

This is no longer the version of this paper intended for February 2020 TESL-EJ

[Abstract](#)

[Introduction](#)

[What happens when an online Community of Practice is ripped out by its roots?](#)

[Options for salvage of data](#)

[Grouply](#)

[Posterous, then Wordpress, to the rescue](#)

[EVO: A canary in the coal mine](#)

[EVO moderator choice of online content and interactive spaces for the sessions](#)

[2010 - the last year Ning functioned normally in EVO sessions](#)

[2011 to 2013 - Where EVO moderators settled once Ning was no longer a free option](#)

[2014 to 2016 and the Rise of Google+ Communities](#)

[2017 and the ascendancy of Moodle as a choice for EVO moderators](#)

[2018 and the demise of Wikispaces](#)

[2019 - Google pulls the rug out from under its G+C communities](#)

[The rise and fall of G+C and its impact on EVO](#)

[Salvage operations with G+C](#)

[2020 after Yahoo Groups announces its closure](#)

[Moving toward the end of Web 2.0 as we know it](#)

[Online community portals chosen by EVO 2020 moderators](#)

[What else could we lose?](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[References](#)

[Appendices](#)

[EVO Moderator preferences in 2010](#)

[EVO Moderator preferences in 2011](#)

[EVO Moderator preferences in 2012](#)

[EVO Moderator preferences in 2013](#)

[EVO Moderator preferences in 2014](#)

[EVO Moderator preferences in 2015](#)

[EVO Moderator preferences in 2016](#)

[EVO Moderator preferences in 2017](#)

[EVO Moderator preferences in 2018](#)

[EVO Moderator preferences in 2019](#)

[EVO Moderator preferences in 2020](#)

[Notes](#)

[The Old Internet Died And We Watched And Did Nothing](#)
[Apps that protect your digital rights](#)

9000 words

Editing history

1. On Feb 3 a copy was made of this article and renamed CALL Research Conference Conundrum
2. On Feb 4 changes were made to this version including S/R of many YG and YahooGroups, changed to Yahoo! Groups, so these need to be preserved and ported over to CALL Research Conference Conundrum
3. The current editors need to be removed from this document and the TESL-EJ article copied to a new doc and shared with the editors, who need to get it online and show it to me before PDF is made

The sky is falling: Are we nearing the end of Web 2.0?

Abstract

This article is a sequel to one written a decade ago by the same author on the loss of Ning as a free sandbox for educators to play in while experimenting with that particular tool. Ning had been designed to help anyone seeking to coalesce around a community online to leverage what they were learning about social networking while affording them the freedom to use such tools to create their own spaces on an open Internet in the new era of Web 2.0. But the developers of Ning were unable to save it from its corporate exigencies with the result that many of the thriving communities that had been developing there under the aegis of the long tail (Anderson, 2004) were faced with a choice of paying for continued passage or walking the gangplank.

This has happened at varying degrees of scale ever since then, as when Wikispaces set its users adrift in 2018, but in the past year have educators experienced the demise of such a large number of major supporters of free online communities, including in particular the rapid demise of Google+ Communities and Yahoo! Groups. This article discusses the ramifications of where this trend is headed.

Introduction

It's been almost ten years since I wrote *The Ning Thing* (Stevens, 2010) and published it in the On the Internet column in *TESL-EJ*. That article almost didn't make that issue. I was quite busy at that time, isn't everyone, and missed the deadline. I think the issue had already gone to the digital equivalent of "press" without my article, but I happened to be sitting in a pub conducting research into the role of craft beer in publication and professional development, in Amherst where the CALICO conference was being held that year, in the company of one of the editors of *TESL-EJ* who happened to be also in attendance, and I was able to explain to him the importance of my contribution to the field. After about the third beer he came around to my assessment and agreed to make the extra effort to tweak enough bytes to put the article through to the digital issue which was just then on the verge of being announced as being available, for free, to the world at large.

TESL-EJ has been freely accessible ever since it started publication in 1994, and the mission of the journal and all who make it happen four times a year is to keep this exchange and conduit of knowledge open to educators on a permanent basis, as far as permanence is a condition we can define and count on in Internet terms. We have however been often reminded of the precarious footing on which we rest when entities where we host our data suddenly cease to exist.

The case of Ning was an interesting precursor to what we see happening with Web 2.0 these days, to the detriment of communities of practice and their impacts on the flow of knowledge among educators. By the turn of the century Marc Andreessen had transformed the Mosaic browser, which he co-authored, into what we now know as Netscape, and in 2005 he co-founded Ning with Gina Bianchini. Ning was "an online platform for people and organizations to create custom social networks ... By June 2011 there were over 90,000 social websites running on the Ning Platform," (Wikipedia contributors, 2019). As with Netscape, Ning at the time provided an essential tool for the spread of knowledge throughout the Internet on the same principles on which the Internet itself was born: open and neutral, and free as in liberty, and also in beer.

Originally funded by its co-founders and "angel investors" Ning eventually turned to less angelic investors for capital and in 2010, the company's new CEO announced the cancellation of its free services.

Educators rely on access to such spaces not only for forming courses and professional collaborations, but for sustaining viable communities of practice that lead to exponential growth of knowledge and relationships in their fields. The almost arbitrary withdrawal of these platforms, on short notice and with only token regard for the ability of their members to recoup

elsewhere, has rendered into space-dust the work of thousands if not millions of educators who had been building networks and knowledge bases in freely accessible spaces online, and has broken the promise and compromised the potential of the much-touted Web 2.0.

Is this a trend we can expect to see more of in the years to come? There is so much of critical importance to educators in the tools I am using even now to document this and to store it in spaces where you can find it and access it online. The prospect of any of these tools being suddenly withdrawn is of serious concern to all who use them, having stored our lives and careers on servers throughout cyberspace over which we have no control (Notopoulos, 2019). This article looks at what has been happening in this regard over the past decade, and where this leaves us going forward.

What happens when online communities of practice are arbitrarily displaced?

By 2010 many communities of educators were among the 90,000 who had found Ning to be the best social networking platform to date, in any price range, to enable them to reach and interact with like-minded colleagues in ways that encouraged and nourished the development of their robust communities of practice. But when these educators were suddenly informed that their portals would disappear along with all their data if they didn't pay costs beyond the means of many educators to sustain (sometimes, hundreds of dollars a year), they were faced with a conundrum that unfortunately has proved to be a harbinger of things to come.

A distributed community of practice is dependent on many fragile factors, and a major one of these is where it lives and breathes online. If the online space is user-friendly, intuitive, and offers the right features for facilitating community sharing and development, then interaction among members leads to the implementation of collaborative projects that define the cohesion of the community and forwards its goals. This is no more clearly seen than when the platform on which a CoP rests its development is suddenly removed.

Several things might happen in this case. The community first struggles to recover its data, hopefully to remount it online elsewhere. If this is successful then the community might regroup, but it is often the case that the community can only mount the vestiges of its data online somewhere, as in a museum, but without the life that the lost platform afforded. Often third parties will try to help with data import, sometimes for free and sometimes not.

In my experience, no community that I have founded or experienced as a member has ever recovered fully intact from such a blow to its foundations. Although members of affected communities might regroup elsewhere or happen to reunite as latecomers to other existing

communities, there never seems to be a way to recover the original community dynamics and spirit.

Options for salvage of data

In the case of Ning a decade ago, where 90,000 communities were told they would be thrown overboard unless they paid passage on the mother ship that was restructuring under capitalist rather than altruistic precepts, educators were particularly impacted. Pearson (formerly Longman) tried to help ELT educators preserve their actual communities after the loss of Ning by subsidizing them at the most basic level offered by Ning's restructured paid platform. Unfortunately this level only supported 150 community members and thus left community owners in the position of having to decide who to exclude from the community once that number was reached, in order to let in new members. This was neither a reasonable nor workable solution, as it forced CoP managers to jettison old growth in order to welcome new seedlings, so a forest ecosystem could not possibly develop to sustain and nurture the resulting CoP (see Stevens, 2011).

Grouply

One option for salvage of Ning data was Grouply, a Web 2.0 service founded in 2006 <https://www.crunchbase.com/organization/grouply#section-overview> with intent to compete with Yahoo! Groups and Ning by creating an email and documents management portal with features more similar to Facebook than those afforded by those other two services. <https://techcrunch.com/2008/01/24/grouply-brings-a-bit-of-facebook-to-yahoogoogle-groups/>

By 2008, <https://techcrunch.com/2008/06/03/grouply-claims-to-blow-past-ning-now-what/> Grouply claimed to have “blown past” Ning by capturing a larger share of the available web territory, but by working “symbiotically” (or “parasitically”) with (or, on) Yahoo! Groups to add a Facebook look to their group interactions

After Ning announced in April 2010 that the company would no longer host free Nings, Grouply rallied lifeboats to rescue CoPs having to jump off the Ning ship (Rao, 2010). Grouply made it possible to port the entire community over to the Grouply format, membership intact, although it would now operate more like a Yahoo! Group than as a portal with homepage and other features that had been built into Nings. But the CoPs were just settling into their new surroundings when Grouply was acquired by Oodle, a company whose business was to game social networks and aggregate their content elsewhere (“Classified ad site Oodle buys Grouply”. (2010,

https://www.bizjournals.com/sanfrancisco/morning_call/2010/11/classified-ad-site-oodle-grouply.html). You can learn more at <https://techcrunch.com/tag/grouply/>.

