

Emerging Web Applications

Social Networking And Collaborative Content

Introduction

This module explores the emergence of modern web applications and idioms, including collaborative content, online journaling, and social networking. You will explore modern trends and usage patterns of the web by:

1. building a collaborative website exploring an emerging web application topic, and
2. reading, analyzing, and critiquing the websites constructed by your classmates.

Our primary concern in this module is the *impact* and *implications* of the emerging use of technology. It is the *use* of the technology, and not the technology itself, that is of interest here. In other words, we are interested in the technology only insofar as it promotes or enables novel patterns of interaction and communication.

You will work on this module in parallel with the other modules of this course. Because the module involves the creation of a sizable web site, it requires a significant amount of effort on your part to complete and includes several intermediate milestones to keep you on track. You will build the web site with a team of your classmates using newsgroups, wikis, and messaging tools to communicate with your team and coordinate the development of the site.

Module Topics

You will select from one of the following emerging web application topics:

- wiki media and collaborative web applications
- social networking applications
- blogs and online journaling
- online interactive media
- online multiplayer gaming

The instructor may consider focused proposals for alternate topics.

Site Content

Your collaborative web site should address the following major questions and themes:

- introduce the development: what is it, why is it interesting, what is the history of the development
- survey the major developments that led to the development
- survey the current state of the development
- what is interesting about the development? Is the innovation primarily technological, social, political, moral?
- what is novel about the development? How does this development effect our perception and use of existing technology?
- what is the impact of the development? Is it widespread or confined to a niche? How has the development affected other areas or applications on web?
- how will the development evolve and grow? Is it a fad or will it remain an integral part of present and future developments? How will it shape the evolution of other web applications and the web as a whole?

Your site should leverage the power and unique features available with online content delivery, which will involve including some or all of:

- hyperlinked documents
- images and graphics
- podcasts and screencasts
- interactive hands-on tutorials
- creative integration of multimedia

Tasks

1. **Choose a topic:** Look over the topic intro pages on the course web site. Select a topic and add yourself to the people list for that project.
The instructor reserves the right to split or reorganize teams based on class interest.
2. **Wiki cheat sheet:** Research and create a “cheat sheet” with your team that documents
 - how to edit wiki pages and save changes
 - how to upload and attach files
 - the wiki formatting commands you will need
 - how to view page history, see who changed what, and go back to earlier versions of a page
3. **Personal page:** Individually create a personal bio page including academic and personal interests, pictures, etc.

4. **Project plan:** as a team, create a project plan page that documents
 - project vision
 - team organization: roles and responsibilities, milestones, progress assessment
 - target audience
 - delivery emphasis: level of interactivity, media types employed, desired style
5. **Initial Organization And Design:** main site organization established and implemented using placeholder pages, initial visual and conceptual design complete
6. **Complete Site Draft 1**
7. **Complete Site Draft 2**
8. **Finish Site**

Project Requirements

- the site must be original work; you can use external sources but must demonstrate originality in the site organization, summarization, synthesis, design, integration, etc.
- collaboration: the site must be a cooperative effort from all team members
- external sources must be properly cited: no plagiarism