The Virtual World of Second Life: A Growing Educational Platform

A Wide and Shallow Overview by Stephen Jacobs: sj@mail.rit.edu
To be Covered...

- A Little Virtual World History
- Current Virtual Worlds
- Second Life
- Second Life and Education
- Intro to the NMC
- Q and A
What is a Virtual World?

“A virtual world is a computer-based simulated environment intended for its users to inhabit and interact via avatars…”

Wikipedia
Brief History of Virtual Worlds

• Ancestors:
  – Telephones, IRC, Discussion Boards
• 1976 Colossal Cave Adventure. Crowther.
  – One of many web pages on [CCA’s History](http://www.ccahistory.com)
Brief History of Virtual Worlds

- **Multi User Dungeons** (MUDs)
  - MUD Developed 1978 by Bartle and Trubshaw
MUDs Are Not Dead.
Lucas Arts Habitat, 1985

The Habitat Chronicles
MUD Object Oriented: developed by White in Feb 1990, and refined by Curtis, October 1990 as LambdaMOO
Kotter, Negotiation of Meaning and Codeswitching in Online Tandems
Current Virtual Worlds

Cornell’s SciFair
Margaret Corbit
corbimt@tc.cornell.edu

Club Penguin

There

vPMR

Gaia

Whyville
Second Life Growth

First Residents, 2002

1 Million Registered Users, October 2006

5 Million Registered Users, 3/26/07

Open letter from 1500 leading residents citing instability issues, bugs etc, 5/1/07

For SL history visit the…

SL History Wiki http://dwellonit.blogspot.com/search/label/statistics
Last Month’s Map
Corporate Experimentation
University Experimentation
Lowest Hanging Fruit

• Lectures
• Panels
• Discussions
• Streamed Performance
Lectures

Howard Rheingold, Author of On-Line Community and Smart Mobs visits the NMC Campus

Image: NMC Campus Observer
Panels

Image: NMC Campus Observer
Discussions

Image: NMC Campus Observer
Streamed Performance

Image: NMC Campus Observer
Pros

- Relatively easy to accomplish
- Can be especially useful if your institution doesn’t have Breeze/Connect or other real-time meeting/conferencing tools
- Coolness Factor
- “Engagement”
- Stickiness??

Cons

- Must be registered user, helps to have familiarity with SL already
- Significant machine/connection overhead
- Currently text-based environment for discussion
More Active Learning

- “Museum Exhibits”
- Simulations
- Theater/Live Action Role Playing
- 3D Graphics Creation
- Machinama Animation
- Computer Science/Programming
- Studies and Research on Virtual Worlds
ME1: Aura Lily’s Egyptian Work
ME2: International Space Flight Museum
Simulation/Virtualization

- Weather Virtualization Map – live weather patterns
- Weather Balloon ride
- Virtual Hurricane Hunter
- Tsunami Simulation
- Under-water Guided Tour through different coastal regions
- Glacier Simulation
Theater and Role Playing

Ars Digita Movement Workshop, NMC Campus
3D Graphics Creation

Images from James Wagner Au’s

“-- AND HE REZZED A CROOKED HOUSE”
Machinama

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“Beginning”
Computer Programming

Linden Scripting Language

Key Pad Door

This keypad Door is composed of 3 scripts, one for the door, one for the keypad, and one for each keypad button. Below is the script for the button:
Put this script in each button. Make 11 buttons and name them the following: "Reset","Enter", and the numbers 1-9.

```lsl
//Button Script
default
touch_start(integer total_number)
{
    l1 MESAGELinked(LINE_ROOT,1,1,SetObjectName(),NULL_KEY);
}
```
Advanced Computer Programming
Areas for Study and Research on Virtual Worlds

• Social Interaction
• Social Media
• Branding
• Business Models
• Psychology
• Emergent Behavior

Educational Strategies
Art and Expression
Performance
Communication
The list goes on and on…
New Media Consortium Campus
A Lot of Growth!!!
The Conference Marathon!

reported by CDB Barkley (aka Alan Levine) May 26th, 2007

For some folks, mainly the conference organizers and workers, the Second Life best Practices in Education Conference was a 24 hour sprint marathon. There were so many excellent sessions and discussions, and they seemed to just zoom on by.

Early reports suggest there were visits by some 800-900 unique avatars.