

Second Edition: Fall 2010

LEARNING 2.0

FOR ASSOCIATIONS

by Jeff Cobb



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Praise for *Learning 2.0 for Associations*

“...Jeff delivers an easy-to-read primer on how to leverage social media tools to expand the learning value that associations deliver.”

—Mickie S. Rops, CAE / President, Mickie Rops Consulting Inc. / Chair, ASAE Professional Development Council / <http://msrops.blogs.com>

“*Learning 2.0 for Associations* informs and reminds us that flexibility is the key.”

—Mary Knowles / Distance Learning Specialist and Association Professional

“...a must-read for any association executive.”

—Matt Rumbaugh / Senior Manager, Education and Training, National Glass Association / <http://www.glass.org>

“If you are trying to figure out how to best meld the latest social networking tools with your association's learning efforts then this quick read from Jeff Cobb is a great place to start.”

—Jack Bruggeman / Director, Special Publishing, American Society of Health-System Pharmacists / <http://www.ashp.org>

See the end of the report for more praise for *Learning 2.0 for Associations*.

Praise for *Learning 2.0 for Associations*

“Jeff has provided a comprehensive overview of the state of technology today, what to anticipate in the future, and, most importantly, how other associations are utilizing these tools to better serve their members.”

—Barbara Swarthout, CEBS, SPHR / Director,
E-learning Programs, International Foundation
of Employee Benefit Plans /
<http://www.ifebp.org>

“Jeff has figured out how to provide the right amount of information for the reader without overwhelming.”

—Joseph W. Niegoski / Director,
Educational Services, American Public
Transportation Association /
<http://www.apta.com>

“*Learning 2.0 for Associations* demystifies the evolution of learning into the Web 2.0 environment and offers practical ideas for integrating social media into your learning program.”

—Tony Ellis / Director of Education,
National Association of College Stores /
<http://www.nacs.org>

See the end of the report for more praise for *Learning 2.0 for Associations*.

Praise for *Learning 2.0 for Associations*

“Learning 2.0 for Associations
offers concrete examples and
suggestions and makes the
transition to learning 2.0 seem
both exciting and manageable.”

—Betsy Garman / Publications and Distance
Learning Specialist, American Association for
Clinical Chemistry / <http://www.aacc.org>

“I hope the specific association examples cited by Jeff will force
decision makers to embrace the new learning models and support
the endeavors with ample resources and staffing.”

—Thomas L. Stefaniak, CAE / Knowledge Network Director, International City/County
Management Association / <http://www.icma.org>

“Use this great report and its accompanying
resource Web site as a conversation-starter and
guide!”

—Kathleen M. Edwards, CAE / the Learning Evangelist,
CompassPoints / <http://learningevangelist.com>

See the end of the report for more praise for *Learning 2.0 for Associations*.

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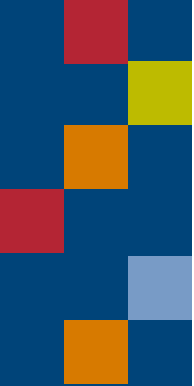
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Preface to the Second Edition


In late 2007, I put together a PowerPoint presentation that would become the basis for the first edition of *Learning 2.0 for Associations*. At that time, it was already clear that a range of factors were altering the landscape of lifelong learning and continuing education. Most prominent among these was the growing availability of new tools for communication, collaboration, and content authoring on the Web. It was rapidly becoming easier, cheaper, and faster for nearly anyone to post, share, and access learning content and to engage in learning interactions with other people around the world. I had little doubt that the new opportunities created by social media and “Web 2.0” would have a significant impact on how trade and professional associations provide education for their members and other stakeholders.

Fast forward three years, and the picture does not seem quite so clear. On the one hand, there is little doubt that social media has created a stir in the association sector. Just take a look at the agenda for a typical meeting of association executives, and you may wonder if there is any topic more important. On the other hand, those leading an association’s social media efforts are more likely to be found in the marketing, technology, or meetings area of



the organization than in the education department. This does not mean that social media is not serving the purposes of education. What it does mean, however, is that a great deal of the learning value that organizations deliver is happening independently of what is formally defined as education.

Arguably, there is nothing new in this situation—it has always been the case that associations provide much of their value through connecting members to each other. But something has clearly changed. Never before have there been such opportunities for members and other stakeholders to connect directly, without the association as an intermediary. And the speed, scale, and scope of knowledge creation and distribution across networks is now staggering. Association educators, in my opinion, stand at a crossroads. In one direction, there lies the future of a product manager: someone who oversees the creation of training materials, discrete events, and perhaps certificate or certification programs. In the other direction lies the future of a learning innovator and strategist: someone who provides vision and leads the development of capability across the sector the organization serves. In reality, the average association educator will likely have to play both roles, but it is the latter that will create differentiating value for the organization.



Learning 2.0 is about much more than simply integrating social media into education. It is about maximizing the potential that the new opportunities for learning represent. Learners, of course, will take advantage of the opportunities regardless of anything that associations do—they now have the ability to connect and learn in pretty much any way they want. That was already true three years ago; it is even truer now. While that fact may seem daunting, it also represents a tremendous opportunity. Figuring out how to get the most out of the vast range of learning opportunities now available online and off is no easy task. It is an area where association educators can clearly lead the way and provide great value to their audience. My hope is that this book will be one useful tool in helping that happen.

Jeff Cobb

Carrboro, NC

September 2010

What's Changed and What Hasn't

In revising this report, I've tried as much as possible to stick to the intent of the first version, which was to offer just enough information to be useful, but not so much as to be overwhelming. My hope is that *Learning 2.0 for Associations* can continue to serve as a resource for those who are just entering the world of learning 2.0 as well as for those who are determined to bring others along.

The basic overview of the evolution of learning covered at the beginning of the document is largely unchanged from the first edition. It seemed to me that the main points remain sound, though I have inserted a few references to mobile technologies that were not in the first edition.

One or two of the examples of learning 2.0 from the first version remain in this version, but for the most part the previous examples have been replaced with new ones, and there is a greater number of examples overall. Additionally, I have cut the resources section from this version of the document and moved it online so that it will be possible to continue adding new examples and related resources over time.

With respect to specific tools and approaches for learning 2.0, this version covers Twitter (a platform that got only a passing mention in the previous version), offers more content on social networks, and also devotes a bit more space to personal learning environments (PLES), a concept that is gaining ground largely as a result of what learning 2.0 has made possible.

Finally, while the original version of this document was called an e-book, I've decided to drop that term in the current version. That was problematic even in 2008 among readers who were not familiar with the e-book as a veritable institution in the Internet marketing world. Since then, the introduction of the Kindle, iPad, and other book-reader applications have made "e-book" an even more slippery term. So, I'm just calling this document a report this time around. That said, I hope to make an e-book version of it—in the Amazon and Apple meaning of the word—available sometime soon.




Introduction

This report considers how approaches to learning have evolved and what impact the newer generation of Internet and communication technologies are having. In it you will find examples of ways in which associations are using these new technologies and what possibilities they may represent for your organization's professional development and other learning initiatives. In some cases the examples are from formal education initiatives, but in many cases they are not—one of the defining characteristics of learning 2.0 is that it often happens outside the boundaries of formal education.

For readers who are not connected with a trade or professional association, it is worth noting that while the examples used in this book are primarily from the association world, the concepts they illustrate apply broadly. Readers from other types of organization will find both the examples and the report in general to be useful.

This report assumes a high level of comfort with the Web, but it does not assume deep familiarity with social media tools. Nor does it assume sophisticated knowledge of learning theory. The examples cover general areas of social media and, to illustrate these areas,



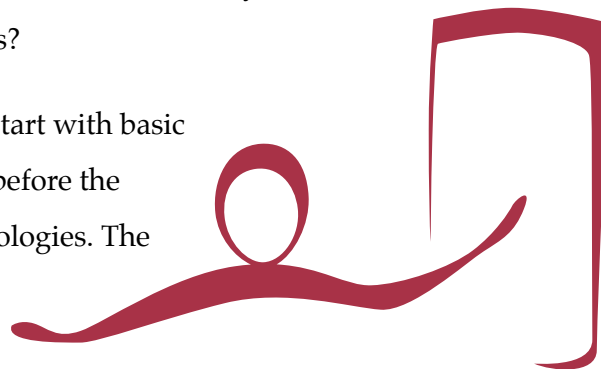
highlight tools that are likely familiar to most readers. Readers who already make significant use of social media technologies or who are deeply versed in learning theory may find some of the content a bit basic, but the examples and the general thinking about learning 2.0 as a concept may nonetheless be helpful. Additionally, those readers who are more advanced may find this report to be a useful tool for educating others in their organizations.

Let's start with a look at what I mean by the term "learning 2.0."

From Learning 1.0 to Learning 2.0

The idea of tacking a version number on the end of nearly any noun you can imagine has become trendy in recent years. In the world of software, from which this practice was borrowed, it makes a reasonable amount of sense. But for a broad concept like “learning,” the significance of this sort of versioning is less clear. What exactly has changed so much about how learning happens?

One of the ways to come at the question is to start with basic teaching and learning models as they existed before the introduction of modern communication technologies. The idea of an expert, tutor, or mentor who conveys knowledge and experience to a student or apprentice, for instance, has been around at least as long as recorded history. The teacher in this relationship holds the position of dominance, and, while there may be dialog between teacher and learner, the teacher is the authoritative source. The Socratic method, for instance, is a time-honored

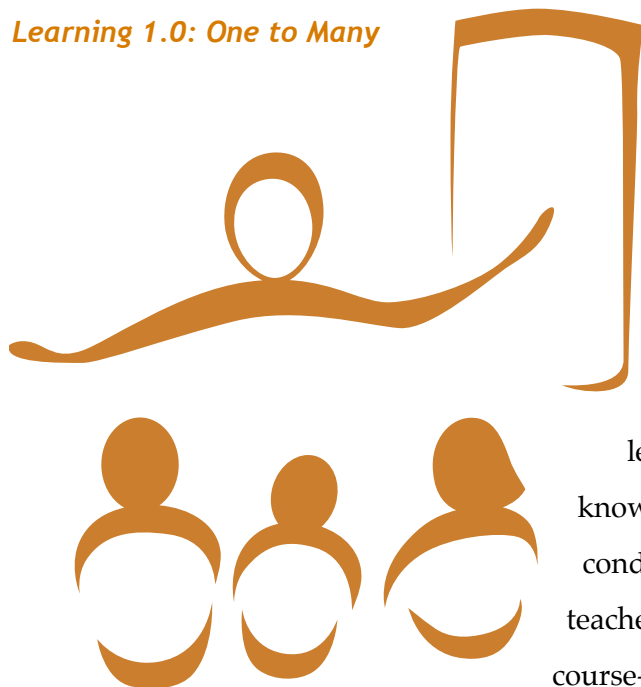


*Learning 1.0:
One to One*



approach to such dialog. Socrates engages the learner in a series of questions, but ultimately it is Socrates who has the answer.