Grouply had a track record to make it appear to be a viable option to Ning or Yahoo! Groups, and so many CoP moderators ported their Nings to Grouply, whereas others had decided to forsake Yahoo! Groups for the more pleasing interface at Grouply, but the parasitic nature of the service was perhaps aggravated by its acquisition by Oodle, which, according to Wikipedia, is

currently the largest classifieds aggregator [of] listings from sites like eBay, ForRent.com, BoatTrader.com, as well as local listings from local newspapers and websites. Oodle strongly encourages posters to include a Facebook profile with listings, believing that users will prefer the transparency of dealing with someone with a name and face attributed to their listing ... On March 6, 2009, Facebook launched a now defunct version of its Marketplace application powered by Oodle. In November 2010 Oodle acquired Grouply, a platform for building custom social networking groups. The **QVC** home shopping company purchased Oodle in 2012. In May 2015, the site was purchased from QVC by Oodle Holdings (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oodle,_Inc.)

Grouply turned out to be a poor choice for migration from Ning, and within a few years communities so migrated simply disappeared offline.

Posterous, then Wordpress, to the rescue

Another player at the height of its popularity in 2010 was Posterous, which offered to help Ning users port over their data to Posterous blogs, <https://techcrunch.com/2010/06/22/posterous-targets-ning-in-massive-switching-campaign-who-is-next/>. Posterous had many affordances of particular interest to education, for example, it allowed users to create blog posts by email, so that teachers could work with students who could post and see and comment on each other's posts as seamlessly as replying to an email. And it gave users the ability to use the URL of an image in a blog post and have the image appear displayed automatically in the post (short-cutting what would have otherwise been a many step process), so it was an excellent site for quickly creating instructional materials with images captured in Jing, which allowed users to post their captures immediately to Screencast.com, where they acquired a URL which was copied instantly to the computer's buffer, and from which it could be embedded in a blog post on Posterous directly from the computer's memory buffer (not having to invoke an embed code, but just by pasting the image URL into the post). This was one of the most seamless combinations of free Web 2.0 tools for creating tutorials than I have ever encountered.

But whereas Ning was a user-interactive LMS (learning management system) Posterous was a CMS (a content management site). It managed to capture posts from Ning users and mount them in an attractive format. But then in 2013 Posterous was acquired by Twitter which quickly proceeded to kill off the service. In this case educators did not have the problem of loss of community, since Posterous was a blogging tool, not a substrate for community interaction, but there remained the issue of loss of data, which for many had been recently recovered from Ning. Fortunately Wordpress came to the rescue and allowed Posterous users to create Wordpress blogs for free to act as receptacles for data recovered from Posterous (<https://www.theverge.com/2013/4/30/4281780/posterous-is-shutting-down-tomorrow-here-are-the-best-alternatives>).

In this way many educational portals in Ning were captured in static format to Posterous blogs and then recaptured in Wordpress, where they remain online to this day, but not as dynamic communities, only as likenesses of their former selves now displayed as in a static gallery.

EVO: A canary in the coal mine

EVO (Electronic Village Online) started in 2001 as a clearinghouse site for language teachers and other educators and ed tech enthusiasts to mount 5-week courses and deliver them for free to peers who wanted to learn new skills. As EVO has transcended the era we have just been discussing, it can serve as an indicator of where online communities go to organize for free. At the EVO website at PBworks (<http://evosessions.org>), there are data from 2001 to the present showing where the moderators of each session chose to base both its content and its interactive presence. PBWorks could be another space that, in light of what has recently happened, might now be regarded as precarious, but these data all reside here:

<http://evosessions.pbworks.com/w/page/10708564/EVO%20Previous%20Sessions>

But as long as the data were available to me, or to anyone for that matter, I was able to use them in preparing this report.

EVO moderator choice of online content and interactive spaces for the sessions

EVO moderators are practitioners in various aspects of English language teaching and learning who, each year since 2001, have created mini-courses lasting several weeks, referred to as sessions, whose purpose is to convey their expertise at a distance to others in the field. These moderators have individually or in collaboration accepted the challenge over the past two decades of having to create from scratch and with whatever resources they themselves can muster, a five-week session that will attract colleagues to it and will mount online a learning

environment that will cover two main ends, (1) a means of placing online an easily accessible and hyperlinked cohesive plan of action designed to convey or help participants explore an issue or expertise of consequence to their work and practice its solutions and implementations, and (2) a viable means of communication among participants that will allow them to implement, organize, and archive their conversations and created artifacts.

EVO started at the cusp of the Web 2.0 at a time when educators were eagerly exploring and adapting the free and open online tools that designers of such tools were seemingly endlessly churning out for use by anybody, for free. Each year there are 10 to 20 sessions created in these productive conditions, and what EVO moderators have chosen as their new portals when put in the position of having to change platforms can give us insights into how the changing nature of Web 2.0 sites is impacting what is possible for others who would like to create educational materials without funding for online environments.

I am undertaking a study of what course and learning management tools EVO moderators have been using since the sudden loss of Ning ten years ago, and how recent changes to the EVO playing field are impacting the sustainability of reliance on free Web 2.0 tools over time.

In this article, I want to focus on the most recent developments, the sudden loss this past year of Google+ Communities, and of Yahoo! Groups.

Long standing reliance in EVO on Yahoo! Groups

Ten years ago, in 2010, EVO sessions were predominantly based in Yahoo! Groups. In 2010 there were 12 sessions, all but three of which used Yahoo! Groups for participant interaction. The remaining three sessions used Ning for as their LMS portal.

In 2011, out of 11 EVO sessions in 2011, 6 again used Yahoo! Groups, 2 used Grouply, and two used Moodle. Only one still used a Ning (which was no longer free, but being perpetuated by the grant from Pearson at the time).

By 2012, EVO moderators had ended their infatuation with Grouply, but eight of the 14 sessions were still in Yahoo! Groups. One session was using Wikispaces as its syllabus portal, a web host also destined for collapse in the coming years. By 2013, when there were only 10 EVO sessions running that year, only 4 were giving their portals as Yahoo! Groups.

Meanwhile, in December 2012, Google had announced its launch of Google+ Communities, <https://mashable.com/2013/01/18/google-plus-communities-beginners-guide/>.

At this time, EVO 2013 sessions had already been planned and were about to launch in January, but what we learned about G+C over the course of the following year led to yet another tectonic shift in EVO moderator perceptions of how best to mount their communities.

The Rise in EVO of Google+ Communities

By the end of 2013 Google+ Communities (G+ C) appeared to have been the app of choice for organizing communities of educators around a single portal. It had many charming affordances. Each post was usually built around a graphic of some kind. The posts were displayed in tiles format so the appearance was colorful and inviting. The posts were similar to Facebook in that discussions took place on each post. Groups could create events and there was at first integration of these events with Google Hangout. Each post had its own URL visible to anyone or only to community members depending on visibility set by group moderators.

Educators had warmed up in droves to Google+ Communities. The price was right and there it's not as if educators weren't aware of their options, but the look and feel was right for those who entrusted their communities to G+C and remained and thrived in those spaces for the five years between the launch of G+C and its sudden closure by Google five years later, in April 2019.

The problem seems to have been that G+C attracted only a small niche of Google users and was not in serious competition with FB (or Twitter) as had initially been hoped. For educators, G+C was in many ways preferable to FB because FB spans aspects of an individual lifestyle whereas G+ allowed users to create circles that would confine these aspects to separable silos with greater user control over keeping the silos from bleeding into one another, an important consideration in an educational context. But the bottom line was that it was not meeting Google's expectations, and I read somewhere that Google did not want to risk exposing itself to the spectacle Zuck had created for himself on capitol hill for what it perceived as little gain over its investment in its social network, so in 2019 it took the decision to cut bait, leaving a lot of educators once again floundering about looking for the most viable crucibles in which to collaboratively develop their visions and aspirations in CoPs of like-minded colleagues.

