

Video Blogging

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Introduction

Video blogging, also called vlogging, allows people to make commentaries through the use of video. These videos are sometimes called vodcasts. People can post their video clips on a website for others to view. If personal access to a website is unavailable, there are sites that will allow you to post vodcasts, such as www.Podbean.com and www.Switchpod.com. Some video blogging websites allow the viewer to subscribe to the vlog so the commentary is automatically uploaded to their mp3 player when it is plugged into their computer. In this white paper, I will focus on the process of creating a vlog for use in an educational setting to simply be posted on a website.

Equipment

Some equipment will be necessary to create and post a vlog. Since technology can range in quality and function, price also varies. A range will be given, but focus will be given on equipment that is available and practical for educators.

Equipment/Software	Where Available	Price Range
Video capture device (flip camcorder, minidv camcorder, digital camera with video recording capabilities, cell phone with video recording capabilities)	General retail environments (www.Target.com , www.BestBuy.com , Etc.)	\$85-\$1,000+ Flip camcorder- \$85-160 MiniDV- \$180-\$300 Digital cameras-\$80-\$1,000+
Webcam (can be used in place of video capture device)	General retail environments (www.Target.com , www.BestBuy.com , Etc.)	\$20-\$100+
Computer	General retail environments (www.Target.com , www.BestBuy.com , Etc.)	Desktop- \$200-\$2,000+ Monitor- \$140-\$1,000+ Laptop- \$270-\$2,000+
Video editing software	Free with various computer packages such as Windows XP and General retail environments for more advanced software (www.Target.com , www.BestBuy.com , Etc.)	Microsoft Movie Maker- free iMovie- free Final Cut Pro-\$400-\$1,000+
Audio editing software (optional)	http://audacity.sourceforge.net/	Audacity- free
Microphone (optional)	General retail environments (www.Target.com , www.BestBuy.com , Etc.)	\$15-\$100+

Overview of technology

- a. **Video capture device-** This equipment records your project, message, or event. There are several different types of video capturing devices. Camcorders are the most obvious, but some digital cameras and cell phones can also be used. A digital recording is needed to upload to a computer and edit.
- b. **Video editing program-** These programs allow you to add titles, credits, or effects to your video footage. You can also cut out pieces of the clip you do not wish to use or rearrange the order of your footage. Editing footage is not required but it polishes up the product. Editing also allows the subject of the video to not feel the pressure of making mistakes. Popular video editing programs include Microsoft Movie Make and Apple iMovie.
- c. **Audio editing program-** This program allows you to add and edit audio recordings to enhance your video footage. This can be used if the audio from the video recording device is of poor quality or if you want to add extra audio to your film. This is another step that is used to polish the footage but is not required. Audacity is a popular audio editing program. A microphone would be needed if you decide to add extra audio.
- d. **Computer-** A computer would act as the studio for your video blog. A computer is needed to upload video content from your video recording device, edit the footage using an editing program, and post on a website. Internet access is needed to post a video blog to a website.

Steps in Creating a Video Blog

Step 1- Decide on the Content



The possibilities for using a video blog in a classroom or school are endless. Many standards and activities can be enhanced by taping and posting to a website. Some suggestions are filming reading commercials instead of writing book reports, recording reenactments of historical events or speeches, communicating with another school across the country or world, or making a video-newsletter to share information with parents at home. Once the topic is decided, it is best to script out what will be said. If there are several different scenes or discussions, they do not necessarily need to be in the correct order. During the editing phase, the order of events can be adjusted.

Step 2-Capture Content



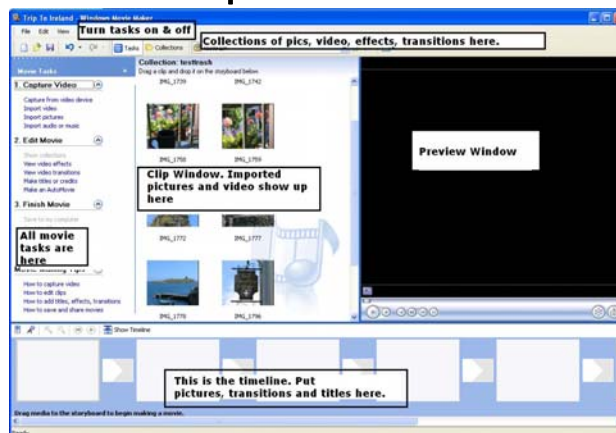
By using a digital video recording device such as a camcorder, digital camera, or webcam, film what you desire to be posted on the website. Due to some devices' limited time restrictions, it is best to plan out what will be said prior to recording. Footage can be recorded in clips and combined into the final product during the editing phase.

