

Digital Tattoo: What's Yours?

A collaborative, digital media literacy project based at UBC

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ABSTRACT

The Digital Tattoo Project provides a broad and flexible program for educating students about their rights and responsibilities around the creation and consumption of digital information. The project involves 2 main components:

- A blog based tutorial/ resource site
- Support materials and resources for the delivery of face to face workshops and seminars related to digital literacy issues

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Project Summary

The Digital Tattoo Project provides a broad and flexible program for educating students about their rights and responsibilities around the creation and consumption of digital information. The project involves 2 main components:

- A blog based tutorial/ resource site
- Support materials and resources for the delivery of face to face workshops and seminars related to digital literacy issues.

In addition, we are employing a content sharing strategy to ensure that the resources we create for the Digital Tattoo project can be easily used by others in their own contexts as desired. This strategy includes the development of a YouTube channel for storing and sharing screencasts, licensing any content we create via Creative Commons, and development of an “embed” script which will make javascript code available to users who can then republish content in their own contexts.

We are currently seeking funding for Phase 2 of this project: see **Project Phases/Intended Outcomes**.

Rationale

UBC's strategic planning document - *Trek 2010* states as one of the university's aims to ensure that "students in all disciplines develop good analytic and communication skills" and that academic programs "address the life-long learning needs of citizens in a knowledge-based society." One of these skill sets is dealing with information in a responsible and judicious and analytical way, both as a consumer and as a creator.

At UBC, in the academy, we teach students to evaluate information critically and analyze research results. We teach students how to acknowledge their debt to previous researchers and incorporate others' research into their own by citing and attributing the words and ideas of other scholars. In the "knowledge-based society" students are also producers of information that can be widely available to others via blogs, discussion groups, chat software and social software sites. Students need to be aware of the implications of publishing personal and academic information and to be skilled users of the software that enables it – from their own Facebook accounts, through Amazon wishlists to capstone academic projects that form part of an electronic portfolio.

The penalties for not understanding these rights and responsibilities are swift and severe. For example, in early October 2008, students who worked for the Canadian Border Service Agency found their Facebook photos and postings on the front page of several newspapers, prompting an inquiry. The term "Facebook fired" entered the Urban Dictionary in January 2008, and a number of companies have begun to offer services to monitor and clean up subscribers' digital reputations. In early 2009, nearly 25, 000 Facebook users identified themselves as UBC students. Most Facebook users, students included, are not aware of the reach of their Facebook profile, let alone how to alter privacy settings. The mantra for many young people is "public by default – private when necessary".

Broader Context

Researchers in the field of social media understand that there are implications for a new kind of literacy that will begin to help us navigate the changing social environment that online participation brings about. Danah Boyd, Harvard Fellow and Researcher at Microsoft describes some key properties and dynamics that alter the way we interact with one another. These features include: persistence (what you put out on the internet stays there), replicability (the cut and paste phenomenon), searchability (you can be found), scalability (what you say to one reaches many) and (de)locatability (we're both mobile – not connected to a single space- and findable – by virtue of our portable devices). These properties and the alteration of social dynamics to include invisible audiences, collapsed contexts and the blurring of public and private spaces means that we are dealing with a new, ever changing landscape of communication and relationship. As Danah Boyd states:

"One of the key challenges is learning how to adapt to an environment in which these properties and dynamics play a key role."

boyd, danah. 2009. "Social Media is Here to Stay... Now What?" Microsoft Research Tech Fest, Redmond, Washington, February 26.

Retrieved March 10, 2009: <http://www.danah.org/papers/talks/MSRTechFest2009.html>

Like a tattoo, information on the web is nearly impossible to remove. And, like a tattoo, what seems like a good idea at 15 may not seem so great at 50. Our intent with this project is to provide information and guidance to students and others in thinking through some of the issues and learning some strategies for managing their own online interactions. The tattoo, therefore, works as a metaphor for our project.

Project Goals

In general, our goals for the project are to produce student-generated content, publish it in an accessible environment (Wordpress) to form the basis of an online tutorial and supplementary workshop materials. Specifically, we aim to:

- Increase student awareness of issues surrounding all information that they post online – information about themselves (on Facebook, etc.); information that they create and post online (websites, some course assignments etc.)
- Provide practical suggestions to encourage student safety, on and offline.
- Increase student use of settings, tools and strategies to ensure privacy when desired.
- Increase student awareness of their rights and responsibilities as creators of digital content on the web.
- Develop the online tutorial in a format that allows for easy sharing/re-publishing to encourage broad usability.

Project Phases/Intended Outcomes

Phase One: April 1, 2008 – April 1, 2009

Status: Complete

In Phase 1 of the project, we met the first 3 goals outlined above, resulting in the following **outcomes**:

- Student generated content and scenarios for the website
- Production of a 50-page interactive website with key questions, self assessment, polls and sample scenarios in 4 categories: Protect, Connect, Learn, Work: <http://digitaltattoo.ubc.ca/>
- Development of supporting materials – bookmarks, one-page handouts, screencasts, etc. to support a campus-wide campaign for active self-management of a student's own personal information and the information a student produces and makes available online.
- Development of train the trainer style materials to support student presenters in reproducing the information for particular student audiences.
- Training and support for student and staff authors in the Wordpress environment.

