

## **Reflection: Using Online Presentation Tools in an educational setting**

Joe Tompkins

MEDT 7462- Module 9

Many of the Web 2.0 tools I've practiced with and reflected on up to this point have been tools integrated into Google. While I know that many of these tools originated from various other services before being pulled under the Google "umbrella" of apps, all of them have been given the "Google treatment" to polish their interface and functionality. As such, they all have shared a similar level of quality that is rarely associated with free tools.

Unfortunately, my experience with the slideshare.net website reminded me that Google offers the exceptions to the rule and in many cases, the old adage still holds true: You get what you pay for.

The slideshare website was a muddled mess of ads and desperate pleas to pay for a "pro account". Once I trudged through the process of creating a free account and began looking for the tools to create an online slideshow presentation, I was stymied by the cluttered interface, ambiguous menus, and links that took me in circles. I was instantly wishing for the clean and intuitive bliss of Google Docs again.

Despite my less-than-favorable experience with slideshare, I can see some clear advantages to an online presentation-sharing service. Using the electronic whiteboard, many teachers use PowerPoint to create lectures and lessons. A collaborative online repository would give them a place to:

- Find new lessons
- Upload/store their own lessons
- Share their lessons with other teachers (whether next door or across the world)

- Allow students to access and review lessons (for missed classes or for studying)

Students are creating PowerPoints these days in elementary school and by the time they reach the upper grades they are more proficient than the average adult. This is their baseline tool for a "presentation" and its use is second nature to them. Using a website that lets them publish and collaborate on their presentations is a great way to extend their knowledge and integrate Web 2.0 technology.