Steve Denning's two posts on G+

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/stevedenning/2015/04/23/has-google-really-died/> and
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/stevedenning/2015/04/17/five-reasons-why-google-died/>

When it finally went down

<https://hackaday.com/2019/03/13/google-communities-wont-go-down-without-a-fight/>

With the advent of G+C we saw a sharp change in choice of platform for the 17 EVO sessions offered in 2014. Of these 7 were still basing themselves in Yahoo! Groups, but 6 had gone over the new G+C platform for group interaction, augmented with some content management tool (and this tended to be PBWorks). By 2015, G+C seems to have gained ascendancy as the platform of choice for group interaction. Of the 13 sessions that year, none were any longer indicating they were based in Yahoo! Groups. Most were using PBWorks for content, but 8 were

using G+Cs as their interactive spaces. This trend continued in 2016. Of the 14 EVO sessions hosted that year, 10 were now based in G+C, often augmented with PBWorks wikis. 2017 and the ascendancy of Moodle as a choice for EVO moderators

In 2017, a new trend seems to have emerged. Of the 16 EVO sessions in 2017, the number basing themselves in G+C had gone down to 5, and was that year surpassed by the number of sessions (6) using a Moodle. Meanwhile 3 sessions were using Schoology, a free site with similar functionality to Moodle, but hosted at Schoology (thus more easily implementable than Moodle which requires its own host server). There were two sessions using Facebook for participant interaction.

2018 and the demise of Wikispaces

Toward the end of 2017, yet another venerable online wiki tool announced that it would be shutting down in 2018. Wikispaces had started out as a free wiki option in 2005 and had developed a robust community base among educators, but in 2014 it was acquired by Tes Global (formerly TSL Education). Later that year Tes revoked free hosting on all wikis that were not used in K–12 or higher education. They did however, give away more than 100,000 premium wikis to K–12 educators, according to <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikispaces>, but it was only a temporary reprieve. In 2017 Wikispaces announced that for financial reasons, it would shut down its classroom and other free Wikispaces, which all would cease to exist in July, 2018, and by early 2019 it had closed down even its premium wikis, and the site went permanently offline.

As always happens when community spaces wither and die, educators scrambled as best they can given limited deadlines to recover the data that mattered to them. EVO moderators had not been heavy users of Wikispaces in EVO, but they were among the many worldwide who were impacted.

Although Wikispaces was not of critical utility to EVO, it was the latest domino to fall in what was becoming a tendency of long-standing community spaces to suddenly shutter their doors and not always give sufficient time nor sufficient tools for community owners working on their own to retrieve their data.

This latest experience with loss of free online community space had to be at the back of moderators' minds when they started preparing in late 2017 for their 2018 session. The choices of platform were similar to what they had used in January and February 2017. Of the 14 EVO sessions, the number basing themselves in G+C remained at 5, and the number of sessions using a Moodle remained at 6, and 3 sessions were again using Schoology. But once again, we were about to lose a critical tool that had underpinned some of our most successful efforts to date of building attractive and robust communities of practice.

Google pulls the rug out from under its G+C communities

While preparing in late 2018 for EVO 2019, we learned that G+C would cease to function in April 2019. This was not going to impact our operations in January and February, 2019, but those who had already committed their ongoing communities to G+C were also aware that these would not continue to function much longer after that.

Forewarned and forearmed, three of the sessions that had been using G+C for several years already, decided to continue their ongoing communities in the same spaces for the time being and deal with the upcoming calamity later. Two new sessions running for the first time that year decided to use G+C because it was an easy and compelling way to get going for a first-time session (and neither of these continued their EVO sessions in 2020). Two of the three who continued using G+C knowing they would soon lose their portals regrouped in different community spaces, but the third had been using Edmodo and FB as well and simply continued in 2020 in those spaces).

So 5 of the 16 EVO sessions in 2019 used G+C, and Moodle4teachers.org hosted another 6, while two of the other sessions used Schoology. But in another shift in moderator preferences, the three remaining sessions based themselves in Google Classroom (and one of these had in 2018 been in G+C). As had been the case ever since 2015, no session moderators chose to base their session in Yahoo! Groups.

Yahoo! Groups had been a long serving platform for EVO communities and a predominant one up through 2015. Yahoo! Groups had been in existence since the beginning of the 21st century and EVO coordinators had been using Yahoo! Groups spaces for archiving their documents and statistics for almost that entire time. For EVO sessions which wanted to make it possible for participants to communicate with the community in email, Yahoo was an excellent choice, and emails posted there would remain available, and searchable in a number of ways, in the decades that followed. But EVO communities had most recently been turning to platforms more mobile friendly and which allowed for conversations to turn on embedded graphics. Yahoo! Groups had fallen out of favor at the platform of choice for EVO moderators, but many EVO sessions maintained extensive archives in Yahoo! Groups spaces.

Salvage operations with G+C

As with Ning and Posterous in previous years, educators' first concern was their data which, as in previous years, could be downloaded from the provider in xml files which the user would then be able to reconstruct into web pages as long as they had the requisite skills for coding

that reconstruction. As in previous years, so many people were finding themselves all at once in the unenviable position of having to download their data and then repost it, third party providers were again offering ways of repackaging the raw data for import into their new homes. But one difference in the case of G+C was that, in the past, the new homes were themselves white-hat blogging platforms seeking to capitalize on a windfall increase in user-base, which is why Posterous, and then Wordpress provided tools for the extraction of the raw xml data from its previous locations and a means of import into new accounts on their platforms so seamlessly, and for free. And the result in both cases was a satisfactory, if not replication, at least preservation of content intact at the new location.

However at the time of the G+C demise, there was no such port of convenience available to G+C users. However one entity calling itself Google+ Exporter provided a set of tools, not free but at a cost of around \$20 dollars, which caught the attention of a substantial number of owners of communities looking for something, anything, that would get their data off Google's servers in the short time allowed and package it in some way that would be importable into other blogging sites such as Blogger or Wordpress. So for a period of time, those closely attuned to the processes involved formed their own brief communities of convenience forced to focus on the ins and outs of working with this particular tool in time to get their data intact from Google, often involving many multiple communities, and then package it for import into their blog sites, preserving pictures and videos, and the names of G+C users associated with their posts. Just that last step required tweaks to code needed to import the xml into the blog of choice.

After the deadline passed when Google had promised to delete all G+C user data left on its servers, and we were able to see what had become of our salvage efforts, these were found wanting. Certainly the communities of practice based in these highly functional G+C spaces, had disappeared or gone elsewhere. For peripheral members whose only contact with such communities was in the G+C space that had attracted them in the first place, these once-bustling communities had vanished without a trace.

Here are two examples of Blogger blogs compiled from what two of the EVO Minecraft MOOC moderators were able to restructure from the heap of data harvested by Google+ Exporter. Judge for yourself: <https://evomcmooc2019.blogspot.com/> and <https://evomcarchive.blogspot.com/>.

Yahoo!Groups announces its closure

EVO moderators learned during its annual moderator development sessions in October-November, 2019, while moderators were preparing for the EVO 2020 season, that Yahoo! Groups had been acquired by Verizon and was planning to delete all user supplied data from all our Yahoo! Groups sites. Just like that.

If any 2020 EVO session moderators were planning to compensate for the complete demise of G+C by falling back on Yahoo! Groups as a community space, they did not leave an easily traceable record. Meanwhile much community attention was being consumed with coping with the 56-day notice to rescue the heavy investment of time and community that had been poured into our Yahoo! Groups communities in the first decades of the present century. Many of these groups mattered very much to us, and to countless others, whose long-nurtured communities were now threatened with sudden death, and burial in an unmarked grave if swift action wasn't taken.

There were the familiar ways of harvesting data directly from Yahoo in huge zip files which had the email traffic and group files, but these preserved only text, no photo or community member data, two critical components that form the face and essence of a community. Fortunately there quickly appeared a rescue option in the form of Groups.io, which was an email management and community interaction site similar to Yahoo! Groups that had long been attracting imports of communities wholesale from both Yahoo! Groups and GG by offering services more in keeping with the functionality of those groups, before their services had been gradually deprecated since the creation of groups.Yahoo/neo in 2010

(<http://yahoogroupedia.pbworks.com/w/page/68466246/Yahoo%20Groups%20Neo>).

The founder of Gio was Mark Fletcher, who in 1997 had created a free mailing list management site called ONElist which soon merged with EGroups, which was in turn acquired by Yahoo in 2000, where Mark Fletcher worked for a few years before striking out his own in 2014 to form Gio.

