closed systems-have created and maintain at the expense of a large part of the U.S. and worldwide populations" (DiGiorgio, 2004).

The basic requirements are known, we must provide these students with a richer, more challenging, more user friendly learning environment or we risk losing some or all of them. One way to begin is with the stated purpose of making learning fun for every student.

Web Page Design and Usability

In the past there has been considerable debate on and research into the area of Web Page Design and Usability. Recently with the success of several very different and highly usable web sites some of the basic issues have started to resolve themselves. Some of this information is of direct relevance to this project. This will be considered as well as information contained in the literature.

There are three broad areas of concern to be considered. These are: 1) General site and page layout; 2) Usability with respect to the expected and/or target users; and, 3) Limitations of and terms and conditions of use. Each of these areas is then broken down into more specific topics for discussion.

General Layout:

Site Layout and Navigation - The general layout of the first page sets the tone for an entire site, with the strongest enhancement or detraction being the site navigational method used. On many sites several layouts and navigational methods are used very effectively.

Site Material Presentation - The next area of enhancement or detraction is the texture or feel of the site. How the material is presented, dryly and formally, technically and directly, mater-of-factly and warmly, or some combination is a key consideration. This will directly effect whether or not the target users feel comfortable on the site.

Target User Experience Level:

Experienced Users - Teachers with who are acquainted with the internet and are comfortable using it as a resource. This group should include all new teachers due to the State's technology requirement.

Novice Users - Teachers not acquainted and/or not comfortable with the internet and its uses. This group should only include experienced teachers who have little or no computer and/or internet experience.

Terms and Conditions of Use and Limitations of Use:

Explicit vs Implicit - All Terms and Conditions of Use and Limitations of Use are intended to be fully discussed and enumerated. When there is any ambiguity or question the site bulletin board will be used for discussions and all decisions will be posted both on the site and as e-mails to discussion participants/subjects. All decisions for the site will be made by the site manager.

Consequences - Any person or organization that knowingly violates any of the Terms and Conditions of Use, Limitations of Use, or posted decisions of the site manager may be immediately banned from any site use or participation.

Several designs with different and/or overlapping features have been proposed as the optimal design for web sites; and, while these are supported to a greater or lesser degree in the literature(Neo, 2003 ;Fu & Salvendy, 2002; and Hung & Chen, 2001), the web itself provides some insight into a much less dogmatic, more flexible design

philosophy. This philosophy might be summarized by the statement; if it works and fits the site, use it. There are any number of very successful sites on the web, commercial and otherwise, that, although they appear to be completely different in design and execution, utilize this philosophy to a greater or lesser degree (examples include Casio Watches, California Teachers Association [CTA], Arbor Scientific, Pacific Water Quality Association [PWQA], National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [NOAA], Southwest Airlines, and California State University at San Bernardino [CSUSB]).

Summary

The literature important to the project was presented in Chapter Two, and focuses on three areas. The first area explores "The Digital Divide and Accessibility." The second area further refines the topic of "At-Risk-Youth and Technology." The third area is a discussion of "Web Page Design and Usability." The literature review reveals an absence of and a need for a web-based teacher resource that evaluates and ranks academic content materials from the frame of reference of student fun.

CHAPTER THREE

PROJECT DESIGN PROCESSES

Introduction

No resource has been found providing standards based content that is rated by students. This project is a direct response in answer to this need. Classroom teachers will provide Lesson Plans, Labs, Unit Plans and other academic content for evaluation of fun factor by the students actually involved with the material in the classroom. Expandability is a basic design element of this project, the intention being to start with a single department at a single school and, eventually expanding to cover all levels of education. The desired result will be the first resource that provides academic content that students have found to be interesting, engaging, and fun to be involved with.

Analysis

Multiple searches of both the available literature and the internet in general indicate an absence of any resource that could be considered a teacher clearing house based on content standards and student evaluation of how much fun the material is. This situation calls for the creation of just such a resource.