Learning 1.0: One to Many



This sort of teacher-student relationship can be one-to-one or one-to-many. And, as education has evolved through the ages, there is as often as not an institution—be it the church, the state, or an accrediting body—that stands behind the teacher, lending credibility and authority. In any of these cases, the

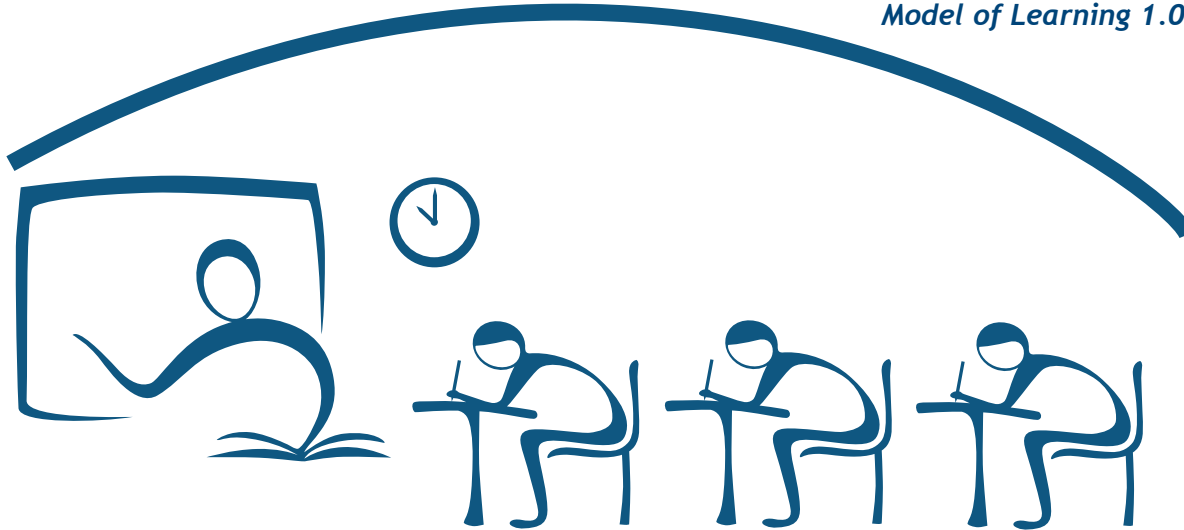
learner is primarily a vessel to be filled with knowledge, and the teacher is the authoritative conduit of that knowledge. The model is teacher-centric, institution-centric, or possibly course-centric, but it is not learner-centric. This

type of learning environment is greatly constrained by both place

and time; learning typically takes place at a specific time, within a clearly defined space and within a relatively limited geography.

A great deal has happened over time to further define the role of the teacher, and we have arrived at a fairly iconic set of views about what a teacher or trainer should be.

*Traditional Teacher-Student
Model of Learning 1.0*





Even so, up until relatively recently, the common understanding of “learning” has been based on the traditional, hierarchical teacher-student model.

And while the notion of distance learning can be found even in the wandering teachers of old, the dependency on the teacher as expert as well as constraints of geography have limited the possibilities for learning.



Early Distance Learning...

The teacher, in short, has usually had to be wherever the

students are and cannot be in two places at once.

This situation has changed, of course, and the first real wave of change came with the introduction of broadcast technologies that broke geographic and, to a certain extent, temporal constraints. While it is no



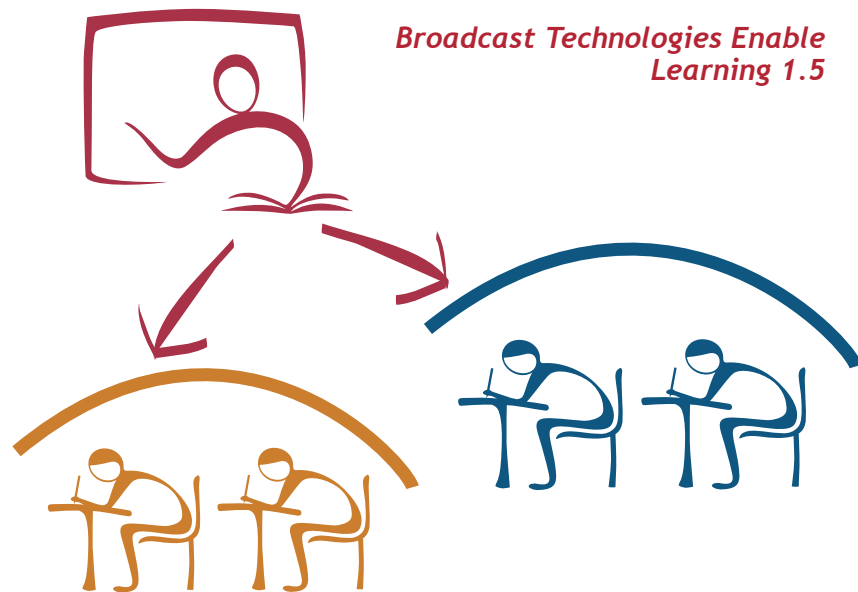
...Still Relied on the Teacher

longer anyone's idea of high technology, the printing press represented the first swell in this wave, and we have been riding the wave right up to our recent Internet past.

Television and recording technologies, in particular, made it possible for teachers, trainers, and other experts to reach

dispersed groups of learners simultaneously and even to reach the individual learner in the office or in the home.

If the old, pre-broadcast model can be thought of as learning 1.0, this might be labeled learning 1.5. Some of the constraints of the old model were thrown off, but the teacher-



student relationship didn't change dramatically. Learning was still teacher-centric, institution-centric, or course-centric, but not really learner-centric.

This was true—and still is true—in many of the learning paradigms that exist on the Internet. Most learning scenarios are driven by the notion of an authoritative “expert,” even if no teacher figure seems to be present.

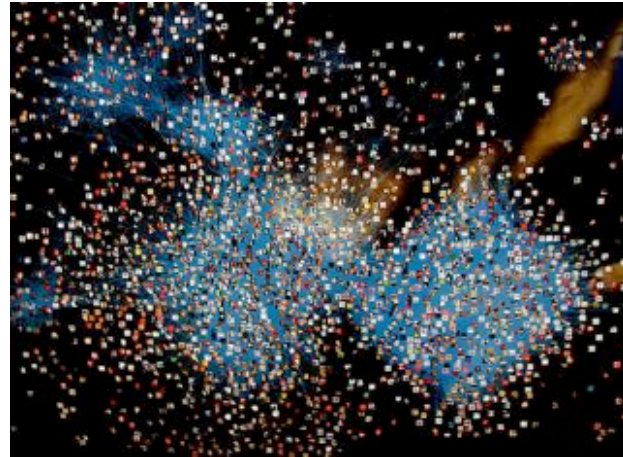
In the learning 2.0 paradigm, the old teacher-centric, expert-dominated model breaks down, and the remaining constraints on time and geography are loosened to the point of almost disappearing entirely. Learning dialogs and collaborations become dramatically more prevalent not just between teacher and learner, but between learner and learner.



*Learner-to-Learner Connections
Characterize Learning 2.0*

One of the key characteristics of the learning 2.0 environment is the ease and speed with which these connections can be formed. And, as they form, one of the effects is that the teacher's role as authoritative, dominant conduit of knowledge weakens. Learners themselves begin to drive many—and, in some cases, all—aspects of the learning experience, including the creation, co-creation, and sharing of key knowledge. Everyone is a learner, but everyone also has the potential to be a teacher.

In the learning 2.0 model, temporal and geographic constraints are dramatically loosened; the old expert-student paradigm shifts to a learning network, a learner-centric paradigm; and, last but certainly not least, the potential scale of the network assumes astronomical proportions. This image, for example, represents the millions of user connections that constitute the Flickr photo-sharing network. This is light years from learning 1.0.



