

# This & That

Winter Issue, 2007

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Happy Holidays!

*While whirling through the holidays, enjoy the spirit of the season.*

*Giving! Peace! Joy!*

## What's All the Hype about Google?

Here's the thing . . . Google is FREE! (And we all like free.) The following is information on the tools that Google offers for teachers.

First you will need to get a free Google Account at [www.google.com/accounts](http://www.google.com/accounts). This will give you access to all the free Google tools. Upon your registration, you will have Gmail, the google email application and iGoogle, a customized page just for you! Then go to [www.google.com/educator](http://www.google.com/educator) and you will find the main page for teachers. In the left navigation column, click on Tools for Your Classroom. Here you will find a list of tools.

The following descriptions are some of our Google favorites:

**Google Earth** – Fly from one location to another on this three dimensional model of the earth! This downloadable program allows you to use Google's satellite imagery to zoom in, find travel directions, restaurants and attractions in major metropolitan areas. Then add media such as photos and push pins with information to create your own lessons and scrapbook-like files. Also see <http://googlelitrips.com> for files created by literature teachers to be used with Google Earth. This is a well-developed product that teachers can use in their classroom.

**Google Notebook** – Browse, clip and organize information from across the web using Google Notebook. This is a web-based program with a downloadable browser extension. Web-based means you don't have to use the same machine for all of your work. The great part of this tool is that you are able to share your notes with others and invite them to collaborate with you. You might be asking, "How can I use it with my students?" You can create a notebook with web resources and send it to their Google accounts so they can add to your class discussions!

**Blogger** – Improve student writing with this web-based blogging (web-log) or journaling tool. Blogger allows a main article and then areas for comments from other collaborators. Using RSS technology, teachers can blog to inform parents on upcoming activities/events or post class discussions for students so that their Google Reader (RSS file reader: seeks out updates on sites you specify) will let them know that something new has been posted!

**Google Docs and Spreadsheets** – This is a web-based, easy-to-use, online word processor and spreadsheet. There are no downloads involved. A favorite piece for Google

*Continued on page 2*

## AIM Institute Pilots Innovative eCommerce Course with Six South-Central Nebraska High Schools

The Applied Information Management (AIM) Institute and Educational Service Unit (ESU) No. 11 launched the pilot for an entrepreneurial marketing course for high school students in south-central Nebraska on November 2. "Marketing in the 21st Century" is a course that will teach students about entrepreneurial business opportunities and allow them to design and implement their own online business in their school using eBay as a selling platform.

"In today's modern-day marketplace, online sales level the playing field for all who participate, creating opportunities for small, rural vendors as well as nationally recognized merchandise distributors," notes Dave Coover, Director of Training for the AIM Institute and one of the authors of the course curriculum.

Over the past six months, AIM has worked with teachers from the participating high schools to develop this innovative curriculum. Coover adds, "Ultimately, the goal of this program is for eCommerce-savvy students to form business relationships with local merchants and help them develop an electronic storefront for their traditional 'brick and mortar' businesses."

Participating in the pilot program are Eustis-Farnam, Wilcox-Hildreth, Minden, Arapahoe, Cambridge and Southern Valley High Schools. Robert Hays, Technology/Curriculum Consultant for ESU No. 11, says, "Implementation of this course in Nebraska schools will bring relevant and engaging activities to students that will utilize current technology in a way that supplements traditional curriculum." He concludes, "This course will hopefully ignite a spark of interest in rural business entrepreneurship among Nebraska students and encourage them to remain in their communities and the state."

### *What's All the Hype About Google? continued...*

Docs and Spreadsheets is the sharing and collaboration feature. Documents, spreadsheets and now presentations can be created by as many as ten individuals on different machines at the same time. Try it out during your next faculty meeting with another teacher or with a student team activity. Great collaborative tools for all curricular areas!

**Picasa** – Google provides this downloadable software to find, share and edit your photos. This easy-to-use software is a must-have for sharing photos through the web. Others can then download the photos or order prints. Save, share and create web-embedded slide-shows of pictures from class activities, sporting events or field trips!

**Google Sketch-Up** – Sketch-Up is well-developed, downloadable modeling software used for designing 3-D models of buildings or other such objects. Use it to design sets for the school play, redesign your classroom or organize and plan community building projects. It can also be used in conjunction with Google Earth.

