Trends in e-learning:
education versus entertainment?

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ASSOCIATION
FOR LEARNING
TECHNOLOGY

ALT

Association for Learning Technology

- promotes good practice in the use of learning technology in education and industry

- represents the members in areas of policy

- facilitates collaboration between practitioners, researchers, and policy makers

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Promoting good practice

- Conferences and workshops
  - **ALT-C 2006**: the next generation
    Edinburgh, UK
    5-7 September 2006.
    13th International Conference
  - Spring Conference in collaboration with SURF and ILTA
    Leiden, Netherlands
    6-7 April 2006

- Annual Policy Forum
  - 2003: the formal launch by Charles Clarke of the DfES e-learning Strategy consultation
  - 2004: developing our Learning Technology Research Policy
  - 2005: institutional strategies for successfully embedding learning technology. Producing an ALT guidance document, which we will publish in 2006.

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Publications for practitioners and researchers

- ALT-J – leading journal with an international focus for the study and application of learning technology
- ALT-N – keeping members up to date on ALT's activities, news, and how we are influencing key policy decisions: http://newsletter.alt.ac.uk
- Email digest – a fortnightly news digest summarising key developments in the field
- Conference proceedings and books

Influencing policy

- HEFCE 2003-2008 Strategy
- DfES e-learning Strategy Consultation
- the 21st Century Skills White Paper
- RAE 2008 panel configuration and recruitment

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ALT

What is learning technology?

www.alt.ac.uk/learning_technology.html

…the systematic application of a body of knowledge to the design, implementation, management, and evaluation of teaching and learning... Thus:

● **learning technology is the use of a broad range of communication, information, and related technologies to support learning and teaching;**

● **learning technologists apply or support learning technology in practice, and/or undertake research relating to learning technology.**

Conflicting pressures

Bespoke v off-the-shelf

Open source v licensed

Obsolescence v reusability

Cost v time

Learning at fixed location v global learners

CEEFAX Generation v Net Generation

Government targets v institutional policy

Formal v informal

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Trends in e-learning

- Tools for lifelong learning
  - e-portfolios
  - digital repositories
- Online assessment
- Reusable learning objects
- Ubiquitous computing: pervasive technology and social software
  - m-learning; podcasting; blogs, wikis
- Simulations and games
- Personalisation
- Professionalisation

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E-portfolios

"tools for personal development planning in the context of lifelong learning"

http://www.alt.ac.uk/docs/ALT-SURFseminar_April_2004.pdf

- Other useful sites
  - http://www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=myworld
  - http://www.eportfolios.ac.uk/
  - http://www.careerswales.com/
  - http://vmap.gold.ac.uk

Digital repositories

"a content store of digital objects with metadata" (ALT/SURF definition)
http://www.alt.ac.uk/docs/ALT-SURFseminar_April_2004.pdf

- Institutional
- Regional
- National

National repository

JORUM is a JISC-funded collaborative venture in UK Higher and Further Education to collect and share learning and teaching materials, allowing their reuse and repurposing, and standing as a national statement of the importance of creating interoperable, sustainable materials.