After searches a decision was made to explore the feasibility and demand for such a resource. This was accomplished by a survey of 15 teachers at a single continuation high school. The survey consisted of two parts. The first part had two questions on computer literacy and skill level, both self evaluated. The second part originally had six questions about resource desirability, feasibility and layout; a seventh was added after it was suggested by the first survey participant.

The questions and responses are presented in APPENDIX B. For the purposes of this section, the results are summarized here. Part One: Question 1 - Computer competency reflects the new technology competency requirements in California with all but one being average or above. Question 2 - Internet use comfort level shows a more even split with six only somewhat comfortable and eight above that level.

Part Two: Questions One and Two - Questions regarding potential use and feedback had overwhelmingly positive responses. Question Three - Potentially helpful by unanimous response. Question Four - All standard lesson plan formats are acceptable with format choice being desirable. Question Five - Web page format, combination shown to be the clear choice. Question Six - Suggestions

for considered improvement were the least definitive. Question Seven - Surfaced concerns about feedback. These responses provided the basis for fine tuning the basic idea into the original project as described.

Design

Design of the project centered in two main areas. The first was protocols or rules for usage, and the second was site layout and focus.

Usage protocols are necessary to address all areas of site usage in a straightforward manner. They are published as a part of the web site. First, to inform all users and potential users of the rules under which the site operates, ex. - Basic Privacy Rights: No users' information will ever be sold; and, no users information will ever be released with out express permission from that user. Second, to inform all users and potential users of the responsibilities and limits of usage, ex. - Administrators: Administrators are welcome as long as they identify themselves as such; failure to self identify may result in a ban from the web site. And, third, to inform all users and potential users of the purpose of the web site and how it works, ex. - Purpose: A resource for

content materials, unit plans, lesson plans, labs, etc. that are fun for students while being directly tied to the State standards.

Site design requirements were considered from many different perspectives, ease of navigation, design repeatability and basic format being among them. To address these requirements a decision was made to design the original site as a single department, Science, at a specific type of school for at-risk youth, Continuation High School. The site is meant to be easily expandable to include all departments in a single type of school. Later, it can be expanded to many different types of schools for at-risk youth and, hopefully, to all public schools.

Ease of navigation was addressed by providing navigation buttons on the left side of the page as well as imbedded links in the text. Design repeatability was incorporated by using a Web page template as a basis for all pages on the site. Basic format was suggested by the initial classroom teacher surveys.

Development

Two screen shots of the project Web pages are provided in APPENDIX C. These shots illustrate the steps in the development of the project.

The decision to use navigation buttons on the left side of the page and imbedded links for ease of navigation was arrived at as a result of the classroom teacher survey provided in APPENDIX B. The left side was a personal choice of the designer.

The concept of design repeatability or a cookie cutter approach to a series of Web pages was developed to give a consistent appearance to all pages produced specifically for this project. This standard format is intended to provide the user with a sense of familiarity as the user moves from page to page of the project.

The basic format for the project was suggested by the classroom teacher survey provided in APPENDIX B. The design was further refined by using the same five navigation buttons as the minimum provided on every page of the project. These buttons are Home, Protocols, Join the site, Content and Contact Us.

The project concept was initially validated by manual testing at a continuation high school in a single department. In the Science department the three teachers

agreed to ask their students to evaluate the fun quotient of all lessons, labs and units presented over a three week period. The results were collated and shared among the participating teachers. The design and development of the current project is a direct result of this testing.

Implementation

The implementation of this project will consist of taking it from the current proposed format; redesigning the project to include data based linkage and interaction; securing an internet hosting location; soliciting use of the project from current classroom teachers, first on a limited basis and then on a general use scale; and, continually updating the project to keep it current, both in content and in usability.

Evaluation

The evaluation of this project is to be an on-going process, which will include all of the following:
1) Limited testing of the redesigned prototype in a single continuation high school science department with all teachers in the department included. 2) Participation growth to several, approximately four to six, similar continuation high school science departments. 3) Expansion of the project to all standards based content areas of the

high school curriculum. 4) Further expansion to all schools that provide services to at risk youth and/or at risk young adults and, to 5) High Schools in general. Included in all these steps will be constant feedback in the form of user surveys, both formal and random individual questions asked of any and all users.