*Reprinted with permission from Deanna Stall, ESU 10*



## Commissioner of Education Recognizes Nebraska Career Student Organization Members

Nebraska students placing in the top three in the nation in their respective career student organization national conferences were recognized at the Commissioner's Recognition for Student Excellence in Career Education on November 26. Governor Dave Heineman and Donlynn Rice, Team Leader for the Curriculum and Instruction Team at the Nebraska Department of Education, gave welcome addresses to the over 250 in attendance. Mrs. Rice and the Governor also presented certificates to the 85 outstanding student members. Students recognized were members of DECA, FBLA, FCCLA, FFA, PBL and SkillsUSA.

DECA award members were Haley Jackson of Millard South HS; Kurtis Evon, Beth Hoffman, Ashley Janca, Jessie Gunsolley, Josh Klostermeyer and Zac Youtz of Bellevue West HS and Keith Fix of Omaha Burke HS.

FBLA award members were Lauren Klute of Heartland HS; Hans Christensen of Johnson-Brock HS; Kevin Ripp, McKenzie Baltzell and Melanie Shafto of Pleasanton HS; Scott Ronhovde, Kevin Zoz and Madison Stephen of Elmwood-Murdock HS; Sarah Maresh of Raymond Central HS; Trent Shrader, Marcus Winter and John Luetchens of Elmwood-Murdock HS; Kyle Bunkers of Lakeview HS; Gabe Williamson of Norris HS and Caitlin Cedfelt of Arlington HS.

PBL award members were Mike Kistler, Ashley Guinan, Charles Burns, Tim Echtenkamp and Chris Reznicek of the University of Nebraska – Lincoln; Eric LeMunyan of the University of Nebraska at Kearney and Mike Fabry and Amanda Fryzek of Midland Lutheran College.

Congratulations to the teachers and students on these outstanding achievements!

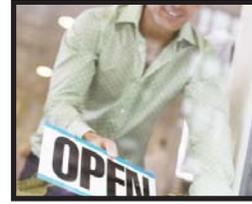
## Office 2007 File Compatibility

Word files generated in Office 2007 use the extension (\*.docx) compared to the familiar Word extension from previous versions (\*.doc). The Word 2007 file extension is not incompatible with older Word versions. All that is needed to open, edit or save documents is a plug-in, which can be downloaded from [www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com). Click on the link for Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack for Word, Excel and PowerPoint 2007 File Formats, which is listed under Popular Downloads, and follow the instructions.

**Note:** Before you click the Download button, read the Overview text just below the blue box, which will allow you to update your version of Office if necessary. A Microsoft Update link is listed in the Overview description. Once the update is installed, restart the computer and then proceed with the installation of the Compatibility Pack.

Once the Compatibility Pack is installed, you can open and edit MS Office 2007 files as well as save files in the new format. For example, select File and then Save As from the menu bar and note that there are two new options: Word 2007 document (\*.docx) and Word 2007 macro-enabled document (\*.docm).

## Facts About Small Businesses



The Office of Advocacy estimates that there are 26.8 million small businesses in the United States, and addresses small businesses' importance to the U.S. economy. It provides data on small business firm survival, owner demographics, health care questions, regulations and procurement. Here are a few of the fascinating statistics!

### Small firms:

- Represent 99.7 percent of all employer firms.
- Employ about half of all private sector employees.
- Pay more than 45 percent of total U.S. private payroll.
- Have generated 60 to 80 percent of net new jobs annually over the last decade.
- Create more than half of nonfarm private gross domestic product (GDP).
- Supplied 22.8 percent of the total value of federal prime contracts in FY 2005.
- Hire 40 percent of high tech workers (such as scientists, engineers, and computer workers).
- Are 52 percent home-based and 2 percent franchises.
- Made up 97 percent of all identified exporters and produced 28.6 percent of the known export value in FY 2004.

Small innovative firms produce 13 times more patents per employee than large patenting firms, and their patents are twice as likely as large firm patents to be among the one percent most cited.

Advocacy's updated FAQs can be found at [www.sba.gov/advo/stats/sbfaq.pdf](http://www.sba.gov/advo/stats/sbfaq.pdf).



*"Have patience with all things, but, first of all with yourself."*

*~ St. Francis de Sales*

## Information Technology Survey Results

Teachers attending the 2007 Fall Business, Marketing and Information Technology ESU workshops completed an online survey focused on the status of information technology in their schools. The survey represented 20 middle-level, 110 high schools and 48 grade 6-12 buildings. Some highlights of the 182 buildings responding included the following:

- 126 buildings require all students to take Computer Applications during high school with 72 buildings requiring Computer Applications for a full year and 40 buildings requiring one semester.
- 36 buildings offer 7 different semesters of computer and/or technology courses.
- Visual Basic, HTML, C++ and Java are the top four programming languages offered.
- Web page development is offered in 136 business departments with Dreamweaver being the most popular application software.
- 82 business departments offer speech recognition training (49 percent).
- 75 buildings offer networking systems (44 percent).