www.jorum.ac.uk
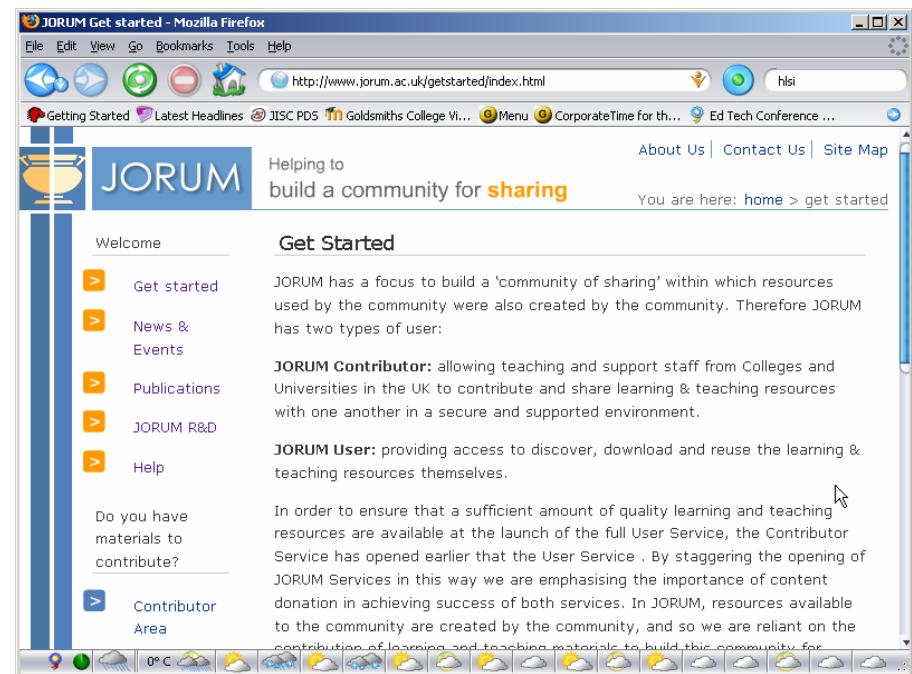
Online assessment

"allows the assessment of learning outcomes to be more flexible and can be used as a motivator"
http://ferl.becta.org.uk/display.cfm?page=189

- Other useful e-assessment sites
  - http://www.toia.ac.uk
  - http://kn.open.ac.uk/public/index.cfm?wpid=4996
  - http://www.reap.ac.uk/

Reusable learning objects

"a digital piece of learning material that addresses a clearly identifiable topic or learning outcome and has the potential to be reused in different contexts."

(H806 "Learning in the Connected Economy" The Open University course team, Robin Mason, Martin Weller, Chris Pegler, IET, Open University, Oct. 2003)

Reusable Learning Objects CETL

www.rlo-cetl.ac.uk/

Ubiquitous computing

Ubiquitous computing names the third wave in computing... First were mainframes, each shared by lots of people. Now we are in the personal computing era, person and machine staring uneasily at each other across the desktop. Next comes ubiquitous computing, or the age of *calm technology*, when technology recedes into the background of our lives.

Mark Weiser, http://www.ubiq.com/hypertext/weiser/UbiHome.html

Pervasive technologies
- mobile phones
- digital TV on demand and PVR
- i-pods
- MP3 players
- wearable technologies

Social Software
- blogs, wikis, flickr

M-learning

Mobile learning projects in UK

www.m-learning.org/

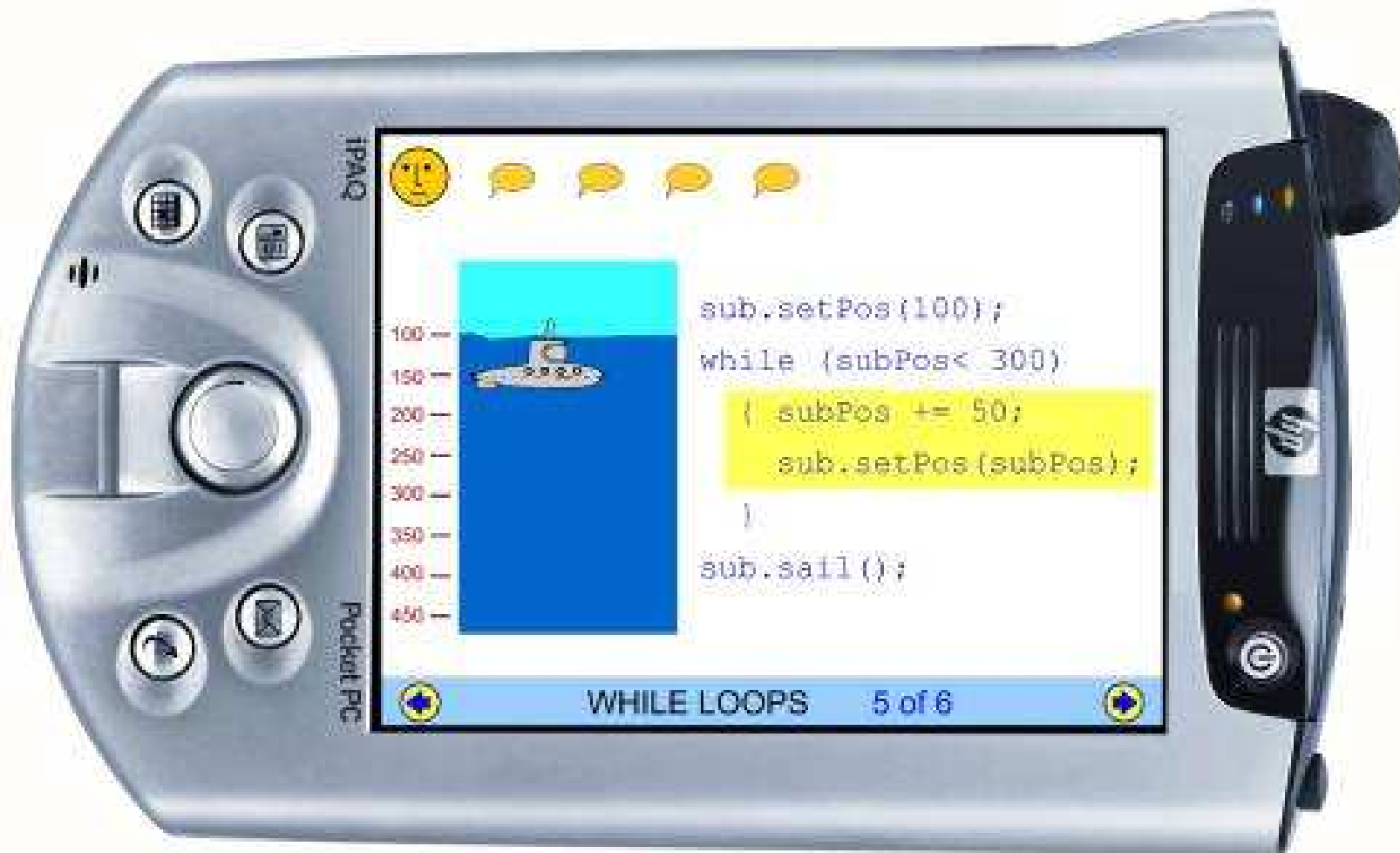**Which technology? Useful definition page**