Web 2.0 Universe: Flickr Galaxy

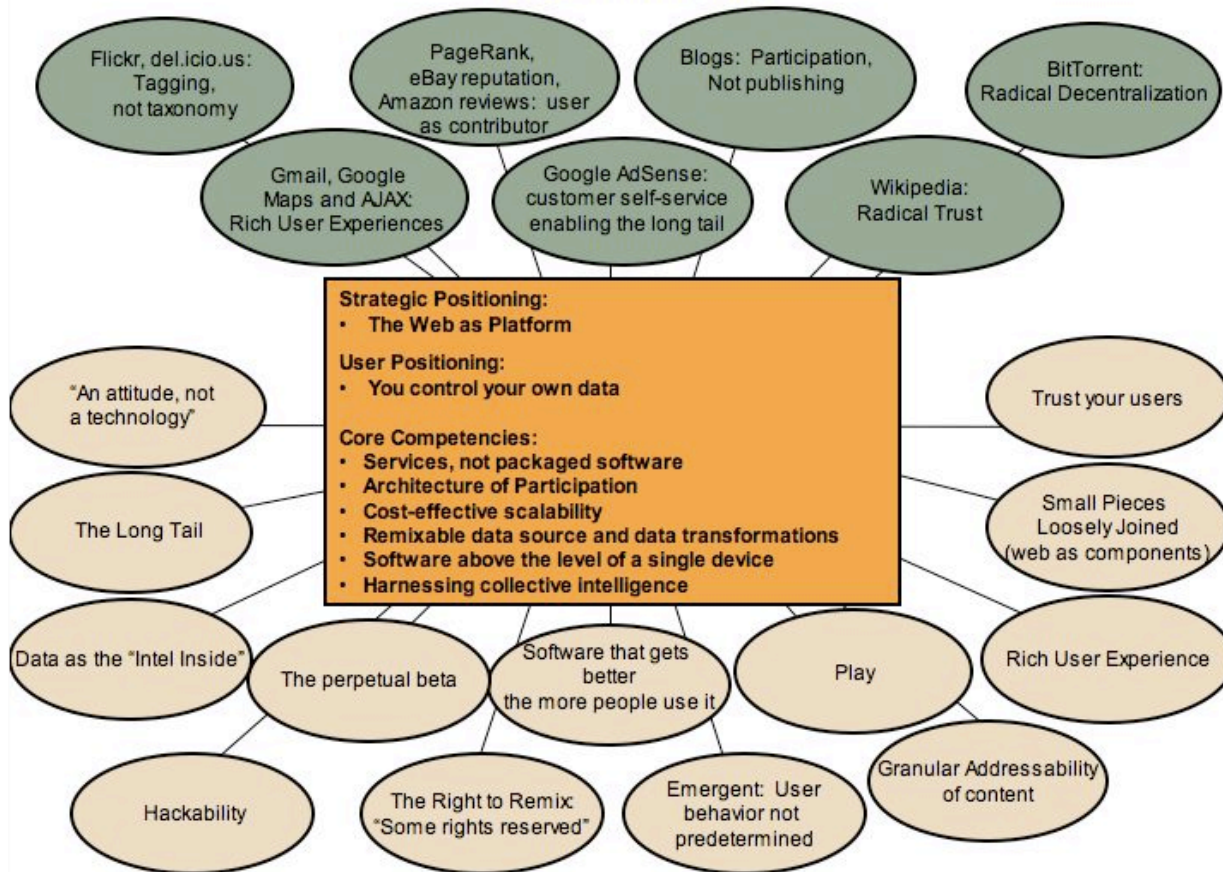
Image Source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/cobatt/34248855>

What Caused This?

Clearly I've left out quite a few details and exaggerated others in my description of the shift from learning 1.0 to learning 2.0 to help make the point. But it is also clear that something has fundamentally changed, and advances in Web technologies have played a major role. So how did all of this come about?


Before there was learning 2.0, there was Web 2.0. The term "Web 2.0" became popular in the aftermath of a conference held by O'Reilly Media in 2004. The image presented on the next page maps out some of the key conditions and innovations that Tim O'Reilly and others felt characterized a new generation of the Web that was fundamentally different from the one that had preceded it. While there is a lot of debate about what Web 2.0 really means and even its validity as a term, it is apparent that a handful of key changes in the Web started to emerge and solidify during the past few years.

- User control of content and the flow of data increased dramatically.
- The ability to interconnect applications increased dramatically.
- The ability to form meaningful communities and collaborate increased dramatically.



Web 2.0 Meme Map

Image Source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/timoreilly/44349798>



Now let's look at each change more closely.

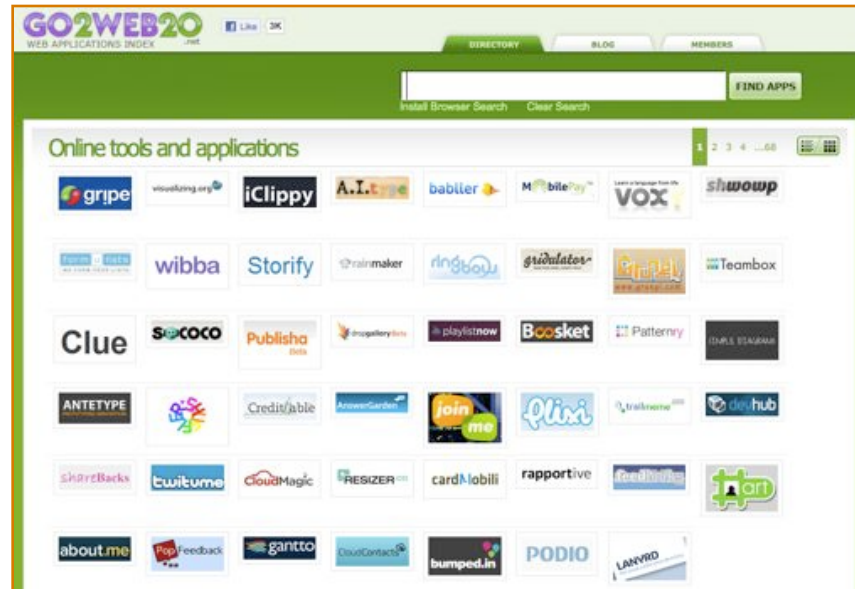
First, there has been a dramatic increase in user control over content and data. End users simply have much more ability to create meaningful content and manage data on the Web than ever before. What used to involve production crews, writers, editors, and teams of programmers can now be done by an individual with relatively inexpensive equipment and a few clicks of the mouse. And the evolution of powerful search technologies like the Google search engine has made it possible for those seeking content to find it with relative ease.

Second, there has been a significant increase in the ability to interconnect software applications using new technologies like XML-based Web services and other application programming interfaces, or APIs. If you have ever used your Facebook account information to login in to a Web site other than Facebook, then you have seen APIs at work. The rapid growth in “apps” for cell phones and other mobile devices like the iPad is another sign of how easy it is becoming to connect different technologies.

Third, there has been a tremendous leap in the ease with which users can form meaningful communities and collaborate with one another. The rise of the open source software

movement or the rapid growth of the user-generated encyclopedia Wikipedia are examples often cited in this regard, but there are many other types of productive communities that have formed using Web 2.0 tools. Part of YouTube's power is the tools it provides for easily commenting on, rating, and distributing videos, in addition to the baseline ability it offers for users to upload video. It is this social interaction with the user-produced media that leads to the term "social media."

The impact of this change on software developers and others who are continually thinking up new ways to use the Web can be seen in a site like Go2Web20.net, which maintains a catalog of the logos of every Web 2.0 application submitted to the site. It is a great place to poke around to see what is going on



3,000+ Applications at Go2Web20.net as of October 2010

Image Source: <http://www.go2web20.net>

and to try a few new tools. But there are a lot there. More than a thousand new applications have been added since the first edition of this report. In the meantime, we have also seen an explosion in “apps” intended for smart phone and other mobile devices. This leads to an obvious observation about Web 2.0 and the incorporation of social media technologies into your learning programs.

It can be overwhelming.



Image Source: South Park

It is a good idea to start simple.

Possibilities and Examples

So what are some ways in which associations and other nonprofits are actually using social media technologies right now, and how can they be incorporated into your learning programs?

In the following pages we'll look at concrete examples and consider the possibilities they represent. The range of technologies presented here is by no means exhaustive—the goal is to offer enough examples to inspire without overwhelming.

Podcasting

The examples in this report are arranged in a roughly logical order, and podcasting is first because in some ways it might be the least “2.0” of the group. Most people are familiar with podcasting at this point, if only because of the huge success and ubiquity of Apple’s iPod. Basically, podcasting enables you to capture audio content or audio and video content easily using

tools like the open source sound editing application Audacity, Apple’s Garage Band, or a variety of Web-based services. It is then possible to provide distributed access to the content using one of the key technologies of Web 2.0: really simple syndication, or RSS. Without going too deeply into the details, RSS provides a way for podcasts and other types of content to be packaged up and sent across the Web to anyone who asks for them. It’s a bit

Podcast Possibilities

- Broadcasting important information
- Interviewing experts
- Sharing conference sessions
- Encouraging learners to produce content

like the radio frequency of the Web, except that it has more in common with amateur “ham” radio than big-time commercial radio because it enables pretty much anyone to be both a broadcaster and a receiver using standard computer equipment and an Internet connection.

The reason podcasting might be considered the least “2.0” of the technologies discussed in this report is because it has tended to be used more as a broadcast medium than as a

The screenshot shows the FICPA website's Podcasts page. The page has a blue header with the FICPA logo and navigation links: About/Join, Continuing Education, Members, CPA Resources, Future CPAs, For the Public, and Gov. Affairs. Below the header, there's a search bar and a breadcrumb trail: You Are Here: Home > Continuing Education > Podcasts. The main content area is titled "Podcasts (Pre-recorded audio)" and features a "Learn" banner with a key and headphones. The text explains that FICPA provides weekly tax updates via podcast, which can be listened to on a computer or iPod. It also lists several podcasts, including "Federal Tax Update" and "Special Podcast - Creating Small Business Jobs Act of 2010". Social media links for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr, YouTube, and FICPA Blog are provided on the left side.

Example Site: <http://www.ficpa.org/Content/CPE/Podcasts.aspx>

community tool or user production medium—at least in the association sector. Even so, the ability to produce and broadcast important information easily is a very powerful tool, even if it does have as much affinity with learning 1.5

approaches as with 2.0 approaches. The Florida Institute of CPAs, for example, uses podcasting as a way to deliver weekly tax updates to its members. Another particularly powerful use of podcasting is the ability to interview stakeholders in your field and among your membership base and then share that information broadly. This can be done at conferences, with a simple handheld digital recorder, or at any time by using a Web-based telephony service like Skype—which is free in most instances—along with simple recording software. Many conference call services also now offer the ability to record calls in a digital format, making it possible to access the recording as a Web-based audio file.

Similarly, place-based conference sessions can be captured and distributed using simple digital recording tools and standard podcasting technologies. In fact, the great ease with which podcast content can be produced leads to one of its most compelling educational uses—namely, the ability for learners themselves to produce and share content and thereby learn by doing rather than by simply reading or hearing.

