

Effective Classroom Websites

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CAPSTONE PROPOSAL
Master's Degree in Instructional Technology

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Advisor Name:	Dr. Herrington
Date:	3/5/12
Capstone Title:	Effective Classroom Websites
Is this a Capstone Project or Study?	This Capstone Project focuses on gathering survey data, literature review, and User experience data. The project will serve as both a project and a study.
Client Name & Description	The client for this Capstone Project are teachers who see a need to have a classroom website but do not know how to make the website effective so parents and student will want to use it.

1. CAPSTONE PROBLEM OR NEED

With communication starting to be primarily centered on the Internet, teachers are starting to use their classroom websites as a communication tool with parents and students. However, with this new communication tool, not many teachers understand how to use it so that it will best benefit the parents and students. By surveying the needs and wants of both parents and teachers, it will provide a general idea of what each party is looking for in terms of what should be on a classroom website (NETS-TF V A). Once the data is gathered and analyzed, a literature review will be conducted to analyze the current body of research on effective classroom websites and research in education using user experience (NETS-TF I B). With the data and research compiled, the user experience (UX) will be implemented to evaluate different websites for ease of use, content, and other qualifying criteria to be specified later by the data and research (NETS-TF II C). The UX data will provide evidence as to how teachers and parents want to effectively communicate with each other once they have to use the website. A research paper will be written incorporating the data and research from the surveys, literature review, and UX explaining the results and ramifications for classroom websites. A Teacher Tube video will also be created explaining the results and showing teachers how to take the results and apply them to their own websites (NETS-TF V A, D; NETS-TF IV D).

2. CAPSTONE DESCRIPTION

The tasks included in the research on effective classroom websites include:

- Surveying parents on what they need from classroom websites
- Surveying teachers on how they use classroom websites

- Conducting research in educational journals about how classroom websites should be used
- Conducting User experience (UX) on different types of classroom websites based on the surveys and literature review
- Write a research article examining the results from the research and User experience
- Create a Teacher Tube video explaining the research and how it can be implemented in the classroom

The deliverables will include:

- the a data analysis based on both parent and teacher surveys on their wants and need from classroom websites,
- a literature review on classroom websites and User experience (UX),
- data from UX presented in appropriate tabular and graphical representations based on populations (student, parent, teacher) including a variety of open ended response quotes,
- a research article examining the results that will be submitted to a variety of professional journals for publication,
- And a 10 minute video will be uploaded to Teacher Tube explaining the results of our research and how teachers can implement/change their classroom websites to be more effective.

Time Frame*	Description	Hours
July-February	Work on previous Capstone project involving the Kennesaw State University Literacy Center. Due to unforeseen issues with communication between the Capstone project and the heads of KSU's website, this Capstone project was changed to Effective Classroom Websites after waiting for a significant amount	Whitney/April: 27.5 hours

	of time to pass with no changes to the website.	
March	<p>Surveys for both parents and teachers will be created and emailed out asking for their views on classroom websites and their needs and wants for a classroom website.</p> <p>While the results from the surveys are gathered, research on different User experience sites will be done based on the following criteria: cost, ease of use, ability to imbed tasks and questions, and quality of the data analysis.</p> <p>Articles will be gathered for the literature review on User experience and effective use of classroom websites. At least 15 articles will be collected based on specific criteria for each topic. Start the rough drafts of the literature review.</p>	Whitney/April: 35 hours
April	<p>The results from both the parent and teacher surveys will be analyzed and the trends and outliers will be identified.</p> <p>The final draft of the literature review for both topics will be created. It will be peer reviewed and submitted to the Capstone advisor for critique.</p> <p>Websites that meet the data from the surveys and the research from the literature review will be selected for User experience. The User experience site will be selected and implemented. Numerous teachers and parents will take part in the User experience.</p>	Whitney/April: 55 hours
May	<p>The results from the User experience will be analyzed.</p> <p>The research article based upon the surveys, literature review, and data from the user experience will be written, proofed, and submitted for publication.</p> <p>A 10-minute Teacher Tube video will be</p>	Whitney/April: 40 hours

	<p>created incorporating the results from the surveys, literature review, and user experience data. The goal of this video is to help teachers create effective classroom websites that encourage and promote active learning from the students at school and home.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: right;">Total Hours</p>	<p><u>KSU Capstone hours:</u></p> <p>Whitney/April: 27.5 hours</p> <p>**Whitney: 14.5 hours</p> <p>**April: 13 hours</p> <p><u>Effective Classroom Website hours:</u></p> <p>Whitney/April: 125</p> <p>**Whitney: 62 hours</p> <p>**April: 63 hours</p> <p><u>Total Capstone hours:</u></p> <p>Whitney/April: 152.5 hours</p> <p>**Whitney: 76.5 hours</p> <p>**April: 76 hours</p>

*Time Frame is subject to change based on the completion of the surveys and user experience.
 **Time will be kept track using Google Docs so Whitney and April can make sure that the partnership is shared equally with the hours and workload.