www.m-learning.org/which.shtml

Research into use of PDAs at London Met U

www.alt.ac.uk/altc2005/timetable/abstract.php?abstract_id=439

Newsletter article on this project:

http://newsletter.alt.ac.uk

London Met University: teaching programming on PDAs


```
sub.setPos(100);
while (subPos< 300)
{ subPos += 50;
    sub.setPos(subPos);
}
sub.sail();
```

WHILE LOOPS   5 of 6

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Podcasting

iPod + broadcasting = podcasting

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Podcasting

BBC download and podcast trial

www.bbc.co.uk/radio/downloadtrial/

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Blogs, wikis, flickr

ALT Spring Conference social software list

http://altspring.jot.com/ToolBar/Technologies

Definition of blog (web-log)

http://www.unc.edu/~zuiker/blogging101/

ALT Spring Conference wiki and blogs

http://altspring.jot.com/Delegate+Blogs

Simulations and games

- Way to encourage hard-to-reach students?
- Trying to make learning more exciting?

Growing body of research:

http://altspring.jot.com/Digital+games

Simon Egenfeldt Nielsen's home page:

http://www.it-c.dk/people/sen/

Personalisation

" The logic of education systems should be reversed so that the system conforms to the learner, rather than the learner to the system."

'Personalisation and Digital Technologies' report

www.futurelab.org.uk/research/personalisation.htm

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Professionalisation of learning technologists

- Certified Member (CMALT) scheme launched
- Principles and values
  - A commitment to exploring and understanding the interplay between technology and learning.
  - A commitment to keep up to date with new technologies.
  - An empathy with and willingness to learn from colleagues from different backgrounds and specialisms.
  - A commitment to communicate and disseminate effective practice.

www.alt.ac.uk/cmalt.html

Membership summary

- Over 500 individuals

- 101 Higher Education Institutions

- 70 Further Education Institutions

- 50 Corporate members
including DfES, Epic Group plc, HEFCE, Higher Education Academy, JISC, LSC, QIA, NHSU, Question Mark Computing, Scottish Qualifications Authority, Toshiba, UKERNA

Membership

- Join as an individual (from £52 per annum)

- Join through your institution or organisation

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Any questions?

Contact ALT

http://www.alt.ac.uk/

alt@brookes.ac.uk

Thank you for listening