Summary

The fact that no resource can be found where content is based in standards and rated by a student fun factor suggests strongly just such a resource. This project has been specifically developed to meet these requirements. Further, it is designed to be expandable, being first proven in one department, expanded to cover all academic areas that are delineated by State or National standards, expanded to all areas of the high school curriculum, and finally, expanded to all levels of education. All academic content will be user provided and student rated, resulting in the first resource that can provide educators with standards based materials that students have found to be fun, interesting, and engaging.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Included in Chapter Four was a presentation of the conclusions gleaned as a result of completing the project. Further, the recommendations extracted from the project are presented. Lastly, the Chapter concludes with a summary

Conclusions

The conclusions extracted from the project follow:

Since no resource of this kind can be found, this project is not only relevant, but it is also a much needed tool. Through classroom teachers it has the potential to provide at-risk-youth a vital bridge across the digital divide. The very absence of such a resource demands its creation. With the only exceptions being those within two years of retirement, every educator this project has been discussed with has shown enthusiasm and keen interest.

In California there is a requirement that new teachers have a minimum competency with computers and other education technology. Since this is not yet the case nationwide the website must be made as user friendly as possible, to promote general usability.

Finally, the interactive nature of the project and the imbedded evaluations, require the website be seamlessly connected to a data base with adequate storage capacity.

Recommendations

The recommendations resulting from the project follow.

1. The idea that learning should be enjoyable or fun is not new, the current literature provides many variants on the idea that to promote lifelong learning and learners the learning experience should be enjoyable, a synonym for fun. The reason for the lack of such a resource as this project is not a point for discussion in the confines of this project, it is enough to point out the lack and propose a solution. That solution being a properly developed and executed version of the project.
2. The type of resource that is called for is too large and complex to be properly addressed by a masters project. What is needed is a doctoral thesis or a business plan with adequate funding for proper development.