3. STANDARDS

- NETS-Technology Facilitator
- I: Technology Operations and Concepts
- B. Demonstrate continual growth in technology knowledge and skills to stay abreast of current and emerging technologies. Candidates:
 1. Model appropriate strategies essential to continued growth and development of the Understanding of technology operations and concepts

II. Planning and Designing Learning Environments and Experience

C. Identify and locate technology resources and evaluate them for accuracy and suitability.

Candidates:

1. Assist teachers as they identify and locate technology resources and evaluate them for Accuracy and suitability based on district and state standards.
2. Model technology integration using resources that reflect content standards.

V: Productivity and Professional Practice

A. Use technology resources to engage in ongoing professional development and lifelong learning. Candidates:

1. identify resources and participate in professional development activities and professional technology organizations to support ongoing professional growth related to technology.
2. disseminate information on district-wide policies for the professional growth opportunities for staff, faculty, and administrators

D. Use technology to communicate and collaborate with peers, parents, and the larger community to nurture student learning. Candidates:

1. model the use of telecommunications tools and resources for information sharing, remote information access, and multimedia/hypermedia publishing in order to nurture student learning.
2. communicate with colleagues and discuss current research to support instruction, using applications including electronic mail, online conferencing, and Web browsers.
3. participate in online collaborative curricular projects and team activities to build bodies of knowledge around specific topics.
4. design, develop, and maintain Web pages and sites that support communication between the school and community.

VI. Social, Ethical, Legal, and Human Issue

D. Promote safe and healthy use of technology resources. Candidates:

1. assist teachers in selecting and applying appropriate technology resources to promote safe and healthy use of technology.

4. RELATED RESEARCH OR LITERATURE

User experience (UX) is defined as “dynamic, context-dependent, and subjective” (Law, Roto, Hassenzahl, Vermeeren, & Kort, 2009). UX is key to usability and the usefulness of a product or website to make sure that visitors keep returning (Carey, Mao, Vredenburg, & Smith, 2005). The importance of user experience relies on the needs and feelings of our users (Gube, 2010). The time where the website’s design is based on the wants of the creator is no longer and the focus should be user-centered, making sure that the user can navigate successfully and find

what they are looking for. According to Peter Morville (2004), user experience (UX) is made up of 7 major facets: (a) useful, (b) usable, (c) desirable, (d) findable, (e) accessible, (f) creditable, and (g) valuable. These facets can be looked at individually or they can help to change “how we see what we do, and enabling us to explore beyond the conventional boundaries” (Morville, 2004). Making sure to investigate the market your website is driven towards is important before deciding on the future development of the website and measuring user experience is a great way to achieve this (Idad, 2010). Without user experience, some websites are not used to their full potential, even though the product or ideas on the websites are valuable; the users could not navigate or find information they wanted. It is important to focus on the needs of the users if you want to create the best experience for the visitors of your website and generate return hits.

References

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- Gube, Jacob. (2010, October 5). What is user experience design? Overview, tools and resources. *Smashing Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://uxdesign.smashingmagazine.com/2010/10/05/what-is-user-experience-design-overview-tools-and-resources/>
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Morville, Peter. (2004). User experience design. *Semantics Studios*. Retrieved from <http://semanticstudios.com/publications/semantics/000029.php>

5. EVALUATION PLAN

To evaluate the Effective Classroom Website capstone project, data will be gathered from numerous sources. The data gathered from the surveys will guide the project in the direction that parents and teachers value. By doing the literature review to analyzing the current body of research, it will also help to guide the user experience websites and questions towards a goal that will help both parents and teachers to communicate effectively on the Internet through classroom websites. With the submission of the research article that will be written about the culmination of all the research, it will allow the project to be evaluated by an outside anonymous party, to provide direction and feedback for further analysis.