When Yahoo! Groups was acquired by Verizon in 2019, group owners were given 56 days to retrieve their data (the deadline was eventually extended by another 6 weeks) but the data extraction tool offered "only retrieves text; photos and other files still have to be downloaded individually" so the extension does not really apply to the hardest to get at data (<https://slate.com/technology/2019/12/yahoo-groups-is-ending-and-verizon-is-making-it-hard-for-people-to-archive-its-content.html>) . Gio would handle import of all data from Yahoo! Groups or GG and set it up as a fully functioning mirror community, intact with all photos, files, and user subscriptions preserved. As with all the groups that Fletcher had worked with over the years, hosting would be free, but in order to effect the move, the group that the data would be moved to needed to be upgraded to premium for one year at a cost of around \$100 (after that it could be reverted to basic and hosted for free in perpetuity, however that is defined in Web 2.0 terms these days). When the scale of the demand for that service became apparent, Gio doubled the price of the premium upgrade, ostensibly to both quell demand and exploit the situation for whatever it was worth to whomever most needed to extract their data with their communities intact. This put that Yahoo! Group in a queue for processing. Processing took a long time, so there was also the option to jump to the head of the queue for another couple hundred dollars. Wikipedia reports that in 2010 Yahoo was reporting that there were 10 million Yahoo! Groups

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yahoo!_Groups), so one can only imagine the scale of the desperation for rescue.

Although I had to pay \$200 for the peace of mind, I was able to recover my Webheads in Action Yahoo! Group and port it to <http://webheadsinaction.groups.io> as a fully functioning community heading into its third decade of CoP interaction. It was a small victory in the midst of so many other wasted CoPs, some of which had meant a lot to the participants involved.

I preserved what I could of the ones I was involved in here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NK7NdZOlpLTGu8XIVCiOj9B2WTytXNJ0vP4AJgX9zg/edit?usp=sharing>

Moving toward the end of Web 2.0 as we know it

Online community portals chosen by EVO 2020 moderators

Faced with loss in recent years of so many other spaces that they had developed, worked in, and relied on, moderators preparing for EVO in 2020 were in uncertain territory. However, being for the most part skilled online practitioners, their choices of where to reform their communities, given the remaining available options, can be uniquely instructive for the rest of us.

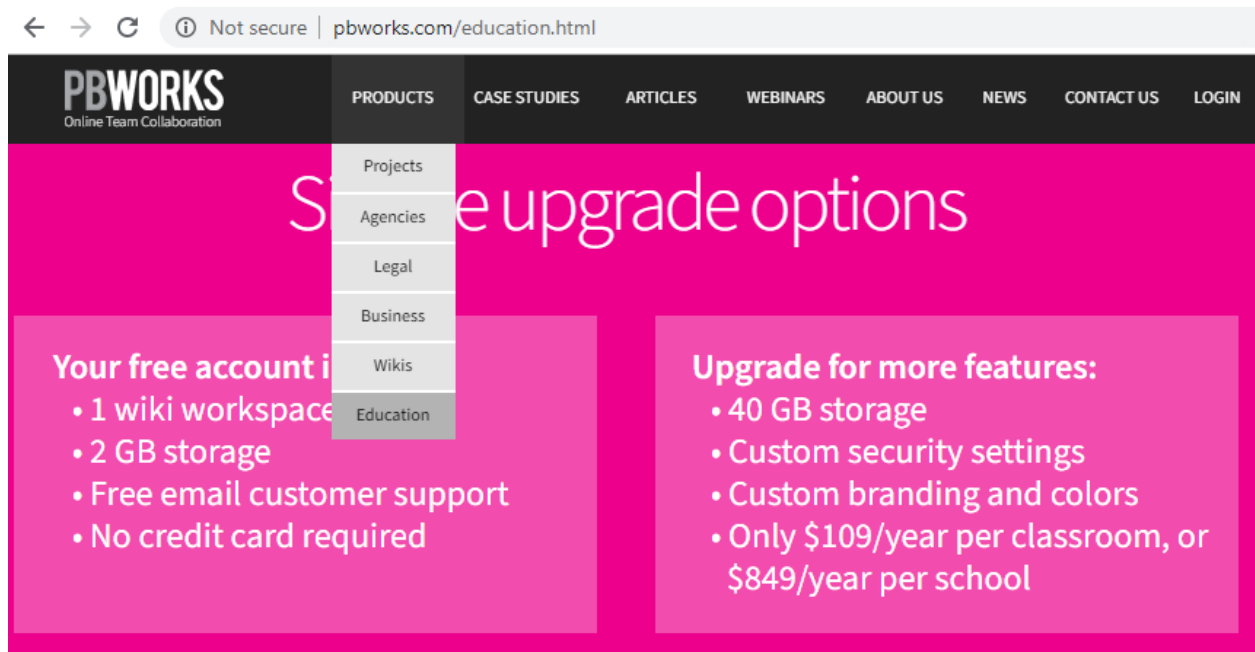
There are 14 sessions planned for EVO 2020. Five of the seven sessions using Moodle were not impacted by the present round of vagaries of the Web 2.0 marketplace and decided to continue as they had done previously (one of the Moodle sessions did not repeat in 2020 and two others were formed, leaving the total at 7, half of this year's EVO sessions using Moodle).

Regarding four of the other 7 sessions, ICT4ELT decided to remain with Google Classroom, and one new session opted for this platform as well; whereas one of the sessions using GC in 2019 decided to replace it with Slack. The two sessions using Schoology in 2019 did not repeat, but one new session opted for this platform.

This leaves three sessions in 2020 that had been using G+C in 2019 and were forced to replace it. One of these went to the Canvas platform. One replaced G+C with Facebook and Gio (as well as meeting in Minecraft and Discord); and the other one simply focused on FB and Edmodo, their remaining two community interaction spaces.

What else could we lose?

EVO and others trying to mount online courses remain heavily invested in two Web 2.0 tools in particular, Google Drive and PBworks. I just now Googled the future of Google Drive but was unable to come up with anything alarming, which is reassuring. I'm not so sure about PBworks. Their blog discusses only maintenance issues, and there is no clue to any changes afoot, but they not long ago cut their free wikis back to only one workspace per user, hardly adequate for the kind of freewheeling development we have been enjoying in EVO, where moderators were able to create a different wiki each year for each new idea they had for an EVO session, and archive the old session. New users can use the basic service at no cost but can't really develop a set of courses unless they keep them under a single project front page (or pay to upgrade). Here are the current terms:



The screenshot shows the PBworks website with a dark navigation bar at the top containing the PBWORKS logo and links for PRODUCTS, CASE STUDIES, ARTICLES, WEBINARS, ABOUT US, NEWS, CONTACT US, and LOGIN. A vertical menu on the left lists Projects, Agencies, Legal, Business, Wikis, and Education, with 'Education' highlighted. The main content area has a pink background with the heading 'See upgrade options'. It features two columns of text: 'Your free account includes' with a bulleted list of features, and 'Upgrade for more features:' with a bulleted list of premium features and pricing.

← → ↻ ⓘ Not secure | pbworks.com/education.html

PBWORKS
Online Team Collaboration

PRODUCTS CASE STUDIES ARTICLES WEBINARS ABOUT US NEWS CONTACT US LOGIN

Projects
Agencies
Legal
Business
Wikis
Education

See upgrade options

Your free account includes:

- 1 wiki workspace
- 2 GB storage
- Free email customer support
- No credit card required

Upgrade for more features:

- 40 GB storage
- Custom security settings
- Custom branding and colors
- Only \$109/year per classroom, or \$849/year per school

As we move inexorably from freemium to pay-me-um, In the past year, we have lost Doodle as a free tool for scheduling events and allowing potential participants to crowd-source their availability. The service has just gone over to paid plans starting at around \$5 a month.

And almost unnoticed, Today's Meet disappeared as well. Today's Meet allowed users to create free chat rooms and give them mnemonic names that could be shared with groups ranging from office mates and family, to classrooms, auditoriums full of people -- any setting that would benefit from a back channel. No login was required; anyone could join the room just by going to the URL and entering text. I used to find it especially useful when covering other people's classes, and I needed to get students I had never met before quickly onto the URL for what I

wanted them to do while I was with them. The teachers whose classes I was covering also appreciated being able to see what I had done with their class and catch up with their students responses through the one Today's Meet link. The simplicity, utility, and convenience will be missed by all who used it.

Credly, an ecosystem for awarding digital badges, sent out an email to its users on Dec 21, 2020 to inform them that the free part of their freemium service would soon cease to function, and users would need to "upgrade to Credly's Acclaim platform to continue issuing badges after June 30, 2020" at which point free subscriptions would "no longer be able to issue badges." But people who have already earned badges have only a link to where their badge resides. At THAT link there is a link to the evidence of how that person earned the badge. However, once the badge is removed from where it is, there is no way from existing pointers to the badge to find that underlying data.

Websites have often come and gone over the years, and we all need to be aware of what we are getting into when we use them. But the loss of some can have ramifications down the line, and there appears to be little integrity on the part of freemium hosts to assume responsibility for any ramifications.

