


Social Networking, Text Messaging and Web Technologies to Support Web-based Teaching and Learning


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 Washington DC, July 14 - 16



University of Texas Pan American



- Located in deep South Texas. UTPA was founded in 1927 and has grown to the 10th largest University in Texas.
 - Students: ~17,539
 - Faculty: 819
 - Demographics: 87% Hispanic
 - 2nd in nation in Bachelors Degrees awarded to Hispanic students
 - 4th in nation in Masters Degrees awarded to Hispanic students



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About COLT²

- The Center for Online Learning, Teaching and Technology (COLT²)
 - Academic support unit under the Division of Academic Affairs to facilitate Online Learning and Technology in the curriculum at UTPA
 - Blackboard CE 8
 - 9 Full Time Employees
 - Instructional Design and Development
 - Instructional Technology / Information Technology
 - Technical Support
 - 10 Part Time Student/Work-study Employees

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What will you learn in this session?

- A way to leverage and manage popular Web 2.0 technologies to provide improved access to support resources for faculty and students
- A way to manage social networking sites through third party open-source applications such as twitterfeed, blogCFC and hello.txt
- A viable support strategy to communicate and assist faculty and students using the institution's LMS

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Reasons & Circumstances

- Number of users increasing while number of resources available stays the same
- Need for improved access to support resources
- Leverage technologies commonly used by traditional users (primarily students)
 - Many students have 'smart' mobile devices
 - Students are always on Social sites
 - Reach out to students in a way relevant to them
- Improve and increase the collection of data for reporting and mining purposes
- Update outdated support infrastructure (software and hardware)

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Before Web 2.0

- Online Helpdesk
 - v1 created in 2000
 - Built on ColdFusion 5
 - Upgraded to CF 7 (2006)
 - MS Access Database
 - No Framework Implementation
 - Difficult to Maintain
- Email support
 - no reliable way to track this
- Phone support
 - no reliable way to track this
- Walk-ins
 - no reliable way to track this



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Helpdesk v2.0x (Portal) cont...

- Shadowbox
 - Used for links on Template
- FAQ Rating System
 - Helpful FAQs Listed
- FAQ Search
 - By Keyword
 - By Category
- Blog News Integrated
- SMS capable
- Twitter API Integration
 - Follow us on Twitter



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Helpdesk v2.0x (Walk-ins)

- Spry not 100% cross browser compatible
 - Small issues with Safari
- Migrate older code Spry to jQuery
 - Will ensure 100% browser compatibility
- Walk-ins Support Queue
 - TV Displays
- Student tickets are now logged
 - Calls
 - Walk-ins
 - Web



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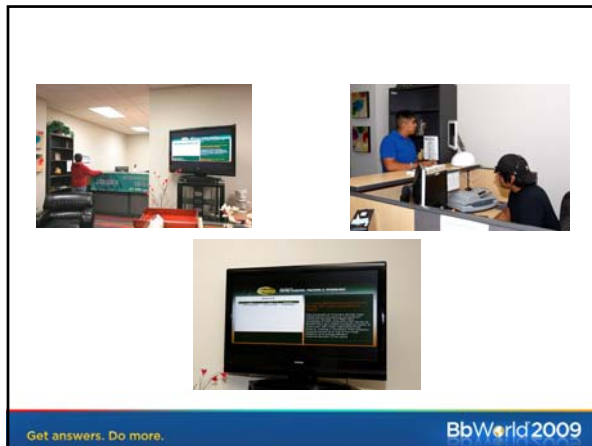
Helpdesk v2.0x (Walk-ins) cont...

- Faculty Requests
 - Logged
 - Developer Notified
- GROWL Notifications
 - Based on Developer Selected
- LDAP/OID
 - Used to gather Student/Faculty Info
- Flash Forms



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Helpdesk v2.0x (Support Staff)

- Helpdesk Technician App v2.02
 - Self Assign web-tickets
- Spry Framework v1.6.1
- Adobe AIR
- Updates
 - TV Display(s)
 - SMS Updates (If requested)
 - Sends Ticket Update via Email
- Self Managed Helpdesk

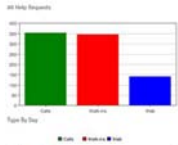
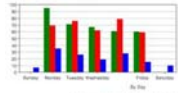
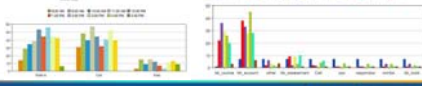
Number	User/Owner	Open Since	Priority
1	Customer Support	1/1/2009	Low

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Helpdesk v2.0x (Administration)

- Helpdesk Admin V2.01
- More in-depth Reporting
 - Average Turn around time
 - Broken down by day
 - By help type
- Easier to manage
 - Employees
 - FAQs/Templates
- ColdFusion 8 RTE
 - Based on the FCKeditor (Rich Text Editor)
- Spry Framework v1.6.1

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COLT² - Blog

- Based on blogCFC
 - Written by Ray Camden
 - Open Source
- Updates pushed from Blog
 - Emails
 - Twitter/Facebook
- RSS Feeds
 - Helpdesk Homepage
 - Different Topics



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Life after Web 2.0

- Web 2.0 Technologies being implemented
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - SMS (Short Message Service)
- How did we implement?
 - Revamp in-house Helpdesk application
 - New procedures
 - How students/faculty members sign in
 - New Helpdesk features
 - Helpdesk AIR Application
 - How employees interact with student tickets



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http://twitter.com/utpa_coltt



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Open Source Tools

- twitterfeed
 - Uses RSS Feed
 - From COLT Blog
 - Half hour updates
 - Updates hello.txt
 - FREE
- hello.txt
 - Updates Twitter
 - Updates Facebