ASCOTech:
World Wide Web as Easy as 1.0, 2.0, 3.0

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As educators, we are all familiar with the World Wide Web. Some of us have been plugged in since its beginning in the early 1990s. The dot-com world is now so pervasive that it is hard to imagine there was a time pre-Google.

Recently, you may have noticed a lot of chatter about Web 2.0 and its role during your surfing experiences. There's also been a great deal of discussion about how Web 2.0 tools can serve the educational environment, as well. If you're thinking, "I don't even remember Web 1.0," then you're not alone.

Web 1.0 is a retronym that describes the original World Wide Web experience of flat text on static Web pages. Those were the days of dial-up connections to the Internet and an era dominated by Netscape. Web 1.0 was not interactive and was defined by proprietary software whose code could not be shared. A single Webmaster would post information on a page that other people could read.

Nobody quite knows exactly when Web 2.0 burst onto the scene, but sometime around 2004, people started using Web 2.0 to describe a browsing experience that is highly interactive, where people can make connections with other people through sites like MySpace or Facebook.[1] Twitter and YouTube are also the offspring of Web 2.0. The ability to blog or update a Wiki captures the spirit of what Web 2.0 is all about. Web 2.0 also has ushered in the idea of *open source* applications, where the source code of the program is freely available for other users to use, improve, and build new applications. With Web 2.0, most users are averaging 1 megabit of bandwidth, which has greatly expanded the use of photos and video on the Web.

To a great extent, the ideals of the Web 2.0 experience mirror education's recent interest in *active* learning. A timely *Campus Technology* posting describes how, with the advent of Web 2.0, the traditional classroom with one speaker and many listeners is so…well…Web 1.0. "With so many ways to create knowledge now very rapidly and collaboratively, we are freed from the necessity of a singular approach to teaching."[2] The Web 2.0 learning experience is really suited for a discussion rather than a lecture.

Some pioneers in higher education are engaging all that Web 2.0 has to offer. Class blogs, collaborative Wikis for students' projects, and Facebook discussions about course content are increasing. Sugato Chakravarty, a professor of consumer sciences and retailing at Purdue University, recently outlined his experience using Twitter with students during his classes. Students can submit questions anonymously from their cell phones or laptops directly to him during lectures. Although heralded as a way to keep students more engaged and give them more control during class, Mr. Chakravarty says embracing this communication method is not easy as a faculty member. "You are vulnerable out there. Students don't hold back. If you

say something wrong or something they don't agree with, they'll let you know, and everybody else will see it."[3]

Before you get too overwhelmed with Web 2.0, however, the corporate tech dreamers are already scheming on the advances of Web 3.0. With Web 3.0, users are expected to experience 10 megabits of bandwidth full-time. Some people have even described this as the full-video Web. Web 3.0 is expected to be the semantic Web, where personalization and intelligent searching are standard. Imagine a surfing experience where search engines understand who you are, what you've been doing, and where you're likely to go next. As if we're not plugged in enough already, Web 3.0 is also expected to be the truly portable personable Web.

References
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