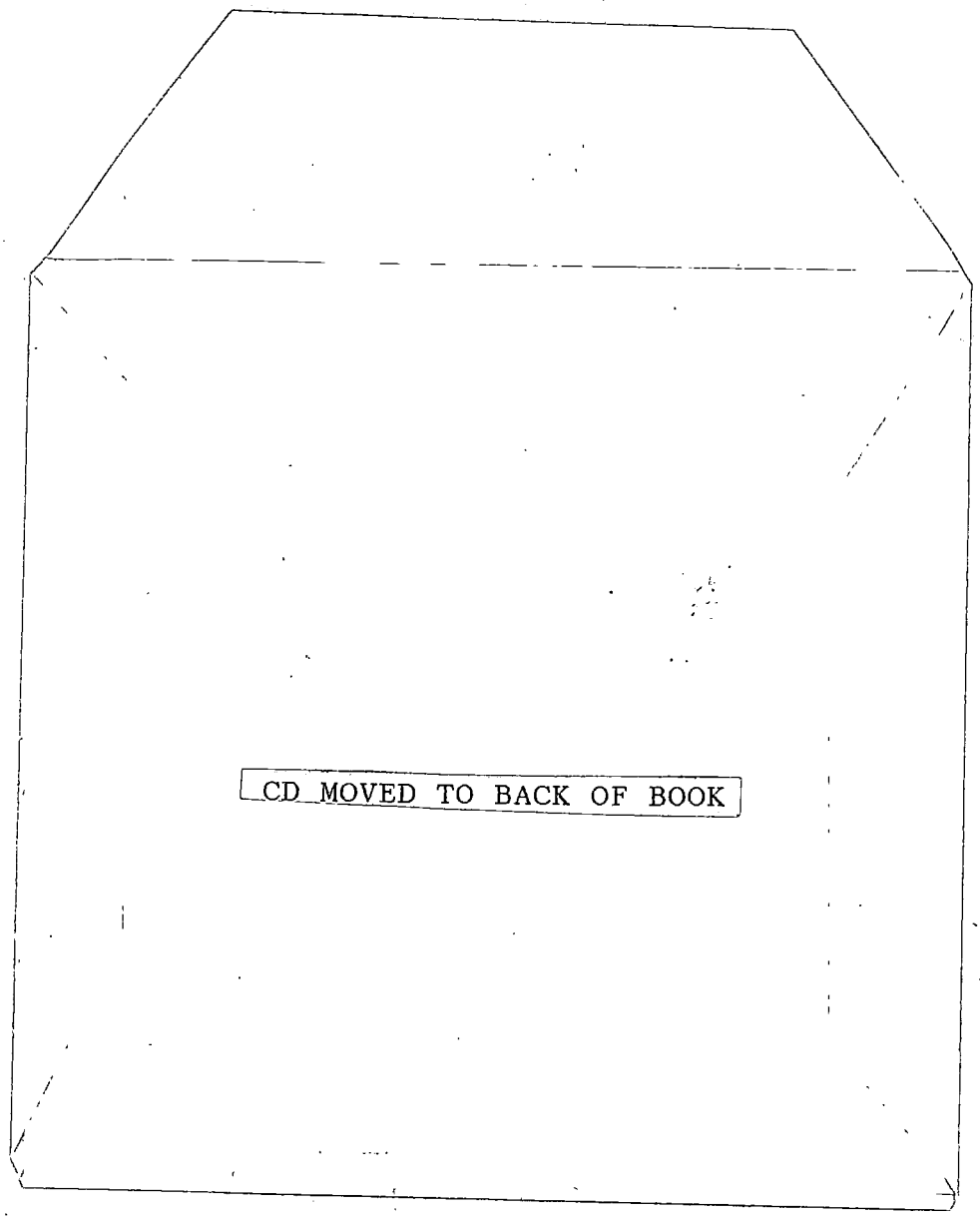
Summary

Chapter Four reviewed the conclusions extracted from the project. First, this project is both relevant and needed. Second, the Web site must have a high degree of user friendliness. Third, the Web site must have sufficient computing power and storage capacity.

Last, the recommendations derived from the project were presented. First, this Web site needs to be produced and, second the resources needed are beyond the scope of this project.

APPENDIX A

CD OF PROJECT


CD MOVED TO BACK OF BOOK

APPENDIX B:

INITIAL TEACHER FEASIBILITY

SURVEY

A feasibility survey of 15 teachers at a single continuation high school was undertaken. The survey consisted of two parts. The first part had two questions on computer literacy and skill level, both self evaluated. The second part originally had six questions about resource desirability, feasibility and layout; a seventh was added after it was suggested by the first survey participant.

For the survey, each participant was provided with background information through a short introductory discussion session where they could ask questions. This was followed by the survey as listed below:

PART 1

Question 1) What level of competency would you assign to yourself currently?

Responses were generally direct, 12 teachers, "Fair" or "Average" with two being "Excellent" or "Expert" and one being "None".

Question 2) How comfortable are you when using internet based resources?

Responses to this question differed. Eight teachers said they were "Very" or "Quite comfortable," while six teachers claimed to be only "Somewhat comfortable," and

one teacher responded with "As I do not use a computer, I am always uncomfortable around them."

PART 2

Question 1) If such a resource were available, would you make use of it?

Responses were very positive. 14 of the 15 teachers responded with "Yes" or "Definitely," only one teacher responded with "No."

Question 2) Would you be willing to provide feedback for the academic content of such a resource?

Responses were very positive again. 14 of the teachers responded with "Yes" or "No Problem," and, again one teacher responded with "No."

Question 3) In your opinion, would such a resource be of help to new and/or experienced teachers?

Responses to this question were mixed. While all the teachers surveyed said that such a resource would be of help to new teachers, the response was split regarding experienced teachers. Ten answered "Yes" for experienced teachers and five answered "No."