Like most of the other types of media I discuss throughout this report, audio content can also serve as a compelling “social learning object”—a focal point that helps to spark comments and dialog among community members. Depending on the audience and the

learning approach, it may even make sense to transcribe the audio file so it's easier for learners to review and reference. Using Web-based outsourcing marketplaces like Elance, it is now quite easy to have a transcript produced rapidly and at low cost, making podcasts a great potential source for producing learning products in other formats.

For other podcasting examples and resources, visit <http://www.tagoras.com/learning20/podcasting>

Blogging

Along with podcasting, blogging is one of the new media tools that is relatively easy for even those with an “old media” mindset to grasp. In simplest terms, a blog is nothing more than a powerful but easy-to-use Web publishing engine. Using a free platform like WordPress or Blogger, anyone with a browser and an Internet connection can set a blog up in a few minutes and start publishing text, images, videos, and a variety of other media. And, according to the Technorati’s State of the Blogosphere 2009 report (<http://technorati.com/blogging/feature/state-of-the-blogosphere-2009>), plenty of people have gravitated towards blogging. There are more than 130 million blogs on the Web, and 77 percent of Internet users read blogs.

In contrast to the audio-driven content of podcasts, blog content tends to be primarily text-based, though blogs can include a variety of other media or even be primarily video-driven. A blog established by a former president of the American Society for Microbiology is typical—an individual with passion for and knowledge about a particular topic or set of topics posts information, opinions, and resources on a regular basis for interested others to access and comment on. Readers may access the blog content by going to the blog site, by subscribing to the blog’s RSS feed using one of many options, including the free Web-based

RSS reader Google Reader, the RSS feature in Microsoft Outlook, or by receiving new postings via e-mail.

As the American Society for Microbiology blog suggests, blogging can be a great way to tap not just staff but also member expertise to generate and share knowledge with your stakeholders. Aside from providing day-to-day information, blogs can help extend the impact of conferences and other learning events. A significant number of bloggers have begun posting before, during, and after the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) annual meetings to share information from the sessions along with their

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR MICROBIOLOGY

Small Things Considered
— The Microbe Blog —

By Elio & Merry
(Roselio Schaechter and Merry Youle)

October 11, 2010

Cheap Exports
by Daniel Smith

Evolution is often thought of in functional terms. Mutations that improve or diversify a protein's function are selected for, whereas disruptive mutations are selected against. However, economy can also play a role in protein evolution.

Amino acids used in proteins vary in size, complexity and chemical characteristics, which makes some cheaper to synthesize than others. Consequently, some proteins are more economical to produce than others. Previous studies (click here and here) have shown that abundant proteins are often less expensive to make, thus reducing their cellular cost. However, the connection between a protein's location and its expense has not been appreciated. Recently, the ASM online journal mBio published our paper, *Economical Evolution: Microbes Reduce the Synthetic Cost of Extracellular Proteins*, which demonstrates that proteins destined for locations outside the cell cost less to produce than intracellular ones.

I became interested in the idea of protein economics while in Matthew Chapman's

ROSELIO SCHAECHTER
The purpose of this blog is to share my appreciation for the width and depth of the microbial activities on this planet. I will emphasize the unusual and the unexpected phenomena for which I have a special fascination... (more)

MERRY YOULE
On the first day of February, 2007, I

Cheap Exports. Source.

Example Site: <http://schaechter.asmblog.org>

personal views. The ASAE Acronym blog also publishes links to a wide variety of member blogs in which meeting attendees (and even some non-attendees) share valuable knowledge and learning.

In a similar way, blogging can help build on and extend the impact of on-demand learning modules or any other learning event, whether real-time or self-paced.

Blog Possibilities

- Postings to supplement events or on-demand learning
- Journaling for learners and personal learning environments (PLE)
- Group projects to co-produce content
- Blog networks for trainers and/or members

To an even greater degree than podcasting, blogging makes it easy for learners themselves to create and share content. It can be useful for group-oriented projects in which learners collaborate in developing content, or it can be a very powerful personal learning tool for the individual learner. The process of consistently monitoring and writing about a particular set of topics generally results in much deeper

understanding of those topics. And a learner can use an RSS reader—an easy, informal personal learning tool—to collect, organize, and read blogs of particular interest on an ongoing basis.

In publishing a blog, associations might also tap multiple members and employees to participate. ASAE's own Acronym blog, for instance, features posts by a number of ASAE staff as well as by guest bloggers from the membership base.

For other blogging examples and resources, visit <http://www.tagoras.com/learning20/blogs>

Video on Demand

One factor driving the popularity of blogging is the tremendous reduction in cost and complexity it represents compared to older, more capital-intensive publishing models,

Video-on-Demand Possibilities

- Educational interviews and storytelling
- Educational marketing
- Embedded in other learning environments
- Event support and continuation

whether in the print world or even on the Web. In the world of video, a similar reduction in cost and complexity has had an even greater impact.

While both video and film had a relatively long and rich tradition in education before the advent of Web 2.0 technologies, the start-up costs associated with production and distribution were generally well beyond the means of individuals or even most organizations. Advances in digital

technology, the Web, mobile networks, and RSS have dramatically altered this situation.

An interview similar to the one pictured here in an Alzheimer's Association video on YouTube might be created with a low-cost digital video camera, perhaps some basic lighting, and video editing software such as the iMovie application included with Apple computers, the free Windows Movie Maker and Windows Live Movie Maker available for PCs, or even the Web-based editing tool available on YouTube. Additionally, tools like Screenflow (Mac only), Camtasia Studio (Mac and PC), Adobe Captivate (Mac and PC), and Articulate (PC



Example Site: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6IA1P2tF0o>

only) make it possible to record and editing videos based on PowerPoint presentations and other activities on your computer desktop.

The bottom line is that a relatively sophisticated and yet user-friendly video production set-up can now be assembled for well under \$1,000, and an account for posting and distributing the videos on the Web can be had for free through YouTube or a variety of other services. If your organization happens to be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, YouTube has a program (<http://www.youtube.com/nonprofits>), which provides for increased upload capability and broad promotion of your videos.

So video on demand is relatively easy to do, and picturing the possibilities it offers is easy for most educators. Recording and publishing conference sessions (or even broadcasting them live, using a service like UStream), interviewing experts and other stakeholders, and capturing stories to bring learning objectives to life are all readily achievable. And video uploaded into a service like YouTube can be made available through a standard Web site, a blog, a social networking site like Facebook, or other Web-based learning environments. Like audio content or a blog post, video can often serve as valuable “social learning objects” that help prompt discussion in formal and informal learning environments.

Additionally, the relatively low complexity and cost of producing and distributing on-demand video may open up opportunities to collaborate with the marketing and memberships functions in your organization in ways not feasible before.

For other video-on-demand examples and resources, visit <http://www.tagoras.com/learning20/video>

Photo- and Slide-Sharing

Two even lower-cost and lower-complexity approaches to sharing visual media online than video are slide-sharing and photo-sharing services. The keynote speaker at the Association Executives of North Carolina (AENC) 2009 annual Technology Showcase posted PowerPoint slides at a service called SlideShare, where users can view the slides online, comment on



Example site: <http://www.slideshare.net/AENC/work-20-tech-best-practices-aenc>

them, easily share them with others, and mark them as a favorite. If the person who posted the slides allows for it, SlideShare even provides the ability for viewers to download the presentation as a PowerPoint file. Additionally, SlideShare features the ability to easily add an audio track

to a slide deck, so a user can both see and hear the presentation.

Anyone who relies on PowerPoint as part of her delivery media for education can see the many ways in which a service like SlideShare can be of use. Simply making slides available from conferences and other learning events can be a valuable way of supporting an event and providing access to some of the resources it offers even after the event ends. With audio added, the slides can become a true on-demand e-learning experience.

A note of caution for slides without audio: Most PowerPoint presentations do not hold up well without a presenter. If your goal is simply to make slides available as a resource, this may not be a problem. If, however, you want your presentations to stand on their own, you may need your presenters to put a bit more work into them.

Slide-Sharing Possibilities

- Event support and continuation
- Group discussions of shared presentations
- Embedding presentations in sites and blogs

Photo-Sharing Possibilities

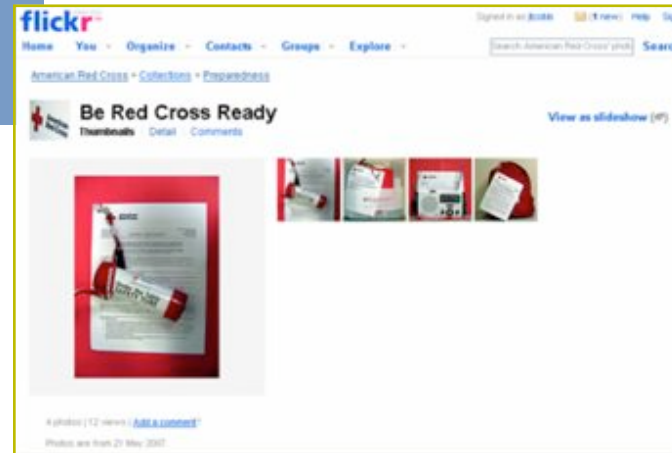
- Event support and continuation
- Maintaining stocks of training photos
- Encouraging members and/or chapters to share photos

has posted a group of photos related to its “Be Red Cross Ready” initiative.

