

Reflection: Using Adobe Connect in an educational setting

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Adobe Connect gives us a peek at what the meetings and classrooms of the future may be like. They will be online, collaborative, multimedia discussions with the participants scattered in various locations as far as the other side of the world. They will include instant sharing of data, photos, documents... everything one could do in a face-to-face meeting (with the added benefit of tools that only technology can provide). Because of its web-based nature, participants could be on their computer, laptop, cell phone, or even in front of their television.

Although the setup was arduous (because I have not used a web cam in the past), as computers and other devices roll out built and ready for this type of thing, setup will not be an issue in the future. As connection speeds improve and broadband becomes more prevalent, future meetings will see less and less of the lag issues we experienced during our online session. I can see a future where these tools are integrated with other Web 2.0 tools like Google Translate to enable seamless cross-language meetings and Google Docs to enable active collaboration while talking with a group of contributors.

In the classroom, the applications for distance learning are readily apparent. Teachers can deliver a multimedia-rich lesson to students who can actively participate and join in. I see the potential to integrate many of our "smartboard" tools into an interface like this, allowing teachers to teach just as they would in a classroom setting. Students who are unable to attend a traditional school setting would be able to engage in the same lessons as their peers.

This is a technology to keep an eye on. I have a feeling we've only seen the beginning.