

Narration (audio):

Thank you so much!

My name is Rebecca Girard and I'm Pete Episcopo. We are so excited to be here to talk to you about a topic that we are truly passionate about...the incorporation of meaningful digital media and technology across all curricula and content areas.

Wow! That definitely sounds fancy. What Rebecca means is we are passionate about bringing 21st century tools into all classrooms. There is such a push to get more technology into the classroom and into the hands of students nationwide. This all sounds great, but a major challenge is that overwhelming feeling...

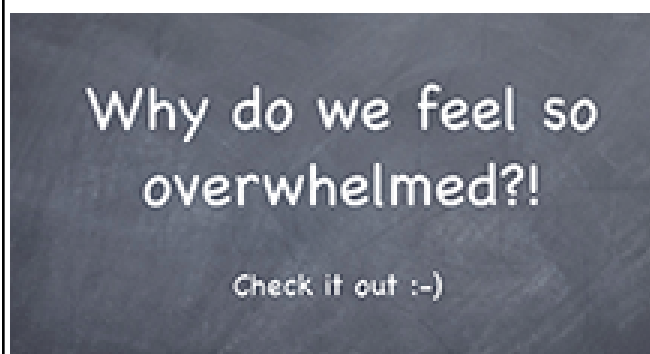
you know, that feeling you have at a staff meeting when you are told to add more, learn more, teach more despite shrinking budgets and the lack of time for training and planning.

If you are like me, you remember some incredible innovations of technology...smoke signals, the pencil, the pony express, the telegraph, the 8 track... All of these new fangled technologies allowed us to communicate information in unprecedented ways.

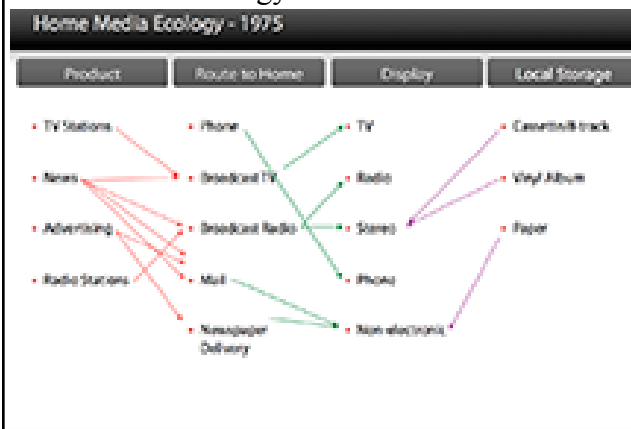
Well, if you haven't noticed one of the reasons why you feel so overwhelmed is that the ways in which we

Visual (Video/Audio)

We are introduced and there is thunderous applause...



Home Media Ecology 1975



communicate have not only changed quite a bit but have increased...

and for many of us those changes make us feel apprehensive...

We no longer have phones fixed to the kitchen wall with that long cord that allowed you to chat with your friends in private in the hall closet. Now you literally hold the ability to chat through text, social media, email, and instant message in the palm of your hand.

Keeping up with all of this can be somewhat daunting.

So it is in this culture or environment that we show up at school and are told to “USE TECHNOLOGY!”

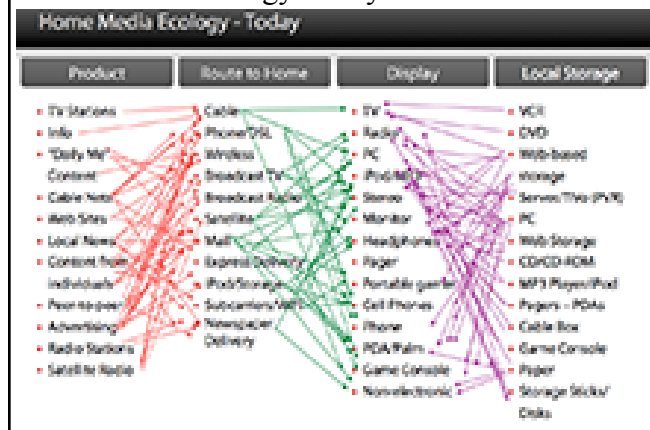
Ok, so let’s find a way to move from feeling overwhelmed to embracing the potential of incorporating that technology.

Not only can we search for information through virtually limitless databases, but we can create content, hit upload and share it with the world in an instant. This connection to a vast network of information allows and can in fact encourage us to find answers to our questions with an immediacy that has never been experienced before.

This is a new era of learning at the speed of wireless... Young people are already tapping into this potential. They have the ability to learn intuitively as they share and discover content virtually, anywhere anytime.

If this is what our students are experiencing, how can we not only maximize this interaction, but also focus it on learning in our content areas?