Conclusion

When I wrote about the "Ning thing" in 2010, it was from the perspective of having observed what appeared to be a one-off phenomenon -- where a site designed to promote openness and equality for anyone in the long tail to take advantage of the affordances of Web 2.0 -- had been established by developers operating largely for altruistic reasons just to see if their work could nurture communities of practice of educators and others bent on leveraging their values for the good of the community, but it had been abruptly rent asunder by corporate interests who had shown their users little consideration for the data, artifact, and networks of human interactions that their work had produced. True, these users were using the spaces for free (assuming Ning had not been able to extract lucrative data points from them that would benefit them in their more covert business), but despite the obvious fact that the model was unsustainable for educators on low incomes and working for institutions who would not have supported the experiments that they had initiated when they had free access to the Ning space, the most shocking thing was that it had happened. Just like that.

Many educators work in online spaces to further their professional development or classroom goals. One great incentive is to learn all we can about them, what a great variety of tools there are available, what their affordances are for our professional goals and aspirations, and how they integrate with our social networks and those of our students. But we are also learning that many of these spaces are like quicksand. There must be reasons for the changing dynamics,

general shift away from desktop to mobile apps among them. But in the past few years we have seen not necessarily an increase in the number of Web 2.0 sites going down, that happens all the time, but a sudden demise of sites hosting large numbers of CoPs of students and educators, resulting in significant data loss, despite token efforts of service providers to help users recover their data, and sometimes terminal disruption to these communities.

When we don't pay for the tools we use then we have no right to expect that their developers have any responsibility toward us, apart from the reputations that accrue to them when they properly protect and preserve the data we have entrusted with them. But even that is not our right, and we have to be prepared from the day that new corporate owners might want their server space back. What happens when we lose PBWorks and Google? Imagine having to download your data from those spaces?

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Wikipedia contributors. (2019, November 1). Ning (website). In *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved 03:56, February 4, 2020, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Ning_\(website\)&oldid=923994840](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Ning_(website)&oldid=923994840)

The ideas that were here have been ported over to the DIYLMS section of
 Stevens, V. (2019, December 8). Presentation idea: Flipping conference presentations in 2019 [Blog post]. Retrieved from <https://advancededucation.blogspot.com/2019/12/presentation-idea-flipping-conference.html>

Yahoo Group: http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/baw2011	Audacity: http://audacity.sourceforge.net/ :
Wiki: http://baw2011.pbworks.com	AudioPal: http://www.audiopal.com/
Blog: http://baw2011.blogspot.com/	Archive.org: http://www.archive.org/index.php
Forum: http://baw2011.proboards.com/index.cgi	Box (online file storage): http://www.box.net/
	Del.icio.us (bookmarking): http://del.icio.us/
	Elluminate at Learning Times (vClass): http://www.learningtimes.org
	EVOCA: http://www.evoca.com
	MP3 Skype Recorder: http://voipcallrecording.com/
	Odeo (podcasting): http://www.odeo.com/
	pbWorks (wiki): http://pbworks.com
	Podomatic (podcasting): http://www.podomatic.com/
	Podbean: http://www.podbean.com/
	Skype : http://www.skype.com/
	Tapped In : http://www.tappedin.org/
	Tokbox: http://www.tokbox.com/
	Viewpoint: http://clear.msu.edu/viewpoint/index.php
	VoiceThread: http://voicethread.com/

include [social networking sites](#) or [social media](#) sites (e.g., [Facebook](#)), [blogs](#), [wikis](#), [folksonomies](#) ("tagging" keywords on websites and links), [video sharing](#) sites (e.g., [YouTube](#)), [hosted services](#), [Web applications](#) ("apps"), [collaborative consumption](#) platforms, and [mashup applications](#).

Whether Web 2.0 is substantially different from prior Web technologies has been challenged by World Wide Web inventor [Tim Berners-Lee](#), who describes the term as [jargon](#).^[7] His original vision of the Web was "a collaborative medium, a place where we [could] all meet and read and write."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_2.0

Appendices

EVO Moderator preferences in 2010

In 2010 there were 12 sessions, all but three of which used Yahoo Groups for participant interaction. Six of those used PBWorks for content management (and one of those 6 used a Moodle as well), and the other one using YG also used a Ning. The remaining two specified YG in their syllabi plus a variety of other online spaces during their sessions.

Four sessions used Ning. One of those was mentioned above as having used YG as well, but of the other three, one used PBWorks along with the Ning, and the other two used Ning to augment interaction taking place in Second Life.

So in January and February of 2010 YG was common to $\frac{3}{4}$ of all the sessions that year, and PBWorks was used in 7 of the 12, whereas Ning was being used in 4 of the 12 sessions.

Yahoo! Groups and PB Works

1. [BaW-10](#) - YG and PBWorks
2. [Multiliteracies for Social Networking and Collaborative Learning Environments](#) - YG and PBWorks
3. [EVO Video 2010](#) - YG and PBWorks
4. [Internet4YoungLearners](#) - YG, Grouply, and PBWorks
5. [Online Games for ESL/EFL](#) - YG and PBWorks

Moodle, YG and PBWorks

6. [Digital Materials Preparation Techniques](#) - Moodle YG and PBWorks

Yahoo Groups and free Ning

7. [EVO Drama 2010](#) - YG and Ning

Yahoo Groups and etc.

8. [Adaptive Technology](#) - YG
9. [Smart Teaching with Interactive Whiteboards](#) - YG and etc.

Ning and PBworks

- [Images4Education](#) - Ning and PBWorks

Ning and SL

- [Teaching Languages in a Virtual World](#) - Ning and Second Life
- [Virtual Language Travel](#) - Ning and Second Life

EVO Moderator preferences in 2011

There were ten sessions in 2011. For participant interaction, 6 used YG, 2 used Grouply, and two used Moodle. For these 6 sessions, 2 of the sessions using YG used PBWorks for content management, one used a Ning (which was no longer free, but being perpetuated by a grant from Pearson at the time), and three used something else; e.g. readings, Facebook, and so on.

Of the other 4 sessions, two were using Grouply for participant interaction plus PBWorks for content management, One used Moodle in conjunction with PBWorks, and the remaining session relied only on Moodle.

So in this year, over 6 of the ten sessions were using YG, and half were using PBWorks. Because Grouply was similar to and in competition with YG, you could say that 8 of the ten sessions had opted to manage their participant interactions through portals where they could store documents and communications histories but had the option of posting to forums either on the web or through email.

Yahoo Groups and PBworks

- [Becoming a Webhead 2011](#) - YG and **PBWorks**
- [Mentoring TESOL](#) - YG and **PBWorks**

YG and Ning

- [Multiliteracies for Social Networking and Collaborative Learning Environments](#) - YG and Ning

YG & etc.

- [Re-playing Process Drama](#) - YG
- [Podcasts for the EFL/ESL Classroom](#) - YG and etc.
- [Reflection and Practice: Virtual Education](#) - YG and Facebook, etc.

Grouply and PBWorks

- [Digital Storytelling](#) - Grouply and **PBWorks**
- [VILLAGE Language Learning and Community Building in Second Life](#) - Grouply and **PBWorks**

Moodle and PBworks

- [PLEs and PLNs for Lifelong Learning Competencies](#) - Moodle and **PBWorks**

Moodle

- [Creating Vocabulary Activities](#) - Moodle

BaW tools used in 2011

Yahoo Group: http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/baw2011	Audacity: http://audacity.sourceforge.net/ :
Wiki: http://baw2011.pbworks.com	AudioPal: http://www.audiopal.com/
Blog: http://baw2011.blogspot.com/	Archive.org: http://www.archive.org/index.php
Forum: http://baw2011.proboards.com/index.cgi	Box (online file storage): http://www.box.net/
	Del.icio.us (bookmarking): http://del.icio.us/
	Elluminate at Learning Times (vClass): http://www.learningtimes.org
	EVOCA: http://www.evoca.com
	MP3 Skype Recorder: http://voipcallrecording.com/
	Odeo (podcasting): http://www.odeo.com/
	pbWorks (wiki): http://pbworks.com

	Podomatic (podcasting): http://www.podomatic.com/
	Podbean : http://www.podbean.com/
	Skype : http://www.skype.com/
	Tapped In : http://www.tappedin.org/
	Tokbox : http://www.tokbox.com/
	Viewpoint : http://clear.msu.edu/viewpoint/index.php
	VoiceThread : http://voicethread.com/
	VoxOpop : http://www.voxopop.com/
	WetPaint (wiki): http://www.wetpaint.com
	Wikispaces (wiki): http://www.wikispaces.com
	WiZiQ (virtual room): http://www.wiziq.com/

EVO Moderator preferences in 2012

For a few years, EVO was predominantly based in Yahoo Groups. In 2012 for example 8 of the 14 sessions were in YG, one was in Edmodo, one was in Ning, one was in Spruz, and 3 were in Moodle, and one of the Moodle sessions was using Wikispaces as its syllabus portal.

