



E-learning in Bangladesh

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The use of technology in the field of education is becoming indispensable worldwide. The effectiveness of using e-learning tools in the classroom has been studied and proved time and time again.

Studies suggest that effective learning occurs when the senses are stimulated. By stimulating the senses, especially the visual sense, learning can be enhanced. It is further suggested that if multiple senses are stimulated, greater learning takes place. Stimulation through the senses is achieved through a greater variety of colours, volume levels, strong statements, facts presented visually, use of a variety of techniques and media. What better way to tingle multiple senses of a student than using technology, especially information technology?

Information technology is capable of capturing a student's attention through visual representation of concepts taught, sounds, moving pictures as well as interactive activities. A student may sleep through a lecture on the human digestive system. But if he can see visually how the digestive system works, actually see animations of the food moving through the body, listen to the relevant sounds and then do an interactive activity related to the topic, he will find it worth his interest.

As a corollary of information technology comes the internet a worldwide repository of interlinked information from a sea of sources. The use of technologies such as the internet as a teaching tool in schools is not the issue now since it is pervasively used. Rather, the issue is how to effectively employ such technologies and harness fully the new opportunities created by them to promote positive student learning experiences.

The internet basically provides three basic types of tools in the education domain tools for research, tools for communication and tools for construction.

In providing tools for construction, the internet promotes learning by scaffolding varieties of authentic learning activities for students.

Educational institutions today understand this and are already making use of this func-



tional medium in various aspects of their day-to-day activities. From classroom teaching, assigning homework, assessing students and delivering results, technology, and more importantly the internet, is being embedded into the very core of the educational system.

In Bangladesh, however, the use of internet among students is limited to social networking and entertainment. The reason being, lack of appropriate content from the field of education and absence of research based activities and assignments from schools. Inquisitive students often feel lost in the humongous sea of information available on the internet. If they could find something that was close to their school syllabus, they could find it useful and relevant to them.

The Daily Star and Team Creative have jointly launched the country's first assessment website for school students called champs21.com to engage the Bangladeshi students in using the internet constructively and for education purposes. Russel T Ahmed, CEO of Team Creative says, "Our next genera-

tion -- our students will have to face the global competition eventually, since children of their generation in the developed countries are already using technology in their learning process. We need to prepare these students appropriately to face and come out successful in this competition."

Champs21 is a web-based assessment service for students from Classes 3 to 10 in mathematics and science. Students can take chapter-based and term-based tests throughout the whole session/year following school curriculum. The application scalability aims at drilling down conceptual comprehension as well as functional & relative clarity amongst students. This helps students to assess their strengths and weaknesses, decide which topics need more attention and track their progress.

More varieties of such interactive websites need to be initiated to cater to the needs of our Bangladeshi students, so that they can use the internet more constructively for their personal and holistic development.

SofExpo begins Feb 1

IT.TELECOM DESK

The biggest ICT exposition of the country 'BASIS SoftExpo 2011' will begin on February 1 at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the capital, says a press release.

The five-day-long SoftExpo has been organised by Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS), the apex body of the software industry and ITES based services.

Organisers are expecting participation of over 50,000 visitors in the gala ICT event that has over 100 exhibitors including software and ITES (IT Enabled Services) companies, e-Governance solution providers, mobile content and application developers, communication solution providers, e-commerce portals, IT training institutes and outsourcing companies.

Expressing his satisfaction with the arrangement of the exhibition, BASIS President Mahub Zaman said that this year's exposition will outshine all the previous expositions. Moreover foreign investors will get fair scopes to consider various business aspects for bilateral contract with the local ICT based companies, he also added. 15 IT companies from Europe are expected to visit the exposition to invest in Bangladesh's software sector.

Convener of the fair AKM Fahim Mashroor said the exposition will

focus on youths.

There will be 'IT Job Fair' in this year's exposition. Renowned companies are expected to offer jobs for the youths.

The expo has been categorised in seven zones- Business Software zone, e-Commerce zone, e-Governance zone, Communication zone, Mobile Application zone, Multimedia & Animation zone and Outsourcing zone. Beside these, there will be showcase of prospective projects of IT enabled service companies.

During the five-day expo seminars and business sessions participated by key decision makers of the country and renowned experts from home and abroad will be held.

Technical sessions on emerging technology trends will also take place

during the five-day exhibition. The sessions will be on Application Development in mobile platform (Android and iPhone) on February 1; Application Development in Apple's mobile platform on 2nd February; Application Development in Android on 3rd February; Agile and Kanban on February 4; Unit testing in PHP and Web Security on February 4; Designing user experience and Developing application on the cloud on February 5th.

The five-day-long BASIS SoftExpo 2011 will remain open from 11:00am to 8:00pm. The entry fee has been set at Tk 20.

BASIS SOFT EXPO 2011

February 01-05, 2011



Facebook to let advertisers republish user posts

AP, New York

Facebook users who check in to a store or click the "like" button for a brand may soon find those actions retransmitted on their friends' pages as a "Sponsored Story" paid for by advertisers.

Currently there is no way for users to decline this feature.