For complete details, review the survey located at: [www.surveymonkey.com/sr.aspx?sm=qvAgay7kHtqZz6U9ZQdA1icyk9oByT0A4vOhsC5tzZU\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/sr.aspx?sm=qvAgay7kHtqZz6U9ZQdA1icyk9oByT0A4vOhsC5tzZU_3d)

## Teaching Idea: So What!?

Are you asking students to do “current events”? Many teachers have students summarize an article each week—typically a one-page, written report that helps teach academic skills such as reading, writing and synthesis. Add one more dimension: Insist that students write an additional paragraph that addresses the “So what?” question. Specifically, ask them to analyze the article and to share how it relates specifically to the content of the class and its intended learning outcomes.

*Steven LeShay, Wilmington College, DE*

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## Teaching Idea: Famous Attitudes

### **GROUP ACTIVITY from EI LAP 3, Opt for Optimism (Positive Attitude)**

**Preparation:** No advance preparation is needed for this activity.

**Process:** Divide the class into small groups of three or four students each. Ask each group to appoint a reporter.

Ask each group to identify a famous person whom the group members believe displays a positive attitude and to explain why they chose this person.

Have the group reporter share his/her group’s choice and the reasons for that choice. On the board, write the positive characteristics that they discuss which are in common.

Now, ask each group to identify a famous person whom the group members believe displays a negative attitude and to explain why they chose this person.

Have the group reporter share his/her group’s choice and the reasons for that choice. On the board, write negative characteristics that they discuss which are in common. Summarize.

## Aurora High School Business Department Recognized

Aurora High School’s Business Department was one of the recipients of the Outstanding Career Education Program Award at the 2007 Nebraska Career Education Conference. Dave Long, Julie Jensen, Lois Hixson and Dana Thompson are the teachers who were recognized for educational excellence and achieving student success through career education. In addition to teaching their classes, these teachers specialize in providing extra projects for their students, including FBLA, Junior Leadership Academy, “Your Future Is Now” senior program, Career Day and more. Aurora High School principal Doug Kittle said that these programs enable “our students to maximize their full potential.”

## Federal Reserve Consumer Help

The Federal Reserve System believes that consumers who make informed choices provide the foundation for a healthier economy. Many consumers are aware of the Equal Credit Opportunity Act but are not aware of the protection the law provides. Therefore, the Federal Reserve launched a national consumer website at [www.FederalReserveConsumerHelp.gov](http://www.FederalReserveConsumerHelp.gov). The site provides answers to the most frequently asked questions about consumer and banking issues.



### Free Current Events Resource

Are you integrating current events into your curriculum? Do you need a resource for your articles?

Then check out [www.izzit.org](http://www.izzit.org) to find a free current events service that generates daily news articles along with discussion questions. The questions are designed to encourage critical thinking, challenge assumptions and encourage classroom discussions. In addition, the current events articles can be emailed to your inbox on a daily basis.

## About the Marketing Pathways

The Business, Marketing and Management Career Field includes four clusters of particular interest to business and marketing educators that address Finance, Business Management and Administration, Hospitality and Tourism and Marketing. The Information Technology Career Cluster is also available within the Communication and Information Systems Career Field.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employer demand for employees in marketing is forecasted to be strong through 2012 due to increased technological changes, competition, global markets and methods of communicating with customers. For example, growth projections through 2012 fall into the Bureau of Labor Statistics "faster than average" category:

- Marketing managers:  
21 – 35% growth = 81,000 additional employees  
Mean wages in 2003: \$92,190
- Sales and sales managers:  
21 – 35% growth = 168,000 additional employees  
Mean wages in 2003: \$91,830
- Advertising and promotions managers:  
21 – 35% growth = 37,000 additional employees  
Mean wages in 2003: \$73,170
- PR Specialists:  
21 – 35% growth = 75,000 additional employees  
Mean wages in 2003: \$48,230
- Marketing Researchers:  
21 – 35% growth = 66,000 additional employees  
Mean wages in 2003: \$61,670

Similar employment needs are found throughout the retail industry. For example, in its "2004 Multi-Outlet Retailer Compensation Survey," Mercer Human Resource Consulting, referenced a median annual salary (base and in-

centives) for top merchandising executives of multi-outlet stores as \$231,600. Buyers for the same type of stores had median annual salaries of \$82,500. The potential for the top positions in retail establishments has resulted in Ivy League institutions reinstating retail management majors in their business schools.