Home Media Ecology Today



There are more ways
to learn, create, and share
information
than ever before!



Pete, that is an excellent question... and really that is our job as 21st century educators. We need to provide opportunities for our students to learn and to acquire the skills they will need as natives of a globally connected society that rely on technology.

Ok, I totally agree...consider this as well...
our students go from “powering up” at home...

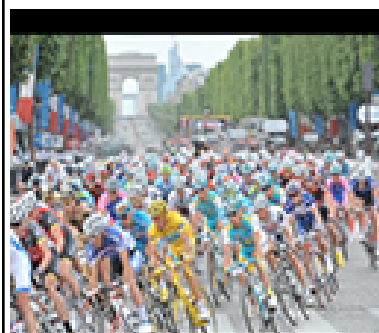
to “powering down” at school because we don’t capitalize on their pre-existent knowledge of applications and tools. Teachers can find it difficult to maintain pace with the rapid development of technology while students effortlessly engage in it.

It is in this environment that Pete and I found ourselves trying to bridge the gap...How to motivate teachers to use technology so that they can engage their students in learning? Our answer...Web 2.0!



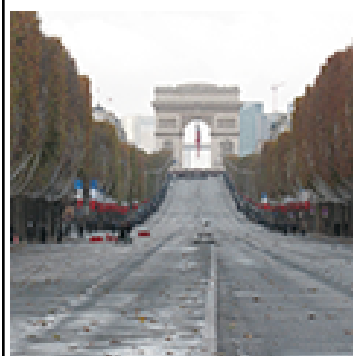
Our job...

- to introduce skills
- to help our students learn
- to adapt to the changing environment of the 21st Century



Consider this...

Students go from
"powering up"
at home...



to
"powering down"
in school.

We were blown away by what we learned. There is just so much free stuff out there that works so well at both engaging teachers and students. Immediately teachers experience an increase in self-efficacy because these tools are easy to use and students dive into the lesson because they are using the technology of their time.

This is the telegraph of their day and for so many, when they are at school, they are being told not to use these tools...to unplug!

So here is what we did...

At my small private, Catholic, all girls high school in California where I have been teaching science for 14 years, I created the Incorporating Technology Crowd...I sent out an invitation for members to join the group...to be a part of the IT Crowd. Members were encouraged to meet biweekly to share tools and collaborate on ways to incorporate them.

And at my large public, co-ed high school in Florida where I have been teaching digital media for the past 6 years, I did pretty much the same thing as Rebecca and I designed the Web of Learning Symposium, invited my colleagues to share bagels and juice while they were connected with training and support using a learning management system. This allowed teachers to learn on their own time when it was most convenient.

We both found that the teachers who were involved are passionate just like we are about using tech, but no one was leading the charge to create an environment where they could flourish through experiencing, learning and incorporating the technology in meaningful ways into their practice.

Some teachers wanted that face-to-face learning

Web 2.0 apps
engage students



APPS THAT ENGAGE

blogs wordle nota prezi exploratree schoology
jeopardylabs mashups
visuwords google apps iRubric
evernote ted gliffy simplemind
quizlet glogster ibooks tourwist
popplet showme flashcardexchange
podcasts carrotsticks
zoho edmodo
ninja words voicethread socrative
protagonize
cobocards
wordnick



notre dame
high school

belmont, ca



viera
high school

viera, fl

opportunity while others wanted something more autonomous and on their own time.

Because we have been involved in our schools for a few years, we understood the unique culture of our communities.

At my school, the teachers wanted to be able to meet and work together...this time together was so important that they gave up their lunch periods and expressed the desire to not just meet every other week, but requested opportunities to meet every week.

