

Organizing Your Digital Self

Presentation:

Going “digital” can be a bit overwhelming. How do you keep track of your links, files, blogs, email, and website materials? How do you go about organizing and sifting through the vast array of resources on the Internet and turning them into an easy-to-use and coherent set of learning materials for the classroom or online environment? People always tell me that they can’t believe I get so much done - it’s easy if you have the right tools! I don’t claim to have all the answers, but I’ll tell you what seems to work for me (and what hasn’t).

Outline:

My presentations are interactive (built using mindmap technology) and designed to be tailored to the audience in the room. After a quick assessment of the needs of the audience, I focus on the parts of the presentation that are most useful to them and we go from there. All presentation mindmaps are available online and can be used in faculty development workshops back on campuses as a way to engage faculty. If you've never seen one of my mindmap presentations, then it's probably hard to understand how this works, but I can assure you that it does. My presentations using mindmaps have been highly received at conferences like AMATYC, DTL, and eLearning.

- **If you do nothing else ... do this!**
 - Update all the Internet plug-ins on your computer so that you have a good experience (Flash, Java, Firefox, Adobe Acrobat...)
 - Create a shell for each class you teach – organize by unit, section, and learning objectives
 - Create a digital space for the projects you direct
 - Create an account to manage bookmarks from the cloud instead of from your desktop (Google Bookmarks or Del.icio.us)
 - Get control of your email (watch Zero Inbox)
 - Keep an up-to-date website at your campus (CV items, contact info, course info)

- **To catch up ... do this!**
 - Set up an RSS reader and load it with some blogs and newspaper feeds
 - Join a social networking site (Facebook, Myspace, LinkedIn) to see what it’s all about
 - Learn how to use Jing
 - Send a Doodle to schedule a meeting (www.doodle.com)
 - Build a personal website (Google Sites is pretty easy)
 - Begin using an online calendar
 - Learn how to use cloud computing sites (Google Apps are an example)
 - Read about GTD (getting things done)

- **To take off full speed ahead ... do this!**
 - Start a blog or begin twittering
 - Set up your online calendar to do appropriate reminders
 - Try Jott (www.jott.com) or Sandy (www.iwantsandy.com)
 - Consider migrating personal email (and work if allows it) to Gmail
 - Publish your own resources on the web (videos, links to help teach a course, worksheets you've written)
 - Build your own social networking site using Ning
 - Teach others!

Description of Presentation:

The role of the academic is changing – no longer the guardians of information, we are quickly becoming the facilitators of learning – however that learning takes place. Whether you are an instructor, an administrator, or support staff, you are probably finding your digital life a bit overwhelming. How do you keep track of your links, files, blogs, email, and website materials? How do you go about organizing and sifting through the vast array of resources on the Internet and turning them into an easy-to-use and coherent set of materials for the classroom or an online environment? Let me share some of my strategies for coping with the information overload and the new digital era.

Map of Resources: <http://tinyurl.com/9kd35u>

Biography:

Maria H. Andersen is on the math faculty at Muskegon Community College and has a passion for helping other faculty learn how to "be dangerous" with technology and relate to the Internet generation. She is a 2009 ITC Distinguished eLearning Educator and the Director of Technology Workshops for AMATYC. She is finishing up work on a PhD dissertation on understanding the necessary conditions for (or barriers to) innovation in math instruction. You may have stumbled across Maria blogging about math, technology, and teaching on the Internet at the website www.TeachingCollegeMath.com.