In the Marketing Cluster, you'll find five career pathways: Marketing Communications, Marketing Management, Marketing Research, Merchandising and Professional Selling. As with the cluster itself, each pathway is recognized because of the common concept and skill sets required of careers within the pathway.

The **Marketing Communications** pathway focuses on careers that inform, remind and/or persuade a target audience. Examples of marketing communications activities include advertising, direct marketing, public relations, sales promotion and digital marketing communications. Sample careers include advertising account executive, media buyer, media planner, public relations manager, sales promotion manager, trade show manager and sales promotion manager.

Careers in **Marketing Management** focus on a broad, cross-functional knowledge of marketing and management. These functions include marketing-information management, pricing, product/service management, promotion and selling. Sample occupations include chief marketing officer, marketing manager, product/brand manager, marketing director and marketing specialist.

Careers in **Marketing Research** focus on utilizing qualitative and quantitative research methods to determine information needs, design data-collection processes, collect data, analyze data and present data to be used to make business decisions. Sample occupations include customer-insights

specialist, marketing research analyst, market research interviewers, marketing research manager and marketing research director.

In the retail-specific arena, research efforts focused on **Merchandising**, viewed by many as a primary route to executive-level careers in retailing. Careers in Merchandising focus on efficient and effective product planning, product selection, buying, licensing, and inventory control. Sample occupations include assistant buyer, buyer, merchandise manager, merchandising assistant, merchandiser, merchandise division manager and merchandising coordinator.

Finally, careers in **Professional Selling** focus on offering services, equipment, machines, supplies, parts and finished goods to other businesses to use for business operations, for the manufacture of other products, for samples passed on to others or for resale/provision to others. These occupations require in-depth knowledge of the target customer such as the customer's needs, business, competitors and products; pre-sales activities; sales processes and techniques and servicing after the sale. Sample occupations include account executive, district sales manager, manufacturer's sales representative, sales agent, sales engineer, regional sales manager and vice president of sales.

For each Pathway within the Marketing Cluster, the Marketing Career Cluster skill and knowledge statements (essential learnings) identify specific performance elements and measurement criteria that industry believes are important for effective job performance and career development. To access Nebraska's Marketing Pathway knowledge and skill statements, visit [www.nde.state.ne.us/BMIT](http://www.nde.state.ne.us/BMIT) - click on Marketing in the About Us Section.

*MarkED Eblast, November 2, 2007  
Reprinted with permission from MarkED*

## “Challenges” Provide Student Opportunities

### eBiz Computer Programming Challenge

The annual eBiz High School Computer Programming Challenge is designed to connect business with high schools to promote education and careers in information technology by demonstrating “real-world” practices. The Challenge features team-oriented problems in business-related topics that emphasize design, documentation and teamwork and includes both an advanced and intermediate division.

The teams, comprised of a teacher and up to four students, are challenged to develop a computer application according to documented specifications. The teams will be required to produce and submit items according to a set schedule over several months culminating with a day-long event on March 5, 2008, at First National Tower in downtown Omaha.

The website, <http://ebizchallenge.aiminstitute.org/>, will be the conduit to connect the teacher/student teams with business professionals, to provide professional mentoring and feedback throughout the Challenge. The culminating event will include head-to-head team competition and mentoring with business professionals, plus an awards and recognition ceremony for the participating schools.

Additionally, you will be invited to a conference call in the near future to discuss any details regarding the Challenge. For those that have not participated in the past, this call will be an opportunity to help with the decision process by talking with the Challenge committee and other teachers that have experience with the Challenge. This event is sponsored by First National Bank of Omaha, IBM Corporation and the AIM Institute.

For more information, please call or send an email to: DeWayne Hughes, Contest Director, eBiz Programming Challenge, IT Architect – Consulting I/T Specialist, IBM Corporation, [dmhughe@us.ibm.com](mailto:dmhughe@us.ibm.com) or Mark Doyle, 2nd Vice President, First National Nebraska, Inc., 402.633.7937, [mduoye@fnni.com](mailto:mduoye@fnni.com)

### Economics Challenge

Each year the Nebraska Council on Economic Education, in conjunction with its University of Nebraska - Lincoln Center for Economic Education, hosts the Nebraska Economics Challenge. The Challenge is an opportunity for students to demonstrate their knowledge of Economic Literacy by competing with other students across the state in written and “Quiz Bowl” examinations. Student participants receive certificates of recognition, awards and accolades.