Question 4) Do you have a preference as to the format in which that the academic content will be delivered?

Responses were, again, mixed. One teacher simply answered "No," ten teachers responded with "Any standard

lesson plan format is OK." or a variation, while four teachers indicated that a choice of standard formats would be a highly desirable feature.

Question 5) What web page format would be most desirable to you?

A) All imbedded links for navigation/reference.

B) All buttons for navigation:

i. Side of page.

ii. Top of page.

iii. Bottom of page.

C) A combination of buttons and imbedded links.

Comment: Most successful web sites operate using C) above.

Responses were nearly unanimous with 14 teachers selecting the combination C) and one saying "no preference."

Question 6) Can you suggest any improvements or additional features?

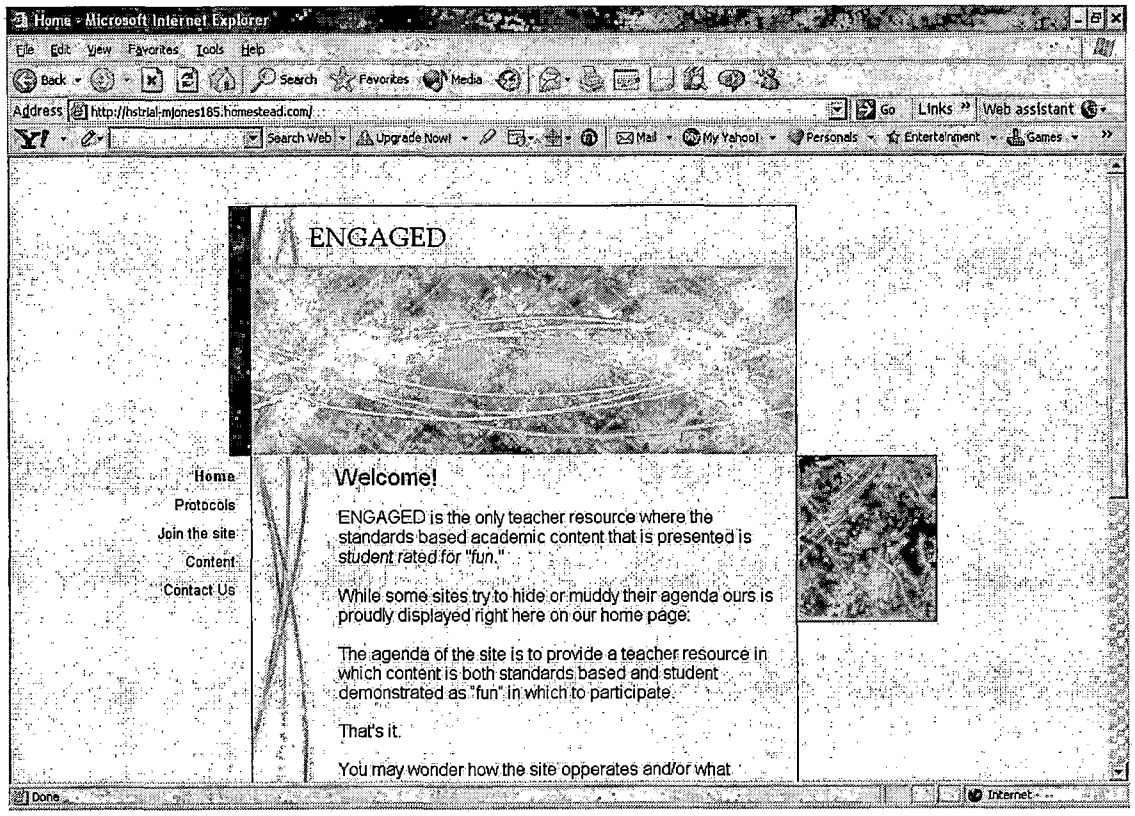
Responses ranged from the suggestion for the next question, to 13 teachers saying "I need to see what it looks like and try to use it before I can answer that," to one teacher simply saying "No."

