Chapter 8
Performance and Agility in Orchestrating Learning Online

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ABSTRACT
Hybrid learning is taking centre stage and the conductor, by means of visible gestures, directs performances on the e-learning platform. Real-time personalized communication takes place as it does in a harmonious ensemble. Intellectual agility ensures that bottom-line contributors to the performance are in good shape and are fit to contribute in this participatory theatre. In the new knowledge era, everyone gets connected, everything is personalized, and adapted to the digital world. Orchestrating the music on the e-learning platform, the conductor and individual performers are joining forces with the artists to produce the desired response or near perfect performance. The technological world enhances the bottom-line contributions with the latest Web 2.0 instruments which make it increasingly effortless for a conductor to access a world of information both which is comprehensive and yet personal. Furthermore, Web 2.0 applications often help to bring novelty to the stage. In this chapter the authors will adopt an empirical approach to explore how the new but less hyped Web 2.0 instruments will be helping the next generation to make full use of an e-learning platform. They will also explore the strengths and ascertain the suitability of the instruments and demonstrate the process of making such a performance a reality on the platform. This scenario is in support of the Hong Kong SAR Government’s initiative of its implementation of the Government Wi-Fi Programme, under the 2008 Digital 21 Strategy.

INTRODUCTION
In May 2005 in Hong Kong, the Special Administrative Region Government published a report on “The New Academic Structure for Senior Secondary Education and Higher Education – Action Plan for Investing in the Future of Hong Kong (the Action Plan)”. The HK government has found that the introduction of Career-oriented Studies (COS) is generally welcomed by the school sector. As part
and parcel of the New Senior Secondary (NSS) curriculum, the COS has been formulated. It is based on one of the key principles, namely the “learning platform”. Its aim is to facilitate the learning of those topics which will enable true lifelong learners to reach their goals. The framework helps learners to get inspiration from new ways of thinking and acquire the knowledge which matches their learning needs, values and attitudes. The linking of the curriculum at the senior secondary level with their future studies/careers reflects the importance of cross-curricular links. “Globalization in higher education and other sectors is characterized by expanded cross-border flows of people, messages, knowledge, ideas, policies, technologies and money.” (Marginson, 2007) The prevailing trend apart from traditional teaching and learning practices is to expand learning opportunities, in a form of educational globalization that enables learners to acquire knowledge and skills across a variety of disciplines.

Learners everywhere today are having the chance to see, hear, and try out new things. From home schooling to kindergarten, kindergarten to primary school, primary school to secondary school, post-secondary school to the University, University to workplace, learners have an irresistible desire to grow and learn according to their needs. The ongoing practice of teaching activities such as lectures, seminars, tutorials or workshops have long been established, facilitating interaction and discussion between peers and teachers or students and teaching faculty. Education is indispensable to life and students are ready to get well-equipped. They prefer to keep up-to-date with knowledge and information of the outer world, motivating themselves to do better and generating ideas to benefit themselves and others in the real world. The question is: What makes the difference between non e-learning and e-learning? The popularity of the personal computer has made it a dominant partner in every student’s learning history; it is their main source of connections to knowledge of the world. With the advent of internet space, information and communication technology (ICT) is enhancing communication all over the world at an incredible pace. The speed at which information can travel using vehicles provided by ICT and the vast storage space available, makes possible the free flow of information and knowledge. This is creating a paradigmatic shift in the history of education. The world is changing and learners can take advantage of this surge of knowledge resources and tools. Humans have countless ideas and now they have the tools to make their dreams a reality. “The school is not the privileged locus of learning. It is not a self-contained, closed world in which students acquire knowledge to be applied outside, but a part of a broader learning system”, Wenger (2005) says. The world is not static - learners are no longer just surfing, searching and browsing on the Internet. The Internet facilitates the construction of architectural designs for new faster and better connections. A new perspective derives from a new paradigm. Sharing and collaboration are taking a prominent position thanks to the Internet.

The advances in ICT are transforming the world and that allows us to rush in, pick up, get involved, travel, move forward at high speed. Ehlers (2007) says, “The focus in the discussion about how e-learning can make a difference, moved from e-learning as a technological innovation to e-learning as a pedagogical innovation and today has arrived at a discussion about the strategic level—how e-learning can make a difference through stimulating a new learning and organizational culture.” A new start can now be made using web-based education. This can drive and train learners globally taking them to a higher level of education than ever before as they can have access to various systems of knowledge in government, business, science and professional services. This advances the application of ICT and prepares learners to get marvelous educational experiences. In a knowledge era of stunning diversity of all kinds, fascinating sources of knowledge are available. Every single source from cell phone,
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