The first round of the Challenge is held online. Teachers and students will be able to participate regardless of travel or budgetary constraints. In the first round, each team of up to five students in two divisions will complete online exams that cover topics in macro, micro and international economics. After round one, the top ten teams in each division will be invited to Lincoln for the State Finals.

All high school students are eligible. No formal courses in economics are required. Any team of students interested in economics is encouraged to compete. Schools may enter multiple teams in their qualifying divisions.

The Adam Smith Division is restricted to students enrolled in courses labeled AP, IB, honors, differentiated or college level. Any economics course as a two-semester course also falls in this division.

The David Ricardo Division is restricted to students enrolled in a one-semester or less high school course not labeled as AP, IB, honors, differentiated or college level.

To make this activity available to as many students as possible, the Nebraska Council on Economic Education will pay the registration fees of every team that participates. For those that are invited to the State Finals, travel and lodging stipends are available.

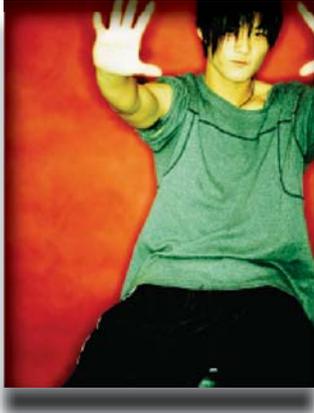
### Finance Challenge

The Nebraska Council on Economic Education, with support from the Kazanjian Economics Foundation, is pleased to announce a new academic competition for students in grades 9-12. The Finance Challenge ONLINE! portal will be available December 15, 2007.

The purpose of the Finance Challenge is to honor teachers and students in grades 9-12 who have demonstrated excellence in mastery of finance curriculum materials. The intent is to encourage high standards for achievement in personal finance classes and to provide support and encouragement to school systems, teachers and students for their accomplishments.

The competition will be for teacher-sponsored teams of 3 to 5 students. Teachers may enter any number of teams. During the Online Challenge, students will enter the Finance Challenge portal to take multiple choice exams in personal finance. The highest scoring teams will receive recognition and accolades for their achievements. Costs for the competition will be covered by the Nebraska Council, the Kazanjian Economics Foundation and local support.

If you would like to participate in the Challenge or would like more information, please contact the Council at 402.472.2333 or at [rbutters3@unl.edu](mailto:rbutters3@unl.edu).



## Web Sites for Young Entrepreneurs

Innovation and entrepreneurship are two key components of creating a globally competitive economy in the 21st century. Planting the seed for entrepreneurship is important for middle and high school students. The two resources highlighted below are unique and creative ways for teachers, counselors, parents and especially students to learn about starting small businesses and becoming entrepreneurs.

The first resource, Hot Shot Business at: <http://spapps.go.com/hsb4/landing/>, is a collaborative venture involving Disney Online and the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. Hot Shot Business is an Internet simulation game aimed at students, ages 9–12, who are interested in learning what it takes to be an entrepreneur. Students learn about the components of running a business including what it takes to set up a business, financing options and responding to market trends and customer preferences. Students learn how to make decisions that ensure profit, yet meet the needs and interests of their community. Students can choose from different businesses such as a pet spa, pro landscaping, comic shop and a candy store. Various teacher resource guides and tools are available to download.

The second web site is the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)'s Web Site for Teens at [www.sba.gov/teens/](http://www.sba.gov/teens/). This site provides teenagers and other young entrepreneurs with resources, tips and web links on starting a small business. This includes providing tips on finding funding, partnerships and dealing with legal issues such as patents, labor laws and day-to-day operational matters.

The site also provides helpful links to business and entrepreneurship organizations that young entrepreneurs can turn to for more information such as the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), DECA, Junior Achievement, 4-H clubs and Boys and Girls Clubs.

## Thanks, But No Thanks

Your mother told you to do it, and now a new survey shows she was right: Sending a thank-you note not only displays impeccable manners but also may give job hopefuls an edge over other applicants. While nearly 9 out of 10 executives polled (88 percent) said sending a thank-you note following an interview can boost a job seeker's chances, they also estimate that half of the applicants (49 percent) fail to do so. The good news is that more candidates are following up after the interview than five years ago.

