Screencasting

A short guide to choosing effective multimedia delivery software to meet your instructional needs

What is Screencasting?

A screencast captures images, actions, and audio directly from your computer screen. Screencasts record your interaction with computer programs and webpages as well as webcam footage. Typically, they are short segments, containing audio in the form of narration and step-by-step instruction. Screencast content can be uploaded to course management systems, like Moodle, personal webpages, social networking sites (Facebook, MySpace) and even YouTube. Practical uses range from teaching students how to use applications, access files, websites and narrating PowerPoints. Screencasts can also be used as assessment tools through Moodle.

Camtasia

www.camtasia.com

Camtasia gives the option to record lengthy, stand-alone audio tracks or screen captures, as well as audio and screen captures together. Important distinctions that set this program apart from Jing are Camtasia’s PowerPoint narration feature. This makes sharing explanation of content or lecture material associated with PowerPoints a breeze.

Jing

www.jingproject.com

Jing allows users to capture any image on screen. It will also record the user’s interaction with their computer’s programs, websites or other applications. In addition to image and screen capture, Jing will record the user’s audio narration occurring simultaneously with any screen gestures with the mouse.

This program tends to work well for short clips, less than 5 minutes in length, as Jing’s recording capacity is limited to that time-span.

VoiceThread

http://voicethread.com

VoiceThread gives users the opportunity to post images and audio for others to comment, critique and give useful feedback. The free version of this program lets an individual post three separate threads with up to 50 pages of content per thread. Participation and commentary by other individuals is entirely free and they can comment multiple times.

If you are interested in creating a collaborative environment or wish to enhance your student’s understanding of content by using group or individual feedback, Voicethread makes this task simple.

Audacity

http://audacityteam.org

You can record directly into Audacity or load-in raw audio files. Audacity does basic audio editing and recording. Audacity is a great tool for recording foreign language audio lessons or assignments. There is no time limit on how long a recording can be, and audacity can export to either WMV or MP3 files, so it can be used with any media playing software (Windows Media Player, iTunes, etc.). These files can then be sent via email, put into a PowerPoint presentation, or loaded into Moodle.

GarageBand

www.apple.com

Garage Band offers recording features for podcasting and music. Users may also choose to incorporate movie clips from other sources such as iMovie. Garage Band is only available for Macintosh computers and comes standard with current bundled Mac software.