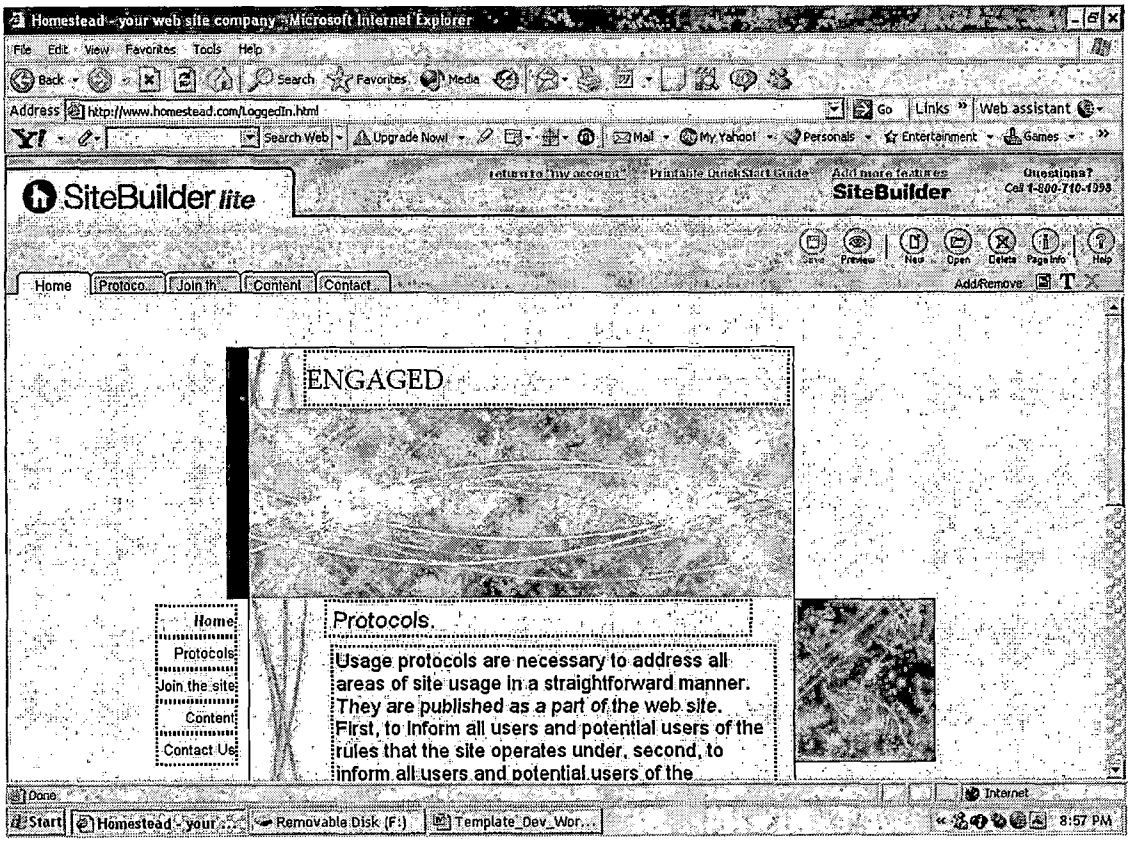
Question 7) Do you see any drawbacks to this concept?

Responses were varied both in content and intensity. One teacher stated with a worried look and tone "Without adequate feedback this idea may be irrelevant," while 13 teachers responded with comments like "No, it looks fine" and "No, this is something we've needed." The last teacher, the one who suggested this question, was concerned with feedback that was both accurate and timely.