YG

1. [Becoming a Webhead 2012](#) - YG
2. [TESOL-Drama Workshop: Implementing and Evaluating the Facilitation of English Language learning through Drama](#) - YG
3. [Digital Storytelling for Young Learners](#) - YG
4. [PLEs and PLNs for Lifelong Learning](#) - YG
5. [Multiliteracies for Social Networking and Collaborative Learning Environments](#) - YG
6. [Teaching English to Young Learners and Teens](#) - YG
7. [Developing our Mentoring Skills](#) - YG
8. [Podcasting for the EFL/ESL Classroom](#) - YG

Edmodo

- [Digital Tools with Purpose in the Classroom](#) - Edmodo

Moodle (and wikispaces)

1. [Teaching and Language Learning Through Gamification](#) - Moodle and Wikispaces
2. [Tutoring with Web 2.0 Tools - Designing for Social Presence](#) - Moodle
3. [MOODLE for Teachers](#) - Moodle

Ning (and SL)

- [MachinEVO](#) - Ning and SL

Spruz

- [Social Networking: Making it Work for You and Your Students!](#) Spruz

EVO Moderator preferences in 2013

In 2013, before G+C had gained traction, where were the communities basing themselves? Of the 10 sessions running in 2013, 4 were giving their portals as YahooGroups, 4 were based in Edmodo, one was using a paid Ning, and the course called Moodle4teachers was based in a Moodle with a Google Docs syllabus

Yahoo Groups

- [Becoming a Webhead 2013](#) - <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/baw2013>
- [The Wonderful World of Teaching English Through Drama](#) - http://groups.yahoo.com/group/EVO_Drama_2013/
- [Multiliteracies for Social Networking and Collaborative Learning Environments](#) - <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/multilit/>
- [Podcasting for the ESL-EFL Classroom](#) - <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/podcasting2013/>

Edmodo

1. **Digital Storytelling for Young Learners** Go to: <http://digitalstorytelling4kids.pbworks.com>
 - a. Click on [Digikids Posterous Group](#) and [Edmodo Group](#) (located in the sidebar)
2. **Designed for Business** - Edmodo
3. **Neuroscience in Education** - [Edmodo Neuroscience in Education group \(hottopicsELT\)](#)
4. **Mentoring** - <http://www.edmodo.com/home#/join/1639371ea1f7f31d70787dd4e32b358bEdmodo>

Paid Ning

- **MachinEVO** - <http://machinevo.ning.com>

WizIQ

- **MOODLE for Teachers** - <http://www.wiziq.com/course/9160-moodle-for-teachers-m4t-tesol-call-is-evo2013>

These were MultiMOOC's **Session Online Spaces in 2013**

- **ePortfolio tools:** Blogs, Wikis, Glogster, <http://www.wix.com/>
 - **Networking and curation:** Scoop.it, Twitter and Tweetdeck, Diigo / Delicious
 - **Google tools:** Blogger, Reader, Docs or Drive
 - **Synchronous presentation tools:** Bb Collaborate / Elluminate, Today's Meet, Big Marker: <http://www.youtube.com/user/BigMarkerVideos/videos>
- Google+ Hangout in conjunction with YouTube
- **Asynchronous presentation tools:** Slideshare.net, Dropbox, Podomatic
 - **Discussion tools:** Yahoo Groups, Posterous
 - **Aggregation tools:** Feedburner, Pageflakes, Netvibes, Spezify
 - **PLN's:** Learning2gether, EdTech Talk, Ed Tech Crew, Classroom 2.0, Mightybell, <http://connectededucators.org/>
 - **Open course platforms:** P2PU, Coursera, Khan Academy, MIT, Udacity, TheCN.com
- Open Masters concept: <http://www.openmastersprogram.com/>

EVO Moderator preferences in 2014

In 2004, there were 17 sessions. Of these 7 were still basing themselves in Yahoo!Groups, but 6 had gone over the G+C for group interaction, and predominantly PBWorks for content storage. Two were still using Edmodo, and the Moodle4teachers guru, Nellie Deutsch, had recruited a second Moodle entry by offering to host that session on her Moodle server.

Moodle

- **CLIL: Using Technology for Content and Language Integrated Learning** - <http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=22>
- **Moodle for Teachers** - <http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=16>

G+C and PbWorks

1. **Crafting the e-Perfect Textbook** - <http://ebookeyo.pbworks.com> and the GooglePlus Community and Listly (located in the sidebar)
2. **MachinEVO** - MachinEVO Google+ group
3. **MultiMOOC 2014** - Join: <http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/multilit/info>
 - a. Join the Google+ Community: <http://gplus.to/multimooc>
 - b. Explore: <http://goodbyegutenberg.pbworks.com/>
4. **NNESTEVO** - <https://plus.google.com/communities/111415124425983599095>
5. **Online Tools for EFL-ESL Civic Engagement Projects** - Google+ Online Tools for EFL/ESL Civic Engagement Youth Projects Community
6. **Peacebuilding for Language Learners** - Google Community at: <https://plus.google.com/communities/113934762020606742698> and wiki at: <http://peacebuildingforlanguagelearners.pbworks.com/>

Yahoo Groups and PBWorks or FB

1. **Designing and Managing Projects in the ESOL Organization** - <http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/projectmanagement2014> and <http://projectmanagentevo2014participants.pbworks.com>
2. **Developing Mentoring Skills** - <http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/mentorevo/info> and <https://www.facebook.com/groups/elt.mentoring/members/>
3. **EVO Drama 2014: Structuring Drama Work** - http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/EVO_Drama_2014/info
4. **ICT4ELT** - <http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/ict4elt2014/>
5. **Wonderful Words: Vocabulary Matters** - <http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/wonderfulwords/info>
6. **Podcasting for the ESL-EFL Classroom** - <http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/podcasting2014/info>
7. **Teaching English to Young Learners and Teenagers** - <http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/evo-yltsig-2014/info>

Edmodo

- [Developing Business English Teachers](https://plus.google.com/communities/108435450676323725072?cfem=1) - Edmodo [Dream Act](https://plus.google.com/communities/108435450676323725072?cfem=1) - <https://plus.google.com/communities/108435450676323725072?cfem=1>
- [Use of Mobile Applications in Language Classes](https://edmo.do/j/4t3h) - <https://edmo.do/j/4t3h>

EVO Moderator preferences in 2015

In 2015, of the 13 sessions that year, none were claiming to be based in Yahoo!Groups. Most were using PBWorks for content, but 8 were using G+Cs as their interactive spaces, whereas one was using Second Life and a PBWorks wiki. Nellie was now hosting 4 sessions on her Moodle server.

Moodle

1. [Using Moodle as a Bridge to Blended Learning](http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=59) - <http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=59>
2. [International Writing Exchange](http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=60) - <http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=60>
3. [Moodle for Teachers \(M4T\)](http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=16) - <http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=16>
4. [Teaching EFL to Young Learners](http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=61) - <http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=61>

G+C and PBWorks etc

1. [Creating eTextbooks](http://ebookeyo.pbworks.com) - GooglePlus Community, Wiki <http://ebookeyo.pbworks.com>, survey, <http://bit.ly/ebooksurvey2015>, and syllabus, <https://docs.google.com/document/d/17tYUYs3mSe6fpqaLbXyKWGxqqbyEySQLU6SCBt0ij3Q/edit?usp=sharing>
2. [Dream Act: What Teachers Can Do](#) - Google Plus Community
3. [Educators and Copyright: Do the Right Thing](#) - Google Plus Community
4. [EVO Minecraft MOOC](#) - - Google Plus Community and Google Docs
5. [Flipped Learning](#) - - Google Plus Community and Anvil

6. [ICT4ELT](http://ict4elt2015.pbworks.com/) - G+C, <http://ict4elt2015.pbworks.com/>
7. [Non-Native English Speakers in TESOL and Collaborative Teaching](http://nnestevo2015.pbworks.com/) - G+C and <http://nnestevo2015.pbworks.com/>
8. [Teaching Pronunciation Differently](http://teachingpronunciationdifferently.pbworks.com/) - G+C, <http://teachingpronunciationdifferently.pbworks.com/>

PBWorks and SL

- [MachinEVO 2015: How to make a Machinima for Learners of English](http://machinevo.pbworks.com/) - SL, Fraps, <http://machinevo.pbworks.com/>

EVO Moderator preferences in 2016

In 2016 the trend continued; of 14 sessions, 10 were now based in G+C, often augmented with PBWorks wikis. One session was running in Canvas (and Facebook), and there were 3 sessions hosted on the Moodle4teachers server.