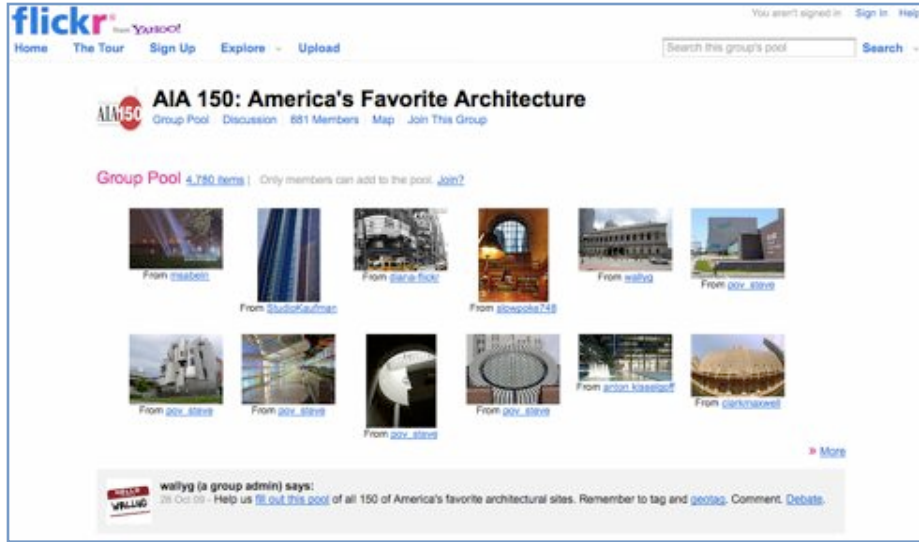
The American Institute of Architects used Flickr as a way to engage members and the general public around its AIA 150: America’s

With or without audio, slides uploaded this way can also easily be embedded in other Web sites and services, and the comment function opens up the possibility of a group engaging in discussion around a particular presentation.

Similar activities are possible with photo-sharing sites. In this example, the Red Cross



Example Site: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/americanredcross/509265613>



Example Site: <http://www.flickr.com/groups/aia150>

photos that you might use in multiple online education experiences, or encourage learners in your stakeholder base to share photos that support learning activities.

Favorite
Architecture
initiative.

Using a service
like Flickr, you
can post photos
from recent
learning events,
create a stock of

For other slide- and
photo-sharing examples
and resources, visit [http://
www.tagoras.com/
learning20/slide-photo](http://www.tagoras.com/learning20/slide-photo)

Social Bookmarking

A simple but still very powerful learning 2.0 approach that remains underutilized in the association world is social bookmarking as a tool to support and enhance learning activities.

Social Bookmarking Possibilities

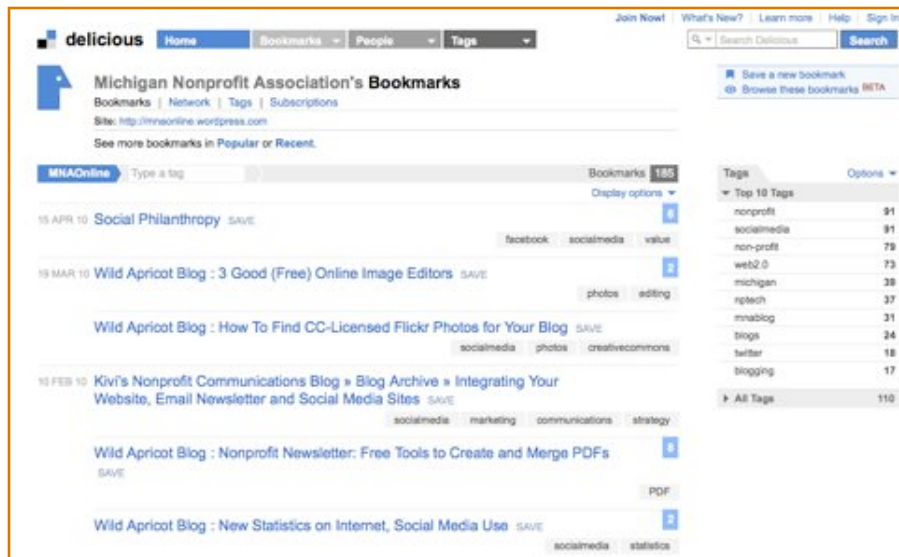
- Collecting and sharing educational resources
- Feeds to educational sites and blogs
- Supplements to events and on-demand training

The basic concept behind social bookmarking is that, instead of just bookmarking sites in a Favorites folder on your personal computer where no one else can see them, you bookmark them through a Web service that enables you to share them with other people. A user of the social bookmarking service Delicious can, for example, bookmark a variety of sites related to nonprofit

issues, as the Michigan Nonprofit Association has done. For each bookmarked item, it is possible to see how many other users have bookmarked the same item and also visit the bookmarks of each of these users to find related items of interest. A user can choose to subscribe to a particular tag, or keyword, such as “socialmedia,” and then easily track new

bookmarks that contain this tag from all Web users or specific users. The service also allows for creating a defined network of users to share bookmarks.

Social bookmarking can be a great way to collect a set of resources related to educational activities and share them broadly or with a specific group of users. Bookmarks can supplement place-based learning events as well as collaborative team activities, and, like most social media tools, they can be distributed via an RSS feed for inclusion in blogs and other Web destinations. Your organization might, for



Example Site: <http://www.delicious.com/MNAOnline>

instance, maintain a centralized list of key Web sites related to your industry and make it available to chapters or member organizations by RSS for inclusion on their Web sites.

**For other social bookmarking
examples and resources, visit
[http://www.tagoras.com/
learning20/bookmarking](http://www.tagoras.com/learning20/bookmarking)**

Wikis

While social bookmarking is mainly concerned with Web users collecting and sharing data about Web sites, wikis provide a way for users to come together and collectively create and maintain a Web site or work collaboratively on Web-based documents.

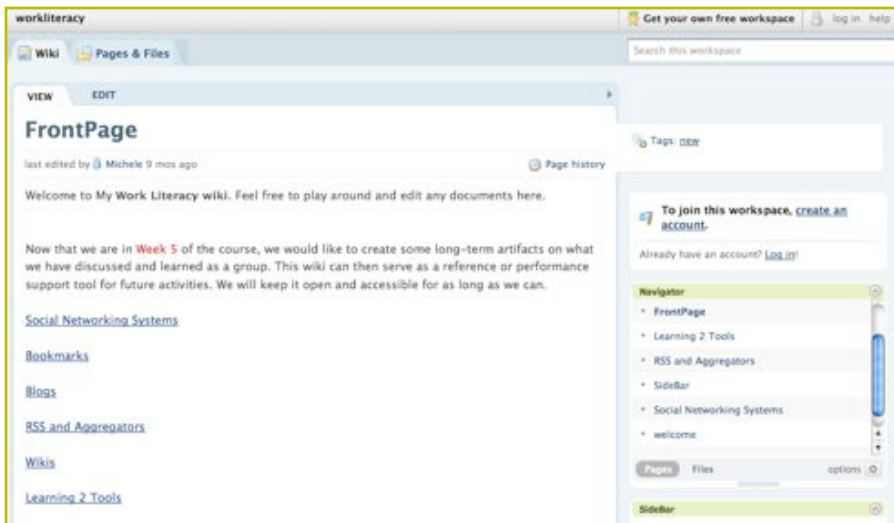
The term *wiki* derives from a Hawaiian language word for *fast*, suggesting how rapidly Web environments can be deployed using the technology.

Wikipedia is no doubt the wiki site with which people are most familiar, and it is an excellent example of the possibilities for collaborative production of meaningful content. By making it possible for users to easily author, edit, and organize Web content

using a standard browser like Firefox or Internet Explorer, Wikipedia has evolved into an encyclopedia that many consider to be on par with old, established publications like

Wiki Possibilities

- Collaborative knowledge from member experts
- Collaborative management of educational resources
- Teamwork and group projects
- Event support and continuation



Example Site: <http://workliteracy.pbworks.com>

instance, used a wiki as one component of Work Literacy, a pre-conference online learning experience held prior to the organization's 2009 annual meeting. Participants in Work Literacy used the wiki, among other things, to collaboratively compile and edit a list of learning 2.0 tools along with their functionalities and potential uses. Putting the wiki together was part of the learning experience, and the documents in it live on as resources for others—like the readers of this report—who are interested in learning 2.0.

*Encyclopedia
Britannica.*

For associations, the potential for harnessing the collective expertise of a membership base is tremendous. Volunteers for the eLearning Guild, for

It's not difficult to imagine this same sort of approach applying to collaborative management of educational resources, team work, and management of resources related to events like conferences or training seminars.

For other wiki examples and resources, visit <http://www.tagoras.com/learning20/wikis>

Virtual Events and Virtual Worlds

So far, the examples we've provided focus on a specific type of media. Increasingly, however, organizations are weaving together multiple types of media to create virtual versions of conferences and other events. In the simplest examples, a virtual conference type event may involve little more than stringing together multiple Webinars or Webcasts and perhaps providing a way for participants to network using text chat or discussion boards. But virtual events can provide for much, much more. Consider the following examples, two of which are from the association world and two of which are not:

- Work Literacy

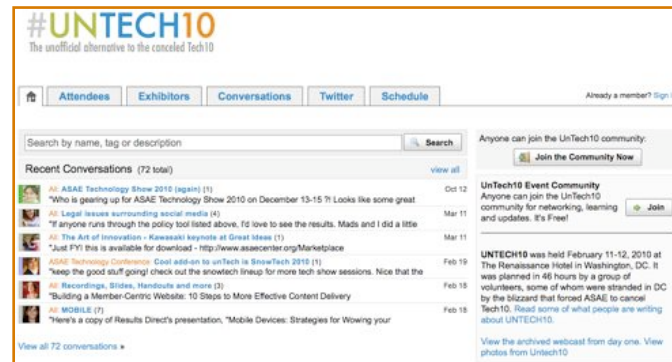
Work Literacy was already referenced above in the Wiki section, but a wiki was only one part of the overall Work Literacy experience. As a six-week long pre-conference online learning event for the eLearning Guild, a

Example Site: <http://workliteracy.ning.com>

membership organization for e-learning professionals, the Work Literacy initiative was learning 2.0 in action. Built on the Ning platform (<http://www.ning.com>), a low-cost option for creating your own social network, the site pulled together a variety of Web 2.0 tools to offer a brief curriculum in Web 2.0 for learning professionals. More importantly, it offered a wealth of input and insights from a wide range of learning professionals. While the Work Literacy site was intended as a tool to build interest and engagement for the eLearning Guild meeting, this type of site can also live on as a great example and a resource site. (The Work Literacy site did in fact live on for quite a while, but after Ning's recent conversion to a paid model access was cut off.)