The national poll included responses from 150 senior executives—including those from human resources, finance and marketing departments—with the nation's 1,000 largest companies. It was conducted by an independent research firm and developed by Accountemps.

Eighty-eight percent of executives said they consider a post-interview thank-you note influential when evaluating candidates, a slight increase from when executives were asked this same question five years ago.

Executives were asked, "How do you prefer to receive thank-you messages from candidates following interviews?" Their responses:

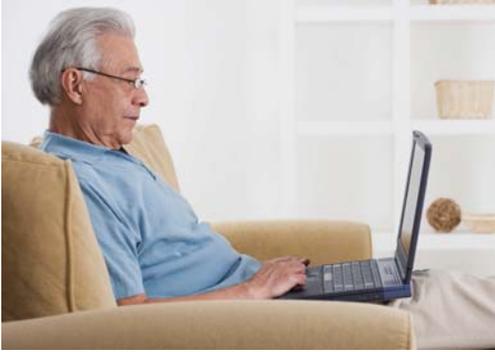
Handwritten note	52%
E-mail	44%
Prefer to receive both	4%

Thank-you letters can be handwritten, typed or sent via email. Each thank-you letter should include a thank you for the interview, your interest in the job, your qualifications and skills and a final thank you. Keep your thank-you letters short and simple but do use the letter to reiterate your interest in the job, your enthusiasm for the company and your selling points as the ideal candidate.

"Regardless of how someone believes he or she performed during the interview, sending a short thank-you note afterward demonstrates initiative and courtesy," said Max Messmer, chairman of Accountemps. "Conveying appreciation in a well written message is not only polite, it also can distinguish a job applicant from others vying for the same position."

Messmer added that the best strategy often is to send an email shortly after the interview, followed by more formal correspondence.

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The Professional Edge, Vol. 18, No. 2, Winter 2007.*



### Web 2.0 to Web 3.0

Web 2.0? Web 3.0? Where are we heading? What's it all about? Before we move forward, let's first see where we have been. Web 1.0 provided Internet connectivity with text and content, but an individual could not interact with a site. Web 1.0 provided a fountain of information; however, there was no capacity to comment on it, add content or interact.

Three years ago Web 2.0 brought interactivity to the Internet. Through such items as blogs, mashups and Wikipedia, users became creators with a voice that could be heard in multiple ways. Blogs and wikis allow us to contribute to the content of the web. Social networks allow us to meet each other and interact. Web 2.0 tools have one thing in common—they are social, enabling people to collaborate and share content.

In addition to making the Internet better for users, Web 2.0 makes the Internet better for computers. It allows a user to ask a computer the same question one would ask a friend. Through tagging, users can file share and become a part of a social network; tagging encourages collaboration online. Tagging allows individuals to identify (tag) items on the Internet, even photos, blogs and videos, which in turn makes the resources searchable by everyone.

Although there is still much to be done with Web 2.0, Web 3.0 will be semantic with ontologies being created that can interpret words beyond the literal translation. (An ontology in both computer science and information science is a data model that represents a set of concepts with a group

or domain and the relationships between those concepts. It is used to reason about the objects within the domain.)

For example, when searching for the word, "puppies," an ontology would allow the computer to also search for words similar to puppies, such as small dogs and litters. A Web 2.0 search would only match the key word by providing all matches to puppies; ontologies broaden that search.

The vision for Web 3.0 is that the computer could provide you with amazing personal items by becoming a "know it all." For example, Web 3.0 could provide you with a complete vacation packet. It would come to know you and your preferences. In fact, it could summarize all hotel ratings based on your personal preferences. Hotels, with flashy websites but with low ratings, could not hide on the Internet because Web 3.0 could find, consolidate and analyze any review about that hotel located on the web. Web 3.0 could become a personal adviser for users. It could find the right college match for a student. It could find the perfect retirement plan for a married couple.

These technology trends continue to make educators as well as the business world scramble to keep up. However, they provide a rich resource of tools and real-life experiences for our students.

Source: *Trends CD, May 2007*

A HAPPY  
NEW YEAR



### Where Teens Get Their News Fix

- 66% – Internet portals such as Google and Yahoo
- 45% – National TV news web sites
- 34% – Local TV or newspaper web sites
- 32% – Blogs
- 21% – National newspaper sites

Source: *2006 Future of the First Amendment Study, Knight Foundation Technology & Learning, November 2006*



## Technology Education Challenges in High Schools—TECHS

*By Corliss Dixon and Bob Bednar, Pleasanton High School*

If you are looking for the class to help prepare your students for the 21st Century, TECHS is the solution!