G+C

1. [Teaching Pronunciation Differently](#) - Google + community and PBWorks
2. [Classroom-Based Research for Professional Development](http://classbasedresearch.pbworks.com/) - G+C and <http://classbasedresearch.pbworks.com/>
3. [DREAM Act: What Teachers Can Do](http://dreamactwhateacherscando.pbworks.com/) - G+C and <http://dreamactwhateacherscando.pbworks.com/>
4. [Educators & Copyright: Do the Right Thing](https://sites.google.com/site/educatorsandcopyright/home) - G+C and <https://sites.google.com/site/educatorsandcopyright/home>
5. [EVO Minecraft MOOC](#) - G+C
6. [EVO VILLAGE 2016](http://evovillage.pbworks.com/) - G+C and <http://evovillage.pbworks.com/> and SL
7. [Flipped Learning](#) - G+C and ANVIL and Technology Tools for Video Creation and Editing:
 - a. Screencast-o-matic, Jing, Snagit, Camtasia, Present Me, Educreations, Explain Everything (iOS), Quicktime; Screencast.com or Sophia.org for video storage and playing and more; and innovative uses of slideshow software, like Powerpoint and Keynote
8. [ICT4ELT](#) - G+C and PBWorks

9. [Media Resources and Emotions in Teaching and Learning](#) - Google+ Community and Google Sites
10. [Teachers Creating Digital Textbooks](#) - G+C, <http://ebookeyo.pbworks.com/>, listly, survey, Google Docs syllabus

Canvas and FB

- [Teachers as Designers](#) - Canvas and FB

Moodle

- [Moodle for Teachers \(M4T\)](#) - <http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=88> and BigBlueButton, WizIQ, Jing, screencast-o-matic, Movenote, Present me, SlideSpeech
- [Teaching EFL to Young Learners](#) - <http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=91>
- [Techno-CLIL for EVO 2016](#) - <http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=90>

EVO Moderator preferences in 2017

In 2017, a new trend seems to be emerging. Of the 16 EVO sessions in 2017, the number basing themselves in G+C has gone down to 5, and is surpassed by the number of sessions, 6, using a Moodle hosted by Moodle4teachers. Meanwhile 3 sessions are using Schoology, a free hosted site with similar functionality to Moodle, and there are two sessions using Facebook for participant interaction.

Facebook and Weebly

1. [Classroom-Based Research for Professional Development](#) - Facebook and <http://classroombasedresearch.weebly.com/>
2. [EVO ViLLAGE 2017](#) - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/evovillage/>; SL and PbWorks

G+C and Anvil or Discord

1. [Design Thinking](#) - <https://plus.google.com/u/0/communities/113650297668929557819>
2. [EVO Minecraft MOOC 2017](#) - <https://plus.google.com/u/0/communities/112993649763396826671>; discord, minecraft
3. [Flipped Learning](#) - <https://plus.google.com/u/0/communities/108235770209810657733> and Anvil
4. [ICT4ELT2017](#) - <https://plus.google.com/communities/109042333148866234687>

5. [Non-native English Speakers in TESOL](#) - Google+ Community Page; LearningTimes BbC

Schoology

1. [Developing Intercultural Competence Through the Use of Online Resources](#) - <https://app.schoology.com/register.php?type=student>
2. [Experiential Learning](#) - <https://www.schoology.com/> and Facebook
3. [Teaching Pronunciation Differently](#) - <http://www.schoology.com/>

Moodle

1. [DIY Online Assessment](#) - <https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=136>
2. [Moodle4Teachers](#) - <http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=88>
3. [QR Codes in Action](#) - <https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=135>
4. [Teaching Listening: principles, techniques and technologies](#) - <https://moodle4teachers.org/login/index.php>
5. [Techno-CLIL](#) - <https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=90>
6. [TEFL2YL](#) - <http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=91>

EVO Moderator preferences in 2018

The new trend holds in 2018, where of the 14 EVO sessions, the number basing themselves in G+C remains at 5, and the number of sessions using a Moodle hosted by Moodle4teachers remains at 6, and 3 sessions are again using Schoology.

G+C and Anvil

1. Flipped_learning - Interactive space: Google Plus Community and
 - a. Content space: ANVILL: Screencasts, lessons, materials, and resources
2. Classroom_Based_Research - Interactive spaces: Facebook group; Google+
 - a. And Content space Weebly website
<http://classroombasedresearch.weebly.com/evo2018.html>
3. Teacher, trainer, coach- developing the Business English Professional - G+C
4. EVO Minecraft MOOC - G+C, pbworks, Discord

5. ICT4ELT 2018 - <https://plus.google.com/u/0/communities/113923684651536056936>

Schoology

- Mother Tongue Use in the EFL Classroom - <https://app.schoology.com/course/1359597585/materials>
- Teaching Listening: principles, techniques and technologies - <http://schoology.com/>
- Teaching Pronunciation Differently - <http://schoology.com/>

Moodle

1. TECHNO-CLIL 2018 - http://www.ittgiordanistrianonapoli.it/_moodle/course/view.php?id=83
2. Teaching EFL to Young Learners - <http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=91>
3. QR Codes in Action - <http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=135>
4. Moodle 4 Teachers (Teaching Online) - <http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=88>
5. Are_You_A_Fair_Tester - <https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=136>
6. Business_English_for_a_better_world2018 - <http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=225>

EVO Moderator preferences in 2019

In 2019 we started to see a spread to a wider variety of portals. We had by then learned that G+C would cease to function in April of that year, but those who had already committed their ongoing communities to G+C were also aware that they could continue to function through the end of their EVO 2019 sessions in February. Thus two of the sessions that had been using G+C for several years already decided to continue their ongoing communities and deal with the coming calamity later, one that was using FB and Weebly included a G+C, and two sessions running for the first time that year decided to use G+C because it was an easy and compelling way to get going for a first-time session (and neither of these latter two continued their sessions in EVO 2020; whereas the former two regrouped in different community spaces).

That accounted for 5 of the 16 sessions that year, and Moodle4teachers.org hosted another 6. Two of the other sessions used Schoology. But in another shift in moderator preferences, three of the sessions based themselves in Google Classroom. No sessions chose Yahoo!Groups, which turned out to be a presciently wise decision.

[http://evosessions.pbworks.com/w/page/127658303/Call for Participation 2019](http://evosessions.pbworks.com/w/page/127658303/Call_for_Participation_2019)

G+C

1. Basic_Linguistics_for_English_language_teachers_- <https://plus.google.com/communities/106917537905202777339>
2. Flipped Learning for Language Teaching - ANVILL page for the content and to <http://bit.ly/2UVNgfl> for our interactions in a Google + community
Moved to Canvas in 2020
3. Job oriented Training for ESP Teachers and sharing their findings globally and locally
4. EVO Minecraft MOOC (EVOMC19) G+C and PBWorks
Moved to FB and Gio in 2020
5. Classroom-based Research for Professional Development - G+C and <http://classroombasedresearch.weebly.com/evo2019.html> and FB
Using FB and Edmodo in 2020

Moodle

1. CEFR Vs. Assessment: How can new revisions help? - <https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=136>
2. Getting_Online as a teacherpreneur - <https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=240>
3. Moodle 4 Teachers (Teaching Online) - <http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=88>
4. QR Codes in Action - <https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=135#>
5. Teaching EFL to Young Learners - <http://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=91>
6. Techno CLIL 2019 - Moodle at <http://onlinepaths.eu/course/view.php?id=79#section-0>

Facebook and Weebly

- Classroom-based Research for Professional Development - <http://classroombasedresearch.weebly.com/evo2019.html> and FB

Google Classroom and Wordpress

1. Escape the Room - <https://escaperoomelt.wordpress.com/escape-the-room-games/> and <https://classroom.google.com/> **changed to Slack in 2020**
2. ICT4ELT2019 - Google Classroom
3. PBL all-round learning experience for ESL - Google Classroom. Class Code: meoef2

Schoology

- Mother tongue use in the ESL classroom - <https://app.schoology.com/course/1912003592/materials>
- Teaching Pronunciation Differently - <http://www.schoology.com/>

EVO Moderator preferences in 2020

So faced with loss in the space of one short year of their most tried and true community spaces they had used over the past ten and twenty years, moderators preparing for EVO in 2020 were almost in uncharted territory. However, being for the most part skilled online practitioners, their choices of where to reform their communities, given the available options, can be uniquely instructive for the rest of us.

There are 14 sessions in EVO 2020. Five of the seven sessions using Moodle were not impacted and decided to continue as they had done previously (one of the Moodle sessions did not repeat in 2020 and two others were formed, leaving the total at 7). The two sessions using Schoology in 2019 did not repeat, but one new session opted for this platform. ICT4ELT decided to remain with Google Classroom, and one new session opted for this platform as well; whereas one of the sessions using GC in 2019 decided to replace it with Slack.

This leaves three sessions in 2020 that had been using G+C in 2019 and were forced to replace it. One of these went to the Canvas platform. One replaced G+C with Facebook and Gio (as well as meeting in Minecraft and Discord); and the other one simply focused on FB and Edmodo, their remaining two community interaction spaces.

