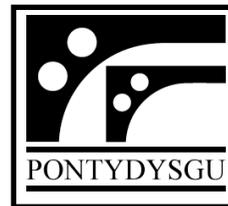


Social Software, Personal Learning Environments and Lifelong Competence Development

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The background

We are at present undergoing
a deep and prolonged industrial
revolution based on digital
technologies

The reform and reshaping of
social systems and
institutions has tended to lag
behind in periods of rapid
technological change

**Profound innovations in
technology tend to be
reflected in older paradigms**

for example the 'virtual
classroom' or the 'Virtual
Learning Environment'

The challenge

**It is not the development
of technology per se which
poses such a challenge to
education systems and
educational institutions**

but the changing ways in
which people are using
technologies to communicate
and to learn and the
accompanying social effect of
such use

My Space and Bebo

Web logs

Flickr, Second Life

**forming and participating
in on-line social networks
and communities**

The reaction of education systems and institutions to the rise of social networking has been at best bewilderment, at worst downright hostility

a refusal to engage in these
issues risks school
becoming increasingly
irrelevant to the everyday
lives of many young people

and particularly irrelevant
to the ways in which they
communicate and share
knowledge

**Web 2.0 allows young
people to be active co-
creators of knowledge**

**We have to review the
industrial schooling model
including the organisation
of institutions and pedagogy
and curriculum**

It is not just young
people who use social
software for learning

**Social software is widely
used in the workplace
for informal learning**

**Most informal learning is
learner driven, problem
based, or motivated by
interest**

**Google is the most used
e-learning application**

**most learning is
unaccredited**

people learn through
legitimate peripheral
participation

Knowing is ... located in
relations among practitioners,
their practice, the artefacts of
that practice, and the social
organization...of communities
of practice

Lave and Wenger, 1991

Lurking is a means of
becoming integrated in
distributed communities of
practice

**In such communities of
practice formal learning
materials are seldom
used**

We have ignored the vast potential of freely available 'objects' of all kinds for learning purposes.

changes in the way in which
we learn and develop new
competences is a challenge
to our traditional subject
organisation

And although most countries have adopted a rhetoric of lifelong learning, there is little sign that education systems have sufficiently changed to facilitate such a movement.

The answers?

**How can we support
lifelong competence
development?**

**Personal Learning
Environments have the
potential to meet such a
challenge**

**PLEs are not another
substantiation of educational
technology but a new
approach to learning**

A response to pedagogic approaches which require that learner's e-learning systems need to be under the control of the learners themselves.

and recognise the needs of life-long learners for a system that provides a standard interface to different institutions' e-learning systems, and that allows portfolio information to be maintained across institutions.

Learning is now seen as multi
episodic, with individuals
spending occasional periods of
formal education and training
throughout their working life.

PLE are based on the idea that learning will take place in different contexts and situations and will not be provided by a single learning provider

the idea of a Personal Learning Environment recognises that learning is continuing and seeks to provide tools to support that learning

**It also recognises the role of
the individual in organising
their own learning**

**PLEs can help in the
recognition of informal
learning**

PLEs can develop on the potential of services oriented architectures for dispersed and networked forms of learning and knowledge development.

“the heart of the concept of the PLE is that it is a tool that allows a learner (or anyone) to engage in a distributed environment consisting of a network of people, services and resources. It is not just Web 2.0, but it is certainly Web 2.0 in the sense that it is (in the broadest sense possible) a read-write application.”

Stephen Downes, 2006

The promise of Personal Learning Environments could be to extend access to educational technology to everyone who wishes to organise their own learning.

The 'pedagogy' behind the PLE – if it could be still called that – is that it offers a portal to the world, through which learners can explore and create, according to their own interests and directions, interacting at all times with their friends and community

**New forms of learning
are based on trying things
and action, rather than on
more abstract knowledge.**

the PLE will challenge
the existing education
systems and institution

Policies to support the development and implementation of PLEs

encouraging and supporting
the development of
communities of practice and
engagement in those
communities

**decisions over funding and
support need to be taken as
close to practice as possible**

**a broader understanding of
digital literacy and its integration
within the curriculum**

recognise different
forms and contexts of
learning

**the development and
adoption of new
pedagogies**

**the co-shaping of
technologies bringing
together techies and
teachers, enterprises and
institutions**

Thanks for Listening

