

Chapter 34

An E–Portfolio to Support E–Learning 2.0

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ABSTRACT

ePortfolios have been in use in university for nearly a decade. Students' learning is changing, and the university is faced with e-learning 2.0, which is based on Web 2.0. This chapter introduces e-learning 2.0 and shows that the ePortfolio is currently the ideal environment to accompany it. To emphasize e-learning 2.0, the authors propose to enrich the ePortfolio's structure by adding an item corresponding to e-learning 2.0 artifacts as well as to other new learning sources. Some ePortfolio standards are described to show the lack of such a dedicated item. It is stressed that this proposition concerns the conceptual aspect and not the technical one. It may help follow the current students' tendency as well as the market demand for use. The end of this chapter addresses some difficulties in introducing the ePortfolio and stresses that it is still relevant for e-learning 2.0.

INTRODUCTION

The ePortfolios are increasingly being used in all the areas of a person's life, such as education, career, the institutions he interacts with, etc (Buzetto-More, 2010). The focus of this chapter is on the ePortfolio use to support the students' e-learning 2.0 in the higher education. Thereby the e-learning 2.0 and the Web 2.0 are introduced and examples of how they can enhance the student's competency are also presented. However these competencies are not associated to a course that a student attends at university, but they are essentially related to web 2.0 or other non formal

sources. In spite of their educational potential, these numerous artifacts are created by the students even though they may often arise problems of organization and presentation (Bubas, 2011).

To emphasize these competencies the ePortfolio is proposed to showcase the e-learning 2.0's artifacts. The ePortfolio is then introduced as an ideal environment to accompany the e-learning 2.0, as well as the student's learning via the serious games or via the open educational resources. To emphasize these learning tendencies, we propose to adjust the ePortfolio structure, by adding an item dedicated to the e-learning 2.0. This proposition concerns the conceptual aspect and not the

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technical one. Like the fact that in the student's ePortfolio we find item about student's name, his preferences, we propose to have inevitably an item, or a set of items, concerning his "web 2.0" competency. Adding this item have benefits for student's future because nowadays the recruiters frequently "google" a candidate to locate his "reputation", his behavior at a community, his ability to interact with issues located on the web, his inclinations, etc. Extending the ePortfolio's structure with this item may contribute to attract hiring manager to use it instead of other internet information. So the recruiter will go directly to this item. In this items the student may present his score in a certain game or indicate a portion of his folksonomy concerning a specific field: these are proof of his competency. Despite the ePortfolio benefits, introducing it isn't evident because students are frequently reluctant. At the end of this chapter we present an example of this reluctance by presenting an experiment we conducted in the university of Tunis. We stress on the ePortfolio's importance to pursue the student's through the different learning environments and that it is still relevant for him.

THE E-LEARNING 2.0

The e-Learning 2.0 Definition

The term "e-learning 2.0" first appeared in 2005 by Downes (2005) to show how communities of practice can constitute an interesting new learning model. According to Downes (2005), "we can talk of e-learning 2.0 applications if users apply Web 2.0 media, i.e. social software, such as wikis, weblogs or RSS in collaborative learning activities for autonomously producing their own learning contents and using them for their own learning objectives". This definition clearly outlines a central feature of an e-learning 2.0 setting: learners are autonomous in acquiring knowledge (Blees, 2009). An extended e-learning 2.0's definition may be

"an approach to learning based on conversation, interaction, sharing, creation and participation, also on learning not as a separate activity, but rather, as embedded in meaningful activities such as games and workflows" (Downes, 2009), (Lytras et al., 2010). E-learning 2.0 is then based on tools that combine ease of content creation, web delivery, and integrated collaboration. Creation of content can occur by anyone as part of their day-to-day activities (Deng, 2007). In essence, the expectation of e-learning 2.0 is that sharing and learning becomes an organic action that is directed and driven by the learners. They are starting to explore the potential of blogs, media-sharing services and other social software which, although not designed specifically for e-learning, can be used to empower students and create exciting new learning opportunities (Cui, 2008).

The Web 2.0 Definition

The term "Web 2.0" is coined by O'Reilly in 2003 (O'Reilly, 2005). It refers to a perceived second generation of web-based interactions, applications and communities. It is considered to be inclusive of a shift from a World Wide Web that is "read only" to a Web that is being described as the "Read Write Web" (Gillmo, 2007). Thus students negotiate meanings and connections within Web 2.0 social spaces or idea networks, exchange bits of content, create new content, and collaborate in new ways. According to Duffy (2012), the term Web 2.0 has been applied to a heterogeneous mix of innovative and emerging concepts, but as Alexander (2006) states, "Ultimately, the label 'Web 2.0' is far less important than the concepts, projects, and practices included in its scope". In order to delimit the term, we can present some broad characteristics of Web 2.0 site:

- "Network as platform"; delivering (and allowing users to use) applications entirely through an internet browser.

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