- UnTech10

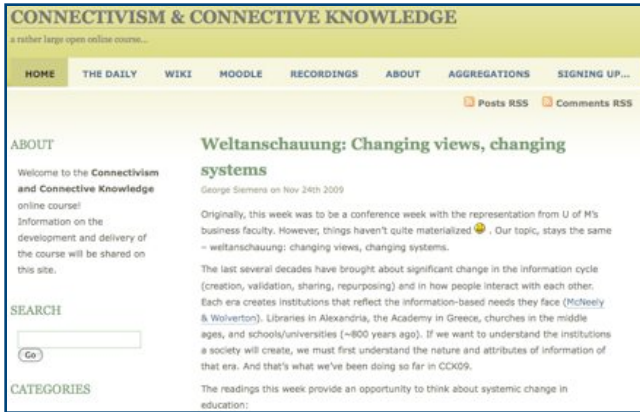
What started off as ASAE's usual annual Technology Conference transformed into a learning 2.0 event when a snowstorm enveloped Washington, DC. ASAE canceled the official conference, but



Example Site:
<http://untech10.conferencespot.org>

a group of volunteers and vendors banded together to create UnTech10, an unofficial version of the conference that blended a variety of online and offline elements. People who were in DC and able to brave the snow participated in place-based education sessions that were simultaneously broadcast in video over the Web. Online participants could watch and also contribute via a Twitter stream. Additionally, there were online-only Webinar sessions and a vibrant online community that included discussion areas and aggregated RSS feeds from people posting about the event on services like Twitter and Facebook.

- **Connectivism & Connective Knowledge**



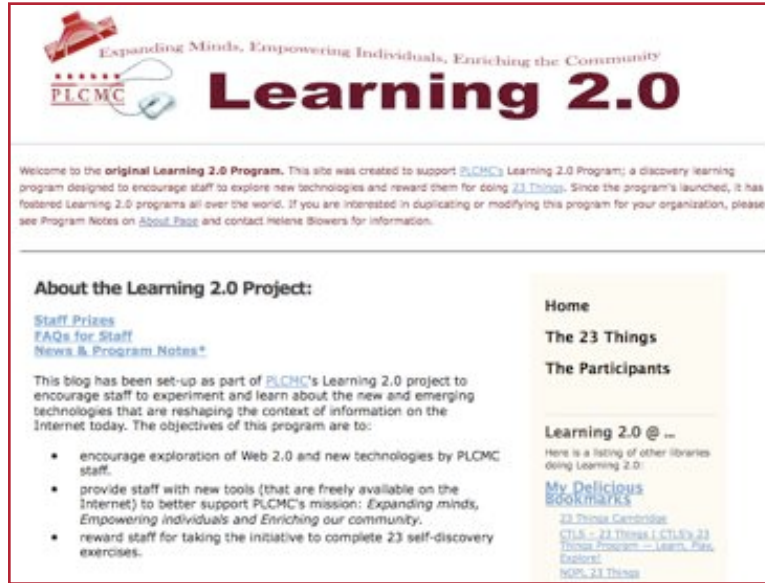
Example Site: <http://ltc.umanitoba.ca/connectivism>

While it was not an association event, the Connectivism & Connective Knowledge “course” facilitated by Stephen Downes and George Siemens in 2008 and 2009 provided a massive dose of learning 2.0—along with an introduction to

some of the more important theoretical thinking about learning in a connected world. Dubbed a “massive open online course (MOOC),” Connectivism & Connective Knowledge attracted participants from all over the world and leveraged a full range of social media and other Web tools to create a collective learning experience.

● 23 Things

23 Things was the brain child of library technologist Helene Blowers back when she was at the Charlotte/Mecklenberg County public library in North Carolina. It has since been replicated by hundreds of other libraries as well as by other types of organizations. The idea—simple and brilliant—was to set up a blog that

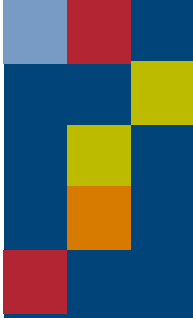


Example Site: <http://plcmcl2-about.blogspot.com>

offered up 23 learning 2.0-type activities “to encourage staff to experiment and learn about the new and emerging technologies that are reshaping the context of information on the Internet today.” It’s a discovery learning approach that fits well with using an array of Web-based tools.

For the 23 Things initiative, as for the other examples, the technology used to support learning interactions was pieced together from a variety of sources, many free and publicly available, some proprietary and involving fees. As virtual events continue to evolve, new platforms are emerging that bring together major aspects of virtual events—Web video and audio, text and voice communication for participants, resource-sharing, and even virtual exhibitor capabilities—in a single unified platform. A number of these act like simplified versions of the most sophisticated form of Web-based virtual interaction: virtual worlds.

While the example above suggests the possibilities for transcending geography and using a variety of tools to construct focused events, virtual worlds take things into a different dimension entirely.



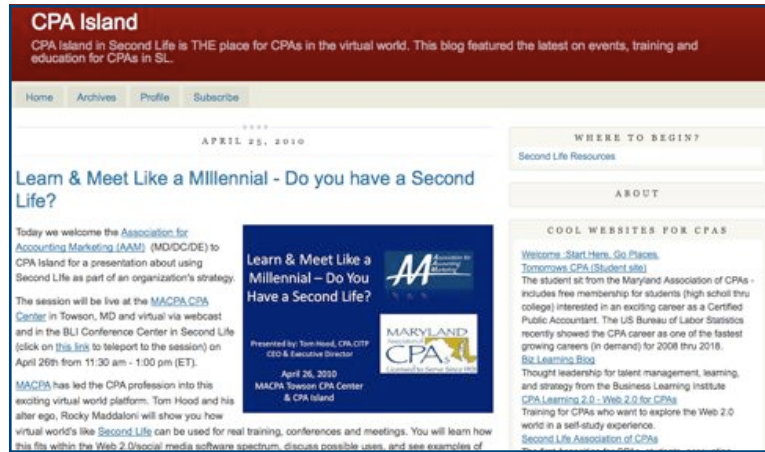
In a virtual world, a learner actually assumes an on-screen identity as an “avatar” and interacts with other users and Web-based objects in a three-dimensional digital environment. Advances in video gaming technologies, in particular, have driven the development of virtual worlds, and games of one sort or another provide the basis for most environments of this type.

Virtual Event and Virtual World Possibilities

- Virtual conferences and seminars
- Destinations for educational resources
- Team meetings and collaboration spaces
- Simulations

Over the past several years, however, platforms like Second Life have emerged that provide real-world experiences for users. In these virtual worlds, users develop relationships, conduct business, and, of course, participate in educational events and interactions.

The Maryland Association of CPAs (MACPA) has led the launch of the Second Life Association of CPAs, the first association for CPAs, students, accounting educators, and all those interested in the possibilities of virtual worlds for the accounting profession, as well as the creation of CPA Island in Second Life. CPA Island includes an Accounting and Education pavilion, a Business Learning Institute, and a New Young Professionals Network Club. These and a variety of other features make it possible for professionals from the “real” accounting world to meet, network, and learn in real time in a three-dimensional virtual environment.



Example Site: <http://www.cpaisland.com>

As the MACPA example suggests, using a virtual world like Second Life enables you to bring learners together at the same time to access resources and interact with each other in

much the same way they would at a real conference, seminar, or networking event—even voice chat is possible. Teams can meet and collaborate, and virtual information centers can be maintained for access by visitors.

Another very interesting application of Second Life or other virtual worlds is a chance to experiment and practice in ways that might be costly or simply not possible in the real world. Conducting simulations of crisis events related to disaster preparedness or medical emergencies, for instance, can provide opportunities for learning that are very difficult to create in real life.

For other virtual event and virtual world examples and resources, visit <http://www.tagoras.com/learning20/virtual>

Social Networking

The final area I'll cover in this set of examples is social networking. As mentioned earlier, the examples here have been placed in a roughly logical order, and there are a number of reasons why social networking falls last. While in a sense all the technologies we've looked at are about networking, social networking sites are the form of social media most explicitly about forming associations with other people, and they help open up questions about the nature of associations in a highly networked environment—an issue I return to in the next section of this report.

Also, our research at Tagoras suggests that social networks are currently the most popular form of social media used by associations, both for educational purposes and otherwise. Their popularity suggests the potential that associations see in them, but, at the same time, social networks offer significant challenges from the perspective of traditional continuing education and professional development.

While a social network may be an integral part of an event, it is not in itself an event—it is an ongoing process, a series of continuous interactions that can't be controlled in the way traditional educational events can be. And while most of the other types of media covered in

these pages—videos, podcasts, bookmarks, slides, blog posts—can be thought of as relatively fixed “objects” (re-mixes and mash-ups notwithstanding), a network cannot really be construed in this way. A network is always changing, always in flux.

Networks also have a tendency to blend into the everyday life of participants in a way that events or even virtual worlds do not. Unlike a virtual world environment, for example, where participants tend to be more or less aware that they are experiencing something separate from “real” life, participants in a social network very often move fluidly among their network connections—on their laptops, on their phone, on mobile devices like iPads—without thinking consciously about the fact that they are participating in a network. A great deal of learning occurs as connections are made and broken, but effectively tracking and measuring this learning can be challenging, to say the least.