Schoology

- [English for the Workplace](#) - Schoology

Canvas (from G+C in 2019)

- [Flipped Learning in language teaching](#) - <https://canvas.instructure.com/courses/1725292>

Slack

- [Escape the Classroom!](#) - escaperoomelt.slack.com and session content at: <https://escaperoomelt.wordpress.com/> was in Google Classroom in 2019

Google Classroom

- [ICT4ELT20](#) - Google Classroom (since 2019) And Content space = <http://ict4elt2020.pbworks.com/w/page/134022987/FrontPage>
- [Immersive Language Teaching and Learning](#) - Discord Channel vLanguages and <http://vlanguages.pbworks.com/>

Facebook and Edmodo / weebly

- [Mentoring teacher-research](http://mentoring-tr.weebly.com) - <http://mentoring-tr.weebly.com> and **Facebook** group 'Mentoring TR' - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/mentoringTR/>
- [Classroom-based research for Professional Development](#) - **Facebook** and **Edmodo** to replace G+C
- [2020 EVO Minecraft MOOC](#), Facebook to replace G+C, Groups IO, Discord

Moodle

1. [TECHNO CLIL 2020](https://onlinepaths.eu/login/index.php) - <https://onlinepaths.eu/login/index.php>
2. [TEFL2YL EVO20](https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=263) - <https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=263>
3. [Tools for Student Collaboration](https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=259) - <https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=259>
4. [M4TEVO20](https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=261) - <https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=261>
5. [Getting Online as a Teacherpreneur](https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=240) - <https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=240>
6. [Grammar for TESOL](https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=267) - <https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=267>
7. [CEFR VS Assessment](https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=136) - <https://moodle4teachers.org/course/view.php?id=136>

Notes

The Old Internet Died And We Watched And Did Nothing

Katie Notopoulos, [BuzzFeed.News](#), Jan 02, 2020



In 1998 I was posting on discussion boards (like the old HotWired Threads) and on mailing lists (like WWW-Dev) and seen some of these early forums come and go. So I decided that I should copy and preserve these posts on my own website, just in case the boards and lists disappeared. Which, in fact, they did. And that's how today I ended up with a **huge archive** of more than 1600 articles on my web site. But most people, as the author of this article suggests, "did nothing", and so we are now in the situation where a lot of the web's original content has been lost. Indeed, this article is a relatively *recent* listing of sites that went down - MySpace, Friendster, Xanga and Webshots. There's so much more - the venerated (and verifiably ugly) GeoCities, for example, Blip.tv and Google Videos (which between them lost about half my videos), and of course almost all of the aforementioned discussion board and mailing list contents. What can you do? Do what I did - *make sure* there's a back-up copy of your own web content. Via [Aaron Davis](#).

Web: [[Direct Link](#)] [[This Post](#)]

Apps that protect your digital rights

Blockstack, Jan 01, 2020



I'm still exploring Blockstack, which appears to have developed a fairly large ecosystem of applications and services (which it **won't let you see** until you create an identity). But the idea is that it provides access to applications that allow you to create data and store it wherever you want, all connected and protected by a blockchain. As the website says, "Blockstack ID provides user-controlled login and storage that enable you to take back control of your identity and data." There's a blogging app, **Sigle**, that **takes you step by step** through the process. It includes a way to **define your own storage**. Yes, it's **open source**.

Web: [[Direct Link](#)] [[This Post](#)]

Mak. A. (2019). "Let us get our stuff and leave" Verizon is blocking archivists who are trying to archive Yahoo Groups before the platform disappears.

Retrieved from:

<https://slate.com/technology/2019/12/yahoo-groups-is-ending-and-verizon-is-making-it-hard-for-people-to-archive-its-content.html>

DEC 09, 2019 5:17 PM

The Yahoo logo.

Yahoo Groups is ending on Saturday.

Ethan Miller/Getty Images

Popular in Technology

I Don't Care That Miss America Is a Scientist!

The Very Respectful Wikipedia Battles Over "OK Boomer"

There Sure Have Been a Lot of Reasons Not to Buy a Ring Device Recently

Exactly How Bad Is the Wawa Data Breach?

Update, Dec. 10, 2019: Verizon is extending the deadline for users to rescue their content from Yahoo Groups—but it appears it will continue to block volunteers trying to mass-archive content from the platform. A Verizon Media spokesperson told Slate in a statement, “In response to our users’ requests, we have decided to extend the deadline for requesting to download data from Yahoo Groups to Friday, January 31, 2020 at 11:59pm PST. Individual Groups users can use this tool to download any content he or she posted on Yahoo Groups. On Sunday, December 15, 2019, the content will no longer be available or viewable from the groups.yahoo.com site, but we will not delete it until all requests submitted prior to the above deadline have been completed.” When asked why the 128 volunteer archivists were banned, the spokesperson noted that the company’s terms of service prohibit users from downloading content that isn’t their own and from deploying third-party tools to extract content from its systems.

PCMag is reporting that archivists are criticizing Verizon Media’s response as meaningless, because the extended deadline only applies to individual users who want to save their own content, not volunteers who are trying to preserve content across the site. In addition, the download tool that Yahoo Groups is providing only retrieves text; photos and other files still have to be downloaded individually.

Original article: In October, Yahoo announced plans to shut down its 18-year-old platform for forums and email lists, Yahoo Groups, and delete all of its contents on Dec. 14—this Saturday. After that, Yahoo will only maintain the service’s mailing list functions. While Yahoo Groups’ popularity has been dwindling for a while now, the announcement sent the tens of thousands of users who still use the service in a frenzy to save the nearly two decades of old messages, photos, polls, databases, and other material. But it appears that Yahoo and its parent company, Verizon, are making it exceedingly difficult for these archivists to even access the platform.

On Sunday, Boing Boing reported that Verizon banned the email addresses that 128 volunteers with the digital heritage collective Archive Team had been using to access groups and collect the data. These volunteers, who are trying to upload old content to the web repository Internet Archive, are now unable to use the disposable emails and semi-automated scripts that allowed them join multiple Yahoo Groups at a time, thus expediting the lengthy process of saving so much material. Verizon informed

the account holders that they had violated its terms of service, but did not specify what the exact violation was. Volunteers fear that, without these automated tools, they will now not have enough time to save everything before the weekend deadline. (Slate asked Verizon for comment and will update this article if the company responds.)

“We’re just trying to save our stuff. [Verizon] only gave us 58 days to do this,” said Brenda Fowler, who has been helping to lead the archiving effort with her blog *Mods & Members*, which is also known as the Yahoo Groups Crusade Headquarters. “It kind of makes me feel like Alderaan is about to be blown to bits with everything on it.”

Similar to Reddit and Google Groups, Yahoo Groups served as a worldwide gathering place where millions of communities with a wide array of interests have flourished. The archive team argues that the digital records of activity on the platform will be valuable for users who want to smoothly transplant their communities elsewhere, and for researchers who may find the content to be of historical significance. Yahoo Groups has been an outlet for writers and photographers to share their work. Scientists have exchanged data on its forums, and families have used it to discuss their genealogy research. It’s a popular host for neighborhood mailing lists. The platform was also a haven where people struggling with mental illness and other health-related issues could support one another and share resources, which could be useful for similar online communities in the future. (The U.K. has even used the platform to help keep track of phone numbers allocated to certain telecom companies.) “It’s almost like tearing down a historic building or trashing a classic car,” a post on *Mods & Members* reads. “[The groups] have such rich history, and now that history is about to be destroyed forever.”

Yahoo Groups and its users have been at odds for a while now. In 2013, the platform rolled out an update called NEO, which was supposed to make the site look more modern. However, people began pushing back upon discovering that the functionality was poor, and that elderly and vision-impaired users were having trouble navigating the site. In order to pressure Yahoo to reverse this change, Fowler created the *Mods & Members* as a place where disgruntled users could convene. Relations between users and the company continued to worsen. The changes caught the attention of Mark Fletcher, a tech entrepreneur who had created the email list service ONElist and merged it with an online

community site called eGroups. In 2002, Yahoo bought eGroups and rebranded it as Yahoo Groups. Fletcher became disillusioned with what Yahoo Groups eventually became and decided to launch another email list and community service called Groups.io in 2014.

Because Groups.io resembles Yahoo Groups in many ways and has a certain combination of features that sites like Reddit and Facebook don't offer, Fowler is now trying to help migrate users and communities over to Fletcher's platform. However, the task has become increasingly difficult with the roadblocks that Verizon has put up. For now, her strategy is to try to raise as much fuss about Verizon's actions as possible online and in the press, and to plead with executives via email and phone. Some volunteers are also trying to join groups one by one and save content manually, but it's doubtful that they'll be able to do much in six days.

Fowler said, "The humane and good thing [for Verizon] to do would be to stop blocking us, give us six more months at least, and let us get our stuff and leave. That's all we've wanted to do."

Future Tense is a partnership of Slate, New America, and Arizona State University that examines emerging technologies, public policy, and society.

Internet Culture Social Media