User interest may (in part) be measured through the following statistics:

Website Visits: since launch in October of 2008: 13,559 visits

Workshops/Participants: 10 workshops/ 207 participants

Conferences: Attendees: 3 conference poster presentations/ 500 participants

The **evaluation methods to date** have included user feedback, focus group feedback and usability testing.

From our user testing, we learned that students appreciated the video screencasts. We plan to enrich the tutorial by creating online "how-to" videos for the following topics: stop photo-tagging, delete Facebook profiles and improve gmail security.

Our users also told us that they would appreciate being able to “return where they left off”, (in other words, do part of the tutorial, sign off and sign on another day to complete it) so we’d like to explore adding this feature.

The tutorial content requires timely updates and edits. As a society, we are only just beginning to grapple with issues around online identity and the associated social implications. Canadian law is evolving in this area; online social networking sites change their privacy policies; citation guides (e.g. APA) issue revisions; publishers develop new tools to identify digital content (DOI), etc. We’d like to explore how best to monitor and comment on timely news events related to digital identity and literacy.

Phase Two: April 1, 2009 – April 1, 2010 Status: Proposed

In **Phase 2**, we intend to meet the last 2 project goals:

- Increase student awareness of their rights and responsibilities as creators of digital content on the web.
- Develop the online tutorial in a format that allows for easy sharing/re-publishing to encourage broad usability.

Phase 2 will involve the development of new content for the tutorial relevant to students as creators and consumers of print and online information in their academic, personal and professional lives. As well, we will develop the necessary technical approaches to support easy re-publishing of this content – to allow for maximum flexibility – thereby increasing its possible uses across campus and beyond.

This will involve the following objectives:

- Develop a new category of content (working title “Publish”) with information about finding published information; issues to consider when publishing your own work online; the role of permissions in an online environment; citing digital and print information, etc..
- Create video screencasts and distribution channel for sharing (via YouTube) in an accessible MP4 format on the following topics: stop photo-tagging, delete Facebook profiles and improve gmail security.
- Develop the technical solutions (embed code using JSON scripts/feeds) to allow for user re-publishing of content in their own contexts as required.
- Improve the web tutorial user experience based on feedback from our usability testing.
- Incorporate a blogging feature on the tutorial site to allow for timely response to relevant stories “in the news” and to track content for later “case study” development.

Evaluation Strategy:

We recognize that, in order to demonstrate impact on the behavior of learners, we need a more fully supported evaluation/research plan. We would like to develop a research component in Phase 2, which would involve:

- Survey design
- Pre-tutorial survey for randomly selected student group
- Post-tutorial survey at 1 week, 1 month, 6 months and one year following.

We are currently seeking funding for this Phase 2 of the project (see attached budget).

Project Connections

This project will form a central component in UBC's learning support resource collection as delivered via:

- LEAP: UBC's collaborative, student – developed “portal” for academic support resources: <http://leap.ubc.ca/>
- UBC's Learning Commons: as part of LEAP and in addition to the learning support resources addressing digital literacy: <http://www.library.ubc.ca/chapmanlearningcommons/learn.html>
- UBC's School of Library Sciences: Digital Media Internship Project: This is Your Life 2.0: <http://blogs.ubc.ca/yourlife2point0/>

In addition, we think it could make an important contribution to resources development for students in the province via BCCampus:

<http://www.bccampus.ca/Educators/educator-services/find-share-learning-resources.htm>

Media coverage:

Church, Elizabeth. *When Everyone Knows Your Teenage Musings*. **Globe and Mail**, Dec. 24, 2008.

Daily Top Ten News. **Academica Group Inc.** January 28, 2008.

http://community.icontact.com/p/academica_group_inc/newsletters/academica_group_inc/posts/academicas-top-ten-wed-january-28-2009

Turner, Ian. *Online Identity Destroys Job Opportunities*. **Ubysey**, March 3, 2009

Invitations to collaborate:

Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada

Steve Dotto (*Cyber Safe with Steve Dotto*)

This project also has the potential to connect with the following UBC campus initiatives to develop a sustain a good network of peers and resource people across campus who are familiar with aspects of digital literacy as addressed in the Digital Tattoo project:

- Pre-arrival communication with new students
- Orientations (Imagine, or Orientation or MUG Leaders, Transfer Students, International Students, Parent Orientation)
- Student Leadership Summit
- Student Leadership Conference
- Residence Assistant Training
- International Student Handbook
- The AMS Insider (datebook)
- The Office of Learning Technology's Online Learner's Guide
- Tutor Training (Writing Centre)
- AMS Tutoring and UBCO's Academic Resource Centre
- UBC Library's online and in person training initiatives
- Career Services (Future Mapping Program; Resumes)
- Peer Programs (including Equity Ambassadors, International Peer Program, Sustainability, Undergraduate Societies)

Project Stakeholders

UBC:

UBC Students

Margot Bell, Associate Director, Student Development

Brian Lamb, Manager, Emerging Technologies & Digital Content, Office of Learning Technology

Ramona Montagnes, Director, UBC Writing Centre

Carol Naylor, Manager, Career Education

Novak Rogic, Manager, Web Strategist -Office of Learning Technology,

C.J . Rowe, Diversity Advisor, Access and Diversity

Cindy Underhill, Learning Resource Designer, Office of Learning Technology

Sheryl Adam, UBC Library

Trish Rosseel, Teaching and Learning Librarian, UBC Library

Budget

See attached