Chapter XVIII
A Model for Knowledge and Innovation in Online Education

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this chapter is to introduce a model that outlines the evolution of knowledge and sustainable innovation of community through the use of social software and knowledge management in an online environment. Social software presents easy-to-use, participatory technologies, thus bringing increased interaction with others and a diversity of perspectives into the classroom. Knowledge management provides the opportunity to capture and store information so that content and learning can be personalized according to learner preferences. This model describes a circuit of knowledge that includes instructional systems design, individualization of learning, interaction and critical reflection. It also represents a new framework within which communities develop and become more sustainable.

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we suggest that the field of online education adopts effective practices from knowledge management, and the best social software tools to create a knowledge community. As social software tools become more available for formal online learning environments, current conceptualizations of online communities must be modified. Where are these social technologies leading us and what are the impacts?

This model proposes a more dynamic online classroom where learners use cutting-edge social software tools to capture and disseminate collective knowledge from the participants in the course, as well as the virtual and local community.
A Model for Knowledge and Innovation in Online Education

This model facilitates the evolution of knowledge within the classroom, and encourages a sustainable knowledge community, wherein innovation may be enhanced. Our vision of this dynamic partnership of knowledge management, online education, and social software is described in the following scenario (Table 1).

Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Futures of Technology and Knowledge in an Online Classroom</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fiona, Tim, and Vita are enrolled in Organizational Learning and Instructional Technologies (OLIT) 565, a graduate course designed to function as an interactive online course using multimedia content, information literacy tools, tests, assignments, and small group projects. The course requires intensive study of the content available in numerous formats for many devices, including desktop computers, iPads, and smart phones. The content can be read online or offline. Interactions with classmates, instructor, mentors, and experts are a critical component of the course and occur through discussion forums, chats, and Web conferencing in the learning management system (LMS), as well as wikis, blogs, and virtual content outside the LMS.</td>
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<td>Although the case scenario may seem like a list of items for online instructors to buy, the reality is that these tools are currently available for learners and instructors alike to manipulate to create meaningful and long-lasting online interaction. Granted, adaptation is a constant challenge, but it is our hope that through describing this model,</td>
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