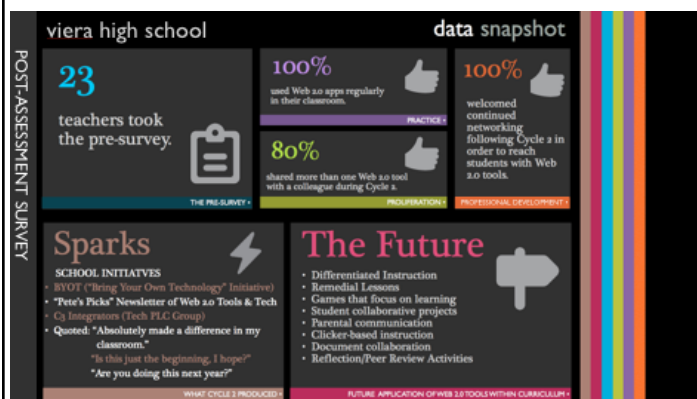
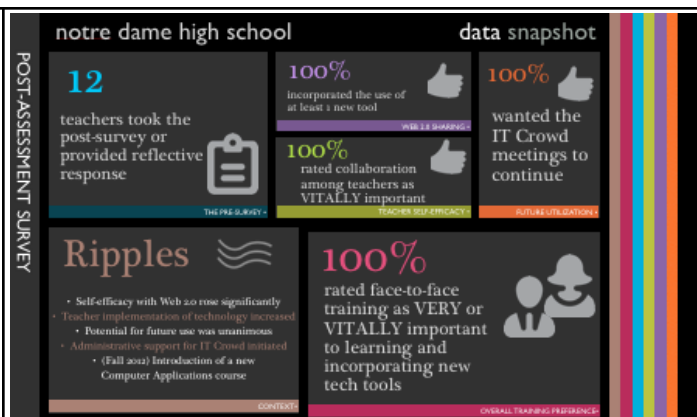
My school has its own dynamics and many scheduling conflicts that make synchronous training very difficult. I found that if I deployed a more autonomous system for training, these teachers did not have to be encumbered by another meeting. Yet, I still met with the teachers as a group periodically and found many stopping by my classroom to ask a question or get some feedback.

In addition to the IT Crowd lunch meetings, I also provided a similar opportunity for training through an LMS. Initially, more teachers used this tool, but as the lunch meetings continued and then increased, I saw fewer posts. Teachers were talking to each other and also chatting with me in the halls or catching me in the copy room with a support question.

So, we could see the engagement, the incorporation of tools, the increase in self-efficacy and autonomy. We also started hearing that they were sharing tools with each other on their own.

And soon students were talking about the new tools in the classroom!

Shazaam!!! Now we're talking engagement! And we never imagined how what we started would go viral! Our teachers became more confident and collaborative and our administrations picked up on



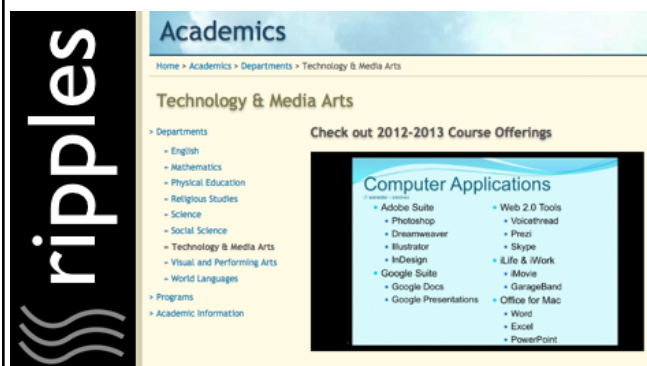
this and have devoted resources and time to support the programs.

My teachers were offered Continuing Education Credits for attending IT Crowd meetings, I have been given release time to continue facilitating the meetings through next school year, and I will be building a Computer Applications course that will include 6th - 12th grade students.

I have begun the development and implementation of the pilot Bring Your Own Technology Initiative to the entire school with the hopes of expanding to Brevard County schools next year. Included in this will be a district wide training on digital ethics that will be deployed...you guessed it...through an LMS!

Despite the obvious differences between our school environments the outcomes were very similar. Our colleagues not only embraced the opportunity to learn more about some amazing tools, but they are clamoring for more opportunities and are fully motivated to incorporate Web 2.0 tools to further engage their students.

Just as the telegraph changed the speed and mode of communication, technology is impacting the way we teach, but there will always be the need for innovative teacher facilitators...teachers who embrace, incorporate, encourage, and engage their students as they learn vital 21st century skills...the skills to create and communicate visually in a digital world.



The point is that engaging teachers with technology has become the challenge of every school district...we haven't stumbled on to nuclear fusion...but we have stumbled on to what we call a Technology Sharing Culture.

Whether the school is public or private, co-ed or single gender, whether your classes are remedial, college bound, honors or AP...if you have a TSC, your school gains significant momentum towards technology integration for the 21st century.

The TSC at each of our schools created collaborative environments that helped to relieve some pressure on the overburdened tech specialists, allowing them to focus on the big picture of supplying reliable technology to the institution at large...the entire school community. The TSC diverted some of the technical support issues as colleagues naturally supported one another.

Everyone was teaching each other how to fish... With a TSC, the availability of support expands as the collaborative grows. This inherently helpful and supportive environment increases self-efficacy and autonomy and motivates, engages and encourages teachers to experiment, investigate, and implement new tools.

The TSC can conform and contour naturally to the way the individuals in a particular school environment desire to learn technology. In short, when flexible opportunities for face-to-face and/or virtual training are offered the supportive work can begin...and we can change the world!

Technology will never
replace teachers,
but teachers who do not
effectively use technology
will be replaced
by those who do.