APPENDIX C:

SAMPLE CONCEPT WEB PAGES


Home - Microsoft Internet Explorer
File Edit View Favorites Tools Help
Back Search Favorites Media
Address http://hstrial-mjones185.homestead.com/
Go Links Web assistant
Search Web Upgrade Now! Mail My Yahoo! Personals Entertainment Games
ENGAGED
Home
Protocols
Join the site
Content
Contact Us
Welcome!
ENGAGED is the only teacher resource where the standards based academic content that is presented is student rated for "fun."
While some sites try to hide or muddy their agenda ours is proudly displayed right here on our home page.
The agenda of the site is to provide a teacher resource in which content is both standards based and student demonstrated as "fun" in which to participate.
That's it.
You may wonder how the site opperates and/or what
Done
Internet


Homestead - your web site company - Microsoft Internet Explorer
File Edit View Favorites Tools Help
Address http://www.homestead.com/LoggedIn.html
SiteBuilder lite
Home
Protoco...
Join th...
Content
Contact
ENGAGED
Home
Protocols
Join the site
Content
Contact Us
Protocols.
Usage protocols are necessary to address all areas of site usage in a straightforward manner. They are published as a part of the web site. First, to inform all users and potential users of the rules that the site operates under, second, to inform all users and potential users of the
Done
Internet
Start
Homestead - your...
Removable Disk (F:)
Template_Dev_Wor...
8:57 PM

REFERENCES

Barbatsis, G., Camacho, M., & Jackson, L. (2004). Does it speak to me? Visual aesthetics and the digital divide. Visual Studies, 19(1), 36-51.

Bilyk, R. (2006, February). Fulfilling technologies broken promise: A perspective on educational technology. THE Journal. Retrieved February 23, 2006 from http://www.thejournal.com/articles/17933/

DiGiorgio, A. (2004). SimDesk Technologies sets its sights on eliminating the Digital Divide Q&A With SimDesk COO Louis A. Waters. THE Journal, 32(3), 8.

Eamon, M. K. (2004). Digital Divide in computer access and use between poor and non-poor youth. Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare XXXI(2), 91-112.

Fu, L. & Salvendy, G. (2002). The contribution of apparent and inherent usability to a user's satisfaction in a searching and browsing task on the Web. Ergonomics, 45(6), 415-424.

Harvey, S. (2004). Bridging the Digital Divide: How technology can change higher education delivery for high school students. Community College Journal of Research and Practice, 28, 73-74.

Hung, D. W. L. & Chen, D-T. (2001). Situated cognition, Vygotskian thought and learning from the communities of practice perspective: Implications for the design of Web-based E-learning. Education Media International.

Knoeppel, J. (2002). Turned off By tradition. California Continuation Education Association Document. Retrieved February 7, 2007 from http://www.cceanet.org/Documents/turnedoff.htm

Mervis, J. (2003). Aid to minority schools is political hot potato. Science, 301(5631), 286.

Miller, C. A., Fitch, T. & Marshall, J. L. (2003). Locus of control and at-risk youth: A comparison of regular education high school students and students in alternative schools. Education, 123(3), 548-551.

Mumford, R. (2004). Regulators choose universal access route to Digital Divide. Microwave Journal, 43.

National Association of Housing & Redevelopment. (2004, March/April). Legal professional with a "social" goal. Journal of Housing and Community Development, 17.

NCES National Center for Education Statistics (2006). FastFacts, What are the dropout rates of high school students? Retrieved March 22, 2006 from http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=16

Neo, M. (2003). Developing a collaborative learning environment using a web-based design. Journal of Computer Assisted Learning, 19, 462-473.

Norris, D. T. & Conceicao, S. (2004). Narrowing the Digital Divide in low-income, Urban communities. New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 101, 69-81.

Strover, S. (2003). Remapping the Digital Divide. The Information Society, 19, 275-277.

U.S. Census Bureau (2006). The Population Profile of the United Ststes: Dynamic Version, Educational attainment in 2004. Retrieved July 10, 2006 from http://www.census.gov/population/pop-profile/dynamic/EdAttainment.pdf

U.S. Census Bureau (2006). The Population Profile of the United States: Dynamic Version, Race and Hispanic origin, 2004. Retrieved July 10, 2006 from http://www.census.gov/population/pop-profile/dynamic/RACEHO.pdf

Varenhorst, B. B. (2004). Tapping the power of peer helping. Reclaiming Children and Youth, 13(3), 130-133.