Facebook says this lets advertisers promote word-of-mouth recommendations that people already made on the site. They play up things people do on the site that might get lost in the mass of links, photos, status updates and other content users share on the world's largest social network.



The new, promoted posts would keep the same privacy setting that the original posting had. So if you limit your check-ins to a specific group of friends, only these same friends would see the "Sponsored Story" version later.

The promoted content will appear on the right side of users' home pages, not in their main news feed. That's

where regular ads, friend requests and other content are located.

Involving users in advertisements without their consent has been a thorny issue for Facebook. Marc Rotenberg, executive director of the Electronic Privacy Information Center, said in this case the company is making money off a person's name or likeness without

their consent. He calls it "subtle and misleading" and says users should object.

Twitter already offers advertisers something similar, called "promoted tweets." These are Twitter posts paid for by advertisers to show up in search results and on top of popular topic lists on the site. But while Twitter's ads are written by the companies that pay for them, Facebook's sponsored stories are created by users.

Both represent an effort to make advertisements more akin to what people are already experiencing on the site instead of putting up virtual billboards that users might ignore or find tacky.

10 billionth download for Apple's App Store

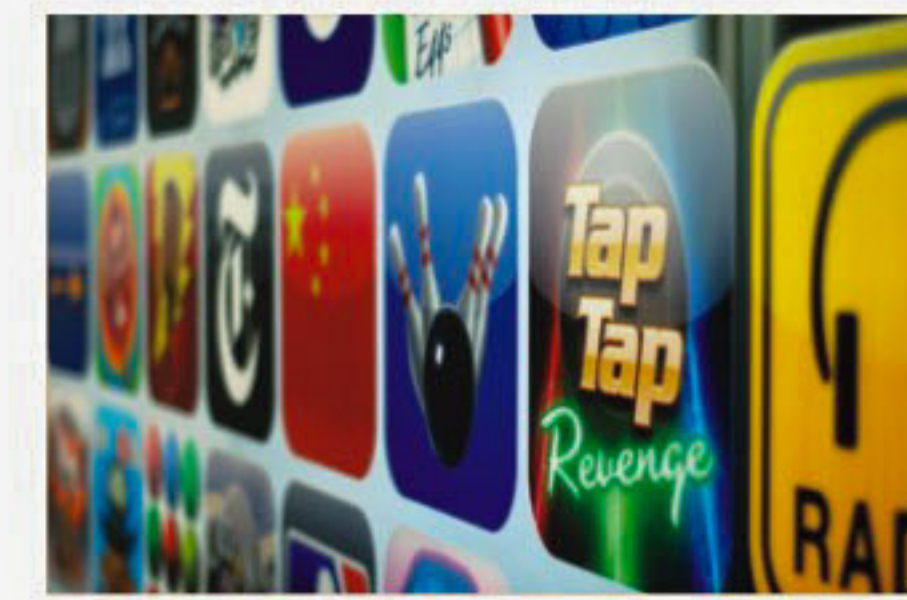
AFP, Washington

Apple's App Store hit 10 billion downloads on Saturday, the California gadget-maker announced.

"Thank you. Ten billion times. The App Store has reached 10 billion downloads. Thanks for getting us there," Apple said in a message on its website.

The App Store offers more than 300,000 free and paid mini-programs known as applications, or apps, for Apple's popular iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch.

The success of Apple's App Store has spawned rivals BlackBerry, Google, which is the developer of the Android mobile operating system, and others to launch



their own online app stores.

Apple reported a record quarterly net profit of \$6 billion on Tuesday, a day after the company's iconic chief executive, Steve Jobs, announced he is going on medical leave.



TECHPHOTO

2000 Years of Computing

Keyboard, wires and switches of vintage supercomputer and the Reeves electronic analog computer are seen while visitors look at a vintage Sage computer and a vintage IBM 360 computer and accessories at the Computer History Museum in California. After a two year, \$19 million renovation, Museum re-opened its doors with a new 25,000 square foot exhibit called Revolution: The First 2000 Years of Computing. The exhibit features over 1,000 artifacts and 100 multimedia stations that explore every major aspect of the history of computing, from the abacus to the smart phone, and every step in between.

PHOTO: AFP

Firefox, Google Chrome adding DO NOT TRACK tools

AP, New York

The Firefox and Google Chrome browsers are getting tools to help users block advertisers from collecting information about them.

Alex Fowler, a technology and privacy officer for Firefox maker Mozilla, said the "Do Not Track" tool will be the first in a series of steps designed to guard privacy. He didn't say when the tool will be available.

Google Chrome users can now download a browser plug-in that blocks advertisers but only from ad networks that already let people decline personalised, targeted ads. According to Google Inc., these include the top 15 advertising networks, as rated by the



research group comScore, a group that includes AOL Inc., Yahoo Inc. and Google itself.

The next version of Microsoft Corp.'s Internet Explorer browser, which is still being developed, will include a similar feature, though people will have to create or find their own lists of sites they want to block.

Google and Mozilla, however, are developing tracking-protection tools that will work automatically once people decide to turn on that privacy feature, that is.

Microsoft, Google and Mozilla's promises of stronger privacy comes on the heels of government complaints that online advertisers are able to collect too much data about people in their quest to target ads.

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