Step 3- Upload Content to Computer



Once your footage has been recorded, it needs to be uploaded into a computer. Video recording devices should come with a manual that describes the exact steps for doing this for your particular product. You may need to install certain software that accompanied the camera or camcorder.

Step 4- Edit Content



Using an editing program such as Movie Maker or iMovie allows you to edit your movie. You can combine clips, arrange them in any order you like, or add effects to your footage. Audacity is an audio editing program that allows you to do the same

with audio clips. This step is not required to post a video blog, but it can enhance the quality of the footage that you post. This step may take more time in the early stages of vlogging due to inexperience. Once the user learns how to use the software and has experience with it, the time required in this step should decrease.

Step 5- Post Content



Several options exist for posting a vlog to a website. Many sites allow you to post blog content with a fee. Here are a few ways to post video blogs without paying a fee. If you have access to a website via Microsoft Front Page, you can link your video file to a website. Creating an account with You Tube will allow you to post video blogs there. You Tube is a more public site and some school districts block access to You Tube. If you have access to You Tube, another option is to embed the code for the video file into your webpage. Podbean.com is a website that allows you to create podcasts and vodcasts. It is a free site that is not blocked by many school districts.

Learning Related Problems

Learning and teaching how to vlog can address many learning related problems. The first set of issues concern the learner. In his book, *Working On the Work*, Schlechty developed a set of rules that will help students become engaged in their work. Engagement will cause students to focus more, behave accordingly, and produce a higher quality of work. He calls these Design Qualities. Having students make a vodcast addresses all of Schlechty's Design Qualities of Choice. The Design Qualities, along with other information by the Schlechty Center can be found at <http://www.schlechtycenter.org/index.asp>.

- A. **Product Focus**—“refers to the opportunity to structure tasks and activity so that what students are to learn is linked to some product, performance, or exhibition to which the students attaches personal value.” Students will have the opportunity to work towards creating the product of a film or video blog.
- B. **Affiliation**- refers to “the possibility of designing tasks so that students are provided the opportunity to work with peers.” Students may be able to work with their classmates on various projects.
- C. **Affirmation of Performance**- “refers to the possibility of designing tasks and activities so that the performance of the students are made visible to persons who are significant in their lives.” Student work will be displayed on the internet for others to see.
- D. **Novelty and Variety**—“refers to the possibility of providing students the opportunity to employ a wide range of media and approaches when engaged in the activities assigned. Vodcasting gives students one more option to create work with a media of their choice.

- E. **Choice-** is “the possibility of designing tasks and activities so that students can exercise choice in what they are to learn or how they go about learning that which is required that they learn.” Vodcasting is an outlet for students to express themselves, allowing them to choose what to say.
- F. **Authenticity-** “refers to the possibility of linking learning tasks to things that are of real interest to students.” With the popularity of You Tube, students are given a project that has relevance to them.

Educators can also benefit from knowing how to create vodcasts. Teachers can create video lessons to be placed on the internet. These can be used by substitutes when the teacher is out. These lessons can also be viewed by students at home if they need a lesson or assignment given again. Teachers can use vodcasts as a way to connect with parents. A vodcast can be made in place of sending a newsletter home with students. These are just a few suggestions. Once this technology is used more often, more opportunities and ideas for using it the classroom will arise.

National Educational Technology Standards

Several Educational Technology Standards would be addressed by using video blogging.

- A. **Creativity and Innovation-** Students will be creating products by using technology.
- B. **Communication and Collaboration-** Students may work in groups to complete some assignments. Opportunities might also be given for students to communicate with students in another state or country by posting vlogs back and forth.
- C. **Research and Information Fluency-** Digital tools may be used in researching specific assignments that are given. The presentation may involve using a vodcast.
- D. **Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making-** Students would have to plan and manage their projects. They would have to decide what to record, how to arrange the material, how to edit, and how to deliver their content.
- E. **Digital Citizenship-** Since material would be posted in the internet, legal and ethical behavior can be discussed with students.
- F. **Technology Operations and Concepts-** Vodcasting would cause students to be familiar with several components of technology.

