

Essential Readings From Around the Net

Contributed by James McConville

This month I want to share some of the links I've accumulated. They are a combination of professional education readings, interesting technological developments and personal media.

Citizendium is a bold new project from the creators of Wikipedia. In responding to the user and contributor complaints about Wikipedia's accuracy and vandalism, this is a new effort. Citizendium will borrow some strategies from the professional publishers in that it will have content experts who monitor and approve certain areas of the encyclopedia as well as required registration with a verifiable name before and pages can be edited. I look forward to seeing if this is as successful and popular as Wikipedia. <http://citizendium.org/>

Apple iTunes lawsuits. The European Union has launched a lawsuit against Apple. It argues that Apple uses digital rights management (DRM) not only to protect songs from copying but to disallow transfer to other (generic) MP3 devices. I find this an interesting development and remain hopeful that Apple/Microsoft and others actually collaborate for a true common DRM platform.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/technologyNews/idUSL1126917220070311>

BC Educator Online Community. BCEdOnline has partnered with all the major players of online communities, including CUEBC, to host an online discussion and bulletin board. There are all kinds of great topics for educators to read and contribute all for FREE. In addition, if your district is a member of BCEdOnline, there are regular webinars and webcasts that you can participate in. A number of us on the executive just joined the one on podcasting. The entry page is here and you can quickly create a free account <http://community.bccampus.ca/bced>. To join an active conversation click on 'discussions'; then 'ICT talk'. I hope to see you there.

No need for grade 12 BC Government exams? A fellow Provincial Specialist Association, the Counsellors have compiled a very interesting list of post-secondary institutions and their requirements for grade 12 government exams. You'll notice that some of the Ontario universities do not require the exam. This will be interesting to follow as it might lead to a more open and flexible graduation program for student who want to choose elective courses. See: http://www.bctf.ca/bcsca/prov_exams.htm

Microsoft Office for every educator in BC? I have long been a proponent of a deal that would give all BC educators a common office software package across the province. Imagine the professional development possibilities at our conferences if we knew that every member has the same version of office at home and at work. In Alberta there has been a deal like this in place for a few years and it would be great if BC had the same type of agreement. Watch for the details from our colleagues at Educational Resource Acquisition Consortium <http://www.bcerac.ca/>

CPU's explained. As it is getting time for me to consider a new computer I've been trying to make sense of the latest offerings from Intel and AMD. My last computer was an AMD X2 processor, at that time it offered more performance than a similarly priced offering from Intel. With all the new dual and quad cores from Intel the choice isn't so clear. Here is an excellent review article that actually considers both the performance and the cost. Note that the costs are in US dollars but as there isn't duty on electronics the prices can be easily converted to our Canadian equivalents. See: <http://techreport.com/reviews/2007q1/cpus/index.x?pg=1>