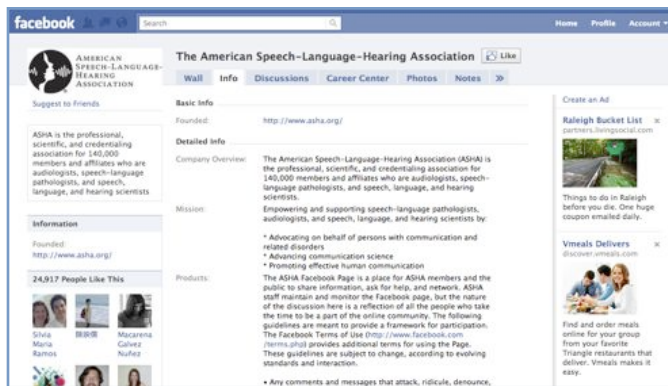
Facilitating learning effectively in networks necessarily means negotiating a balance—and highlighting connections—between formal and informal learning. The micro-blogging social networking platform Twitter, for example, has evolved to be a popular and powerful means for creating connections between formal and informal learning at conferences and other events. The Packaging Machinery Manufacturing Institute (PMMI) has moved aggressively

to get attendees at its annual PACK Expo onto Twitter. Tweets contributed to the #packexpo hashtag created for the conference help to enhance the event both for those attending and those who may only be able to join online. For PMMI, as for many organizations, the annual conference was a great catalyst for getting members on Twitter, but a vibrant tweet stream of packaging-related communication and knowledge also continues throughout the year at #packaging. PMMI uses the TwapperKeeper service to save all the tweets, and, at the time this report is being written, there are nearly 30,000 of them available for searching, sharing, and export. (For more information on hashtags, I recommend the third part of Deirdre Reid's excellent series on Twitter basics, available at <http://deidrereid.com/2010/08/26/twitter-basics-part-3-how-it-works>.)



Example Site: <http://twitter.com/PMMIorg>

We can expect to see more and more use of Twitter by associations. New enough to be barely mentioned in the previous version of this report, it has grown to well over 100 million users in the past couple of years. At same time, LinkedIn has surpassed 70 million users, and Facebook has rocketed past half a billion users. Each of these networks now reaches a large enough and diverse enough audience that they cannot be ignored, and while the activities that occur in them may not always fit comfortably into what we have traditionally defined as the education function for associations, there is no doubt that they are hotbeds of learning.

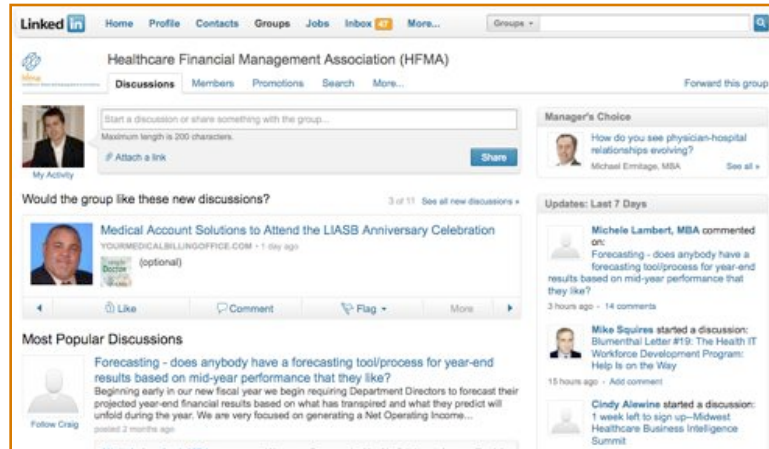


Example Site: <http://www.facebook.com/asha.org>

The American Speech-Language Association (ASHA) Facebook page, for example, has more than 24,000 members at the time of this report's publication—and that's in spite of the fact that you have to dig deep to find a link to it anywhere on ASHA's main Web site.

The Facebook page is home to a vibrant stream of conversation and resource-sharing, and it also serves as a career resource and tool for public education and advocacy. Check some of the links leading out from the ASHA page, and you'll find that one of them is to the Facebook page for the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA)—a natural “node” in ASHA’s overall network of learners in the communication sciences field.

Over on LinkedIn, it’s easy for an association to set up a group, or even sub-groups, where members can engage in discussions and share resources. For the Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA), for example, LinkedIn discussions are a natural extension of the discussions that take place in the private and more narrowly focused forums on its Web site.



Example Site: <http://www.linkedin.com/groups?mostPopular=&gid=1878748>

HFMA’s LinkedIn group has more than 4,000 members at the time this report is being written.

While LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter are all valuable platforms for learning, many organizations take the view that they need to provide a specialized, proprietary community for social interaction and knowledge-sharing in the field or industry they serve. As a result, a new crop of social network platforms for membership organizations has grown rapidly

over the past few years.

The Society of Corporate Compliance and Ethics (SCCE), for example, makes use of LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook but has also implemented its own, privately branded social networking



Example Site: <http://community.corporatecompliance.org/CORPORATECOMPLIANCE/CORPORATECOMPLIANCE/Home>

using a licensed software platform. CEO Roy Snell's account of growing membership in the network suggests that social networks are not only valuable platforms for learning but that learning, in fact, is one of the key drivers for attracting participation and delivering value in the network. SCCE recruited

subject matter experts from its stakeholder base to post perspectives and insights weekly on hot topics. Staff, board members, and key volunteers were also enlisted to contribute to the ongoing discussions until knowledge-sharing and conversations began to flow more organically.

Starting up a network from scratch like SCCE did can take a

Social Networking Possibilities

- Event support and continuation
- Team and community support
- Aggregation of social media applications
- Public education
- Personal learning environments (PLEs)
- Continuous learning interactions, formal and informal

significant amount of ongoing effort, but the pay-off is high if the learning community you establish comes to be seen as a key resource for your field or industry. Even when using established social networks like Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter, organizations have to work to ensure that value is generated in the network. This means enlisting help from staff and volunteers but also making effective use of events like place-based conferences and social learning objects like videos or blog posts as catalysts for participation.

**For other social networking examples
and resources, visit
[http://www.tagoras.com/learning20/
social-network](http://www.tagoras.com/learning20/social-network)**


What Does It All Mean?

So where does that leave us? First, while a new version of software is intended eventually to replace an old version, the same philosophy does not necessarily apply in the realm of learning. There are still situations where traditional teacher-centric, institution-centric, or course-centric approaches may be warranted. Where compliance with a particular law or process must be validated, for instance, or an assessment of knowledge for credentialing purposes is needed, more traditional forms of learning may be more efficient or effective. One of the challenges learning professionals face today is determining when and how new learning approaches and technologies are best used.

Making the leap to learning 2.0 can feel daunting. One comfort of traditional teacher-centric and course-centric approaches is they enable a

Newer Isn't Always Better

Learning 1.0 and 1.5 are not invalid—pick the right approach for the context, and blend approaches where appropriate.



significant degree of control over the path the learner takes to achieving learning objectives. Designed appropriately, they also tend to produce clearly measurable results. This degree of control and clarity is not always—or perhaps even most of the time—a characteristic of learning 2.0.

To the extent that clarity and control are maintained, they will increasingly be in the hands of the learner. A shift that is still nascent in the association sector but which we can expect to gain momentum in the coming years is towards a demand for personal learning environments, or PLEs, that help individuals manage the various types of learning available across their personal and professional networks.

It is now common for individuals to change jobs—and even careers—multiple times throughout their lives. It is also more important than ever to be able to demonstrate knowledge and skills that are up-to-date. To meet these challenges effectively, employees and job seekers need a way to manage their own education and training, credentials, and, in many cases, a portfolio of relevant work products. Ideally, these formal elements also interface fluidly with an individual’s social learning and knowledge networks. Associations, because they are not tied to specific employers or jobs, are arguably in a unique position for

supporting the growth of personal learning environments, but they must embrace the shift in control to learners and help their members realize the potential.

Perhaps less obvious and potentially more challenging is the change in mindset that learning 2.0 may entail for associations in general—and not just in their educational function. Stephen Downes, one of the leading thinkers in the world of education and technology, makes a distinction between groups and



Image Source: http://www.flickr.com/photos/stephen_downes/287697453

Stephen Downes

Groups Versus Networks

- Groups require unity; networks require diversity.
- Groups require coherence; networks require autonomy.
- Groups require privacy or segregation; networks require openness.
- Groups require focus of voice; networks require interaction.

networks when considering social interactions among individuals. (See <http://www.downes.ca/cgi-bin/page.cgi?post=35866>.) Groups, he suggests, are characterized by unity, coherence, and a focus of voice—qualities that associations typically strive to embody for their membership base. Networks, on the other hand, are constantly changing and defined by interactions—more like an ecosystem. Knowledge within networks, Downes



Teacher as Network Administrator

argues, is emergent and complex and ultimately has more in common with how human beings learn than traditional group approaches to knowledge and learning—most of which fall under the learning 1.0 and 1.5 paradigms covered earlier in this report.

For the association learning professional, embracing learning 2.0 may mean embracing Clarence Fisher’s concept of the teacher as network administrator—someone who, rather than dispensing expert knowledge, facilitates

the connections that lead to the achievement of learning objectives.

George Siemens's concept of the teacher as museum curator may also be useful. For Siemens, a teacher is like an expert behind the scenes who "creates spaces in which knowledge can be created, explored, and connected." (For George Siemens's thoughts on curatorial teaching, see <http://www.connectivism.ca/?p=93>.)



Teacher as Museum Curator

There is always the danger that these approaches and learning 2.0 in general can lead to unproductive “coloring outside the lines.”

But they can also lead to the sort of innovation that can’t be unlocked in old paradigms.



Jackson Pollock

What's Next?

As you consider how learning 2.0 approaches might fit into your learning initiatives, get your hands dirty. Most social media tools are free. And you probably already have a smart phone or other mobile device to experiment on in addition to whatever computer you usually use. Try out the tools covered in this report or others mentioned in the resource collection for the report at <http://www.tagoras.com/learning20>. Visit Go2Web20.net and pick some new tools at random. Get a feel for what is possible.

As you do these things, consider the context of your organization. Are staff and members open to the kinds of interactions and diversity

Get Your Hands Dirty

Explore and experiment—try out a variety of tools, and use the tools themselves to capture your learning. But keep your context in mind.

of thinking that the successful use of social media requires? Are there pockets in your membership base where you can take first steps? Is social media truly relevant to the types of learning your organization seeks to provide at this time and under its current strategy? It's easy to experiment a bit around the edges, but the answers to these questions need to be yes for learning 2.0 to really work in your organization. You may have some groundwork to lay.