Environmental Factors

Several environmental factors need to be considered when implementing vodcasting into a classroom.

- A. Several school districts have blocked access to some websites, such as You Tube. Videos would have to be published on an approved website.
- B. When using the internet and posting video, students may be exposed to a wide range of material. Constant monitoring may be needed so inappropriate material is avoided.
- C. A great deal of planning will be needed on the teacher’s part. Students will need to learn and practice skills in planning content, using the equipment,

- using the editing programs, and posting their products. This process can take some time.
- D. Age and level of students would need to be considered when choosing the equipment and technology to use.
 - E. The amount of equipment available for classroom use needs to be considered when planning a project.
 - F. Permission would be needed from parents for student images and work to be posted in the internet.
 - G. If assignments are given via a vlog, a PDF file of the assignment and a grading rubric should be posted as well.

Sources

There are many sources available for guiding someone through how to make a vodcast. Simply searching “vodcasting instructions” on a search engine will yield many sources. The following is a sample of sources that I explored in researching how to make a vodcast.

Podcasting

- A. Joe Koon, a teacher at South Point High School, has an easy to follow guide on how to podcast. He also discusses how to give a podcast a feed, making it available for subscription.
http://www.rock-hill.k12.sc.us/teachers/sphs/jkoon/podcast_instructions.htm
- B. Educause Connect gives an overview of what video blogging is by explaining seven issues related to the topic.
<http://connect.educause.edu/Library/ELI/7ThingsYouShouldKnowAbout/39382>
- C. Peter Meng, a Technical Business Analyst, created a white paper that describes and gives instructions on vodcasting.
edmarketing.apple.com/adcinstitute/wp-content/Missouri_Podcasting_White_Paper.pdf

Editing Content

Using a search engine will yield many sources for instructing how to use video editing programs. The following are examples that I used in researching for this white paper.

- A. Dr. Marshall G. Jones, a professor at Winthrop University, has several resources in using editing programs such as Movie Maker or iMovie.
http://coe.winthrop.edu/jonesmg/lti/pal/PAL_claymation.htm
- B. Microsoft provides instructions on using Movie Maker on their website.
<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/moviemaker/default.mspx>
- C. Apple also provides instructions on using iMovie on their website.
<http://www.apple.com/ilife/imovie/>

- D. Audio editing programs can be useful in adding or editing audio tracks that are added to video footage. Audacity is a free program that also offers tutorials in using the product.

<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/help/>

Benefits vs. Drawbacks

Using this technology has benefits and drawbacks. Many issues have already been discussed in this white paper. The following is a compacted list of the benefits and drawbacks.

Benefits	Drawbacks
<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Video blogging is another form of expression for students-It is an engaging activity that addresses several of Schlechty's Design Qualities-Editing programs are free-Video recording devices are becoming more easily accessible (cameras, cell phones, etc.)-Vlogging is a hands-on activity-This is a popular form of entertainment for students-Video blogging addresses many NET Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Teaching all of the components takes time-Start up cost for equipment can be expensive-Access to You Tube may be discouraged-Extra time for students to record, edit, and publish is needed-Some free editing programs (Movie Maker) has limited capabilities and may freeze up a lot-Image release forms are needed from students-Technology is not appropriate for all ages

Resources

http://coe.winthrop.edu/jonesmg/lti/pal/PAL_claymation.htm

<http://www.schlechtycenter.org/pdfs/theoryofengagement.pdf>

http://www.rock-hill.k12.sc.us/teachers/sphs/jkoon/podcast_instructions.htm

<http://connect.educause.edu/Library/ELI/7ThingsYouShouldKnowAbout/39382>

edmarketing.apple.com/adcinstitute/wp-content/Missouri_Podcasting_White_Paper.pdf

http://coe.winthrop.edu/jonesmg/lti/pal/PAL_claymation.htm

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/moviemaker/default.mspx>

<http://www.apple.com/ilife/imovie/>

<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/help/>