In 2004, Pleasanton was one of four schools to participate in the online TECHS class provided by John Stritt and the Educational Service Unit 10 staff. TECHS, Technology Education Challenges in High Schools, provides an online curriculum, which Pleasanton still utilizes. Today, the program reaches nearly 200 students in 29 schools. The class provides “technical and career opportunity awareness for students with skills in information technology.” The three R’s—rigor, relevance and relationships are also emphasized in TECHS.

You can tailor the class to meet your school’s needs. At Pleasanton, the students serve as assistants to the LAN manager and complete most units of the TECHS curriculum. Some of their LAN duties include: moving and setting up labs, installing software, trouble shooting, maintenance and assisting teachers and students.

Students have access to the TECHS MyeLearning site. The ESU No. 10 staff and other experts provide the lessons in a number of formats that allow students to engage within the program in a variety of means, including video presentations, podcasts, ProfCasting and PowerPoint presentations. Students learn the newest technology through the completion of the assignments. The forms of student response include: blogging, making a Wiki and working together through Google collaborative doc and spreadsheets. Assessments include worksheets and tests, which are taken by students online. Also through MyeLearning, students have email accounts, which provide opportunities for group and individual reflection.

A few of the favorite projects include building a computer, learning podcasting, creating websites, making patch panel cables, creating portfolios and digital stories and learning the newest technology. Students have also created a multi-media room for the school. They installed the speakers, wired all of the necessary cabling and designed and constructed the speakers and projector platforms. They also connected peripherals to the system, including a projector, subwoofer, DVD player, VCR and computer. This advanced technology setup has allowed teachers to implement technology into their curriculums, thus enhancing learning. Currently, TECHS is in the process of building the second multi-media room.

Each TECHS unit includes a chapter on careers, digital citizenship, information literacy, maintenance and a group activity as well as individual assignments. Career activities focus on completing a career assessment, exploration of specific career/college opportunities, resume development and exploration of the 21st Century Skills for employment. The Nebraska Career Connections website is utilized by each student. TECHS is a great introduction to a number of careers and college programs. The skills taught in this class can be utilized in almost any career.

A few of the other areas covered included: Netiquette, Internet Safety, Network Security, Spyware Detection, Virus Detection and Protection, Battle of the Platforms, Bluetooth and Managing the Network.

Our teachers request the students for help instead of the LAN manager! A few members are referred to as the “Dream Team!”

## New Work Habits

In the opening statements of his book, *The Employee Handbook of New Work Habits for a Radically Changing World*, Price Pritchett lays the groundwork with several concepts. Pritchett notes:

We know what's coming: Accelerating change. Increasing complexity. Worldwide competition for jobs.

We know the challenges: Keeping up. Adapting. Figuring out how to use change to our advantage.

With those thoughts in mind, Pritchett identifies 13 ground rules for job success in the information age.



1. **Become a quick-change artist.** You can expect flexible ways of working. Duties will be constantly realigned. Short-lived assignments will be common.
2. **Commit fully to your job.** In today's world, career success belongs to the committed and to those who work from the heart and invest of themselves in their job. Employers will expect more of employees because the marketplace is demanding more.
3. **Speed up.** Organizations must travel light and respond more quickly. Employees need to operate with a sense of urgency.
4. **Accept ambiguity and uncertainty.** Usually there are more questions than answers. Perpetual change will be crucial if the organization is going to survive. Be willing to "wing it" and improvise.
5. **Behave like you're in business for yourself.** Act like you are the owner. Organizations are reshaping themselves to be entrepreneurial and to be closer to the customer.
6. **Stay in school.** Lifelong learning is the only way to be competitive in the job market. Invest in your personal growth and development.
7. **Hold yourself accountable for outcomes.** Responsibility, power and authority are being pushed down to all levels. Therefore, each person needs to be accountable for results.
8. **Add value.** Sticking around for a long time does not necessarily make you worth more to the organization. Make sure you haven't lost value because you have been at your employment for a long time. The world is changing so rapidly. Think in terms of being paid for performance.
9. **See yourself as a service center.** Be valuable to your customers. The better you serve them, the better you protect your career.
10. **Manage your own morale.** You are in charge of your own morale—not your employer, not your supervisor. Assign yourself personal responsibility for your attitude.
11. **Practice kaizen** (pronounced ky' zen). This is the relentless quest for a better way and higher craftsmanship. It is a daily pursuit of perfection.
12. **Be a fixer, not a finger-pointer.** Avoid the blame game and become a problem-solver. Assume ownership of the problems and seek solutions.
13. **Alter your expectations.** The entitlement mindset needs to be changed. Organizations do not owe an individual continued employment. Constantly upgrade your skills and stay flexible to protect your future. Take responsibility for your career and yourself.