If you do move ahead, consider what the successful use of social media means for the learner. In a learner-centric model, the learner's responsibility necessarily increases. This means developing a more conscious approach than may come naturally to the process of creating, organizing, and sharing learning content. Teachers and trainers can and should help learners develop this new awareness of their own learning activities. One of the best ways to do this, of course, is by practicing it as part of your own professional development. In particular, start making use of or increase your use of some of the resources available in the Personal Learning Environments area of the resources that accompany this report (<http://www.tagoras.com/learning20/PLE>).

Last, but not least, if you feel you need outside help in pursuing the possibilities that Learning 2.0 offers, contact me.

Need Help?

Contact me to discuss the possibilities of learning 2.0 for your organization.

- E-mail me at jcobb@tagoras.com.
- Call or SMS me at 919.201.7460.
- Skype me at [jtcobb](https://www.skype.com/people/jtcobb).
- Send me a tweet at <http://twitter.com/jtcobb>.

Resources

In the previous edition, I provided a list of resources in the pages of the report itself, not realizing either the popularity or the shelf life the report would enjoy. This time around, I've decided to be smart and post the resources on a Web site. You can access them at <http://www.tagoras.com/learning20>.

For resources, see
<http://www.tagoras.com/learning20>

Contact Information

If you have questions about the resources in this document, have a resource you would like to add, or are interested in discussing how your organization can implement learning 2.0 practices, please contact me.

Jeff Cobb

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Telephone: 919.201.7460

<http://www.tagoras.com>

<http://www.missiontolearn.com>

About the Author

I have been involved in education and technology for the better part of two decades and have spent much of that time as an entrepreneur working at the intersection of Web technology, learning, and organizational strategy.

I currently serve as managing director of Tagoras, where we help organizations with strategy development, business planning, and marketing for educational initiatives. Our clients have included the National Association of Corporate Directors, the Healthcare Financial Management Association, the Center for Liberty in the Middle East, the Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship, and the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, among many others.



Jeff Cobb

I recently completed three years of services on the Professional Development Council Section of the American Society of Association Executives and currently serve on the advisory board for Philantech, provider of the PhilanTrack™ online grant proposal, reporting, and management system. I've previously served on the research committee of the eLearning Guild and the editorial board of Innovate, a leading resource for information about technology and education.

Finally, I write the Mission to Learn blog (<http://www.missiontolearn.com>) for lifelong learners.



Mission to Learn Focuses on Lifelong Learning

About the Editor

Celisa Steele serves as the other managing director at Tagoras. She has led the development and deployment of successful online education sites with numerous organizations ranging from smaller groups like the Frameworks Institute and the Alliance of Chicago Community Health Services to large national and multinational organizations like the American Red Cross, the American College of Radiology, and the Society for Human Resource Management.

Celisa was a co-founder and chief operating officer of Isoph, one of the leading providers of e-learning services to the nonprofit sector. Prior to Isoph, she worked in creative services at Quisic, a developer of high-end online course content for major universities and Global 2000 companies. Before joining Quisic, Celisa worked in curriculum development for the not-for-profit Family and Children's Resource Program (FCRP), part of the Jordan Institute for Families at the School of Social Work at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

A veteran of the e-learning world, Celisa served on the research committee of the eLearning Guild and has served multiple times as a judge in Brandon Hall's annual e-learning awards.

About the Publisher

This report is published by Tagoras, Inc. Tagoras provides research and consulting to help organizations sell digital learning products, create vibrant customer

and member learning communities, and select technologies to support these activities.

Tagoras consultants have worked with a wide range of associations to plan and launch successful e-learning programs as well as to integrate social media technology into their learning initiatives. Tagoras research publications include *Association E-learning: State of the Sector* (<http://www.tagoras.com/catalog/association-elearning>) and *Association Learning Management Systems* (<http://www.tagoras.com/catalog/association-lms>). A report on virtual conferences (<http://www.tagoras.com/virtual-conferences>) is scheduled to be released in late 2010.



Association Learning/Technology Digest

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ALT Digest

Associations - Learning - Technology

>From the Editor

Tagoras is well into its third year of existence, and as we turn the corner towards 2011, we're hoping to get some feedback from readers of this newsletter about how we could provide more value - through the newsletter, through our research, and through other services we are considering. I'd be truly grateful if you would be willing to take just a few minutes to answer 5 quick questions at the link below.

- <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/F2B3Q5X>

Also, as you may have noticed, we decided to apply HTML formatting to this edition of the newsletter. Depending on the response, this change may or may not become permanent. (I welcome your thoughts!) Enjoy this month's edition. As always, I welcome your feedback, and if you have a colleague who might be interested in this newsletter, please share it.

-Jeff

Personal Learning Environments

Some time ago I blogged about the "massive open online course," or **MOOC**, facilitated by George Siemens and Stephen Downes, two leading thinkers about the ongoing evolution of learning and technology. Siemens and Downes are at it again, and this time the massive open course is focused on a topic that I think will become increasingly important to membership organizations: personal learning networks and personal learning environments.


(Course link: <http://connect.downes.ca/index.htm>)

I probably don't need to define the concept of "personal learning network" - even readers who have never heard the term will most likely "get it" intuitively. Associations have always been an important component of how individuals in an industry or profession connect to and learn from each other. This is the traditional "networking" that is always cited as such

This Month

- Personal Learning Environments
- Links Digest
- Sector News

Looking for e-learning answers?



Praise for Learning 2.0 for Associations

■ “In *Learning 2.0 for Associations* Jeff delivers an easy-to-read primer on how to leverage social media tools to expand the learning value that associations deliver. It’s a must-read for all association educators!”


—Mickie S. Rops, CAE / President, Mickie Rops Consulting Inc. / Chair, ASAE Professional Development Council / <http://msrops.blogs.com>

■ “Learning is evolving as is the reach of content and new access opportunities for growing associations. *Learning 2.0 for Associations* informs and reminds us that flexibility is the key.”

—Mary Knowles / Distance Learning Specialist and Association Professional

■ “Read *Learning 2.0 for Associations*. If you are trying to figure out how to best meld the latest social networking tools with your association’s learning efforts then this quick read from Jeff Cobb is a great place to start.”

—Jack Bruggeman / Director, Special Publishing, American Society of Health-System Pharmacists / <http://www.ashp.org>



■ “As associations grapple with the best usage of Web 2.0 technology, Jeff has provided a comprehensive overview of the state of technology today, what to anticipate in the future, and, most importantly, how other associations are utilizing these tools to better serve their members. It’s a must-read for every association executive.”

— *Barbara Swarhout, CEBS, SPHR / Director, E-learning Programs, International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans / <http://www.ifebp.org>*

■ “*Learning 2.0 for Associations* demystifies the evolution of learning into the Web 2.0 environment and offers practical ideas for integrating social media into your learning program. The library of online resources is a bonus that we all should thank Jeff for!”

— *Tony Ellis / Director of Education, National Association of College Stores / <http://www.nacs.org>*

■ “The education challenge for associations is the same as it’s always been—how do you take a collective of knowledge from ‘out there,’ discern what’s necessary for the broader industry, and then disseminate it in a useful way? That’s what we struggle to do every day. Thankfully, there are more tools than ever to help us do this. Yet, these tools create their own challenges. How do you manage them? With technology, how do you stay far enough ahead to lead, but not get too far ahead and lose relevance? And, most importantly, how can we


monetize this? Jeff Cobb understands and articulates these challenges better than anyone else. This book will help you make sense of what these tools are and how you can use them effectively for your membership. It's a must-read for any association executive."

—Matt Rumbaugh / Senior Manager, Education and Training, National Glass Association / <http://www.glass.org>

■ "Jeff has figured out how to provide the right amount of information for the reader without overwhelming. The report reads along the lines of a very good primer and is a great help for those of us who need clarification of new technology uses and applications."

—Joseph W. Niegoski / Director, Educational Services, American Public Transportation Association / <http://www.apta.com>


■ "Web 2.0 technology is a must for associations, but deciding which applications will work best for your membership can be daunting. Whether you're just starting to research Web 2.0 technology or you're looking to increase interaction with your audience by trying a new application, Jeff Cobb's *Learning 2.0 for Associations* is an incredible resource. Cobb starts with an explanation of the types of applications you can use to make your online presence more dynamic and grow your association community and then provides examples of



associations that are successfully applying this technology. I found the most valuable aspect of the book to be the section on implementation and the questions to ask before announcing new applications to your membership. *Learning 2.0 for Associations* offers concrete examples and suggestions and makes the transition to learning 2.0 seem both exciting and manageable.”

—*Betsy Garman / Publications and Distance Learning Specialist, American Association for Clinical Chemistry / <http://www.aacc.org>*

■ “In this report, Jeff defines and presents learning 1.5 and learning 2.0 courses of action. In learning 2.0, learners run with the initial seeds of knowledge garnered at a course or training event and create ongoing learning communities where learners also serve as teachers sharing their unique experiences. Many of the pathways in the learning 2.0 world are new and emerging. Other tools like podcasting and video streaming have been around for awhile. The technology to create learning offerings in the learning 2.0 realm are all relatively cheap and easy to use. If the ‘can’ is so easy, why have associations as a collective whole been so slow to embrace learning 2.0 approaches? I have no clear answers. Maybe decision makers are living in a different age and totally unaware. The ever-expanding



number of approaches may scare other decision makers into inaction. I hope the specific association examples cited by Jeff will force decision makers to embrace the new learning models and support the endeavors with ample resources and staffing. Ignoring learning 2.0 will be felt in the viability of your organization.”

—*Thomas L. Stefaniak, CAE / Knowledge Network Director, International City/County Management Association / <http://www.icma.org>*

■ “There’s a new role for the association professional development practitioner: to monitor and engage this new informal social learning for member benefit. Whether that means you become coordinator, curator, or innovator is up to you; the bottom line is to try something new. We can’t just do what we’ve been doing for years and expect members to stick around. They can and will move on to other learning sources if the association doesn’t provide what they need, how they need it. Use this great report and its accompanying resource Web site as a conversation-starter and guide!”

—*Kathleen M. Edwards, CAE / the Learning Evangelist, CompassPoints / <http://learningevangelist.com>*