## Curriki (Curriculum and Wiki)

Scott McNealy, chairman and cofounder of Sun Microsystems, took his technology knowledge into the educational arena after helping one of his children with a science assignment. After searching online, he decided that free academic resources could benefit students and teachers while saving school funds. The result was Curriki (curriculum and Wiki), an open source curriculum repository and community that captivates teachers, parents and students.

McNealy shares, "One person referred to it as EduTube. We want to move the market at large to delivering universal access to K-12 education through the open source model." The site is designed to be a central repository that teachers can trust. Educators can find and contribute materials, such as lesson plans, sample tests and video tutorials. In addition to finding information, teachers can create a MySpace-like page to manage their content.

The Curriki idea has now evolved into a partnership with AARP (American Association of Retired Professionals). The plan is to encourage millions of retired teachers to use the site to contribute and assist in the creating of educational objects and to participate in a community to change learning and teaching in the future.

Source: <http://content.scholastic.com>

## New Jersey's Coei's Career Videos

Since 1998, New Jersey's Center for Occupational Employment Information (COEI) has led a federally funded initiative to develop quality career videos for use throughout the nation in One-Stop Centers, educational institutions and career information delivery systems. The initiative was originally developed under the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration, and COEI was tasked with designing "a brief, visual introduction to careers and the world of work."

The collection includes 487 videos categorized using the Perkins Career Cluster taxonomy, with each video lasting approximately 90 seconds. Each video covers skill requirement and duties and provides a realistic look at the rewards and compromises of each career. More information on the video library and accessing these free videos is available on the following web site [http://web1.dol.state.nj.us/coei/CareerVideos/careervideos\\_list.html](http://web1.dol.state.nj.us/coei/CareerVideos/careervideos_list.html)



## ESI Curriculum

ESI: Entrepreneurship Investigation is an exciting, holistic, interactive and comprehensive curriculum project designed for youth, ages 10-19. Youth will study entrepreneurship using a series of four levels taken individually or as a series. Derry Trampe, Shelly Mowinkel and Becky Moock will present a session at the NCE Conference in Kearney next summer. They, along with other teachers, have been piloting the ESI curriculum this year. These economically priced units of instruction are being offered at a reduced rate if you purchase by December 30, 2007.

After completing all levels of the curriculum, youth will have the skills and tools to start their own business, as well as have a completed business and marketing plan—the "road map" to the entrepreneur's success. Through the process of discovery, youth will find out that this is all possible in their community, without having to move to a large community.

ESI has been aligned to school standards for easy classroom use. This curriculum was developed in partnership with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension and Former Congressman Tom Osborne, Nebraska Department of Education, HomeTown Competitiveness, Nebraska Farm Bureau, Net Force and USDA Rural Development.

Now through this incredible offer, you are eligible for a Pre-Press Discount. Order ESI now and save. **Orders placed before December 30, 2007** will receive over 25% off the list price. The Pre-Press Discount pricing is as follows:

- \$5.00 for Unit 1
- \$5.00 for Unit 2
- \$7.50 for Unit 3
- \$7.50 for Leader's Guide

To order at this introductory price, please complete the Pre-Press Order form at <http://4h.unl.edu/esi>. Any questions regarding this offer may be directed to Jean Swanson, Curriculum Coordinator at 402.472.9184 or [jswanson8@unl.edu](mailto:jswanson8@unl.edu).

## DATES TO REMEMBER

February 2008.....	National Career and Technical Education Month
February 10-16, 2008 .....	FBLA-PBL Week
February 19, 2008.....	FBLA State Leadership Conference Registration Deadline
March 13-15, 2008.....	DECA State Career Development Conference - Lincoln
March 19-22, 2008.....	NBEA Convention - San Antonio
April 3-5, 2008.....	FBLA State Leadership Conference - Omaha
April 24-25, 2008.....	NETA Conference - Omaha
April 25-30, 2008.....	International DECA Career Development Conference



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This newsletter was funded by the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Educational Act, Grant #V048A1002700 with the State of Nebraska.

Products mentioned in this newsletter are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by the Nebraska Department of Education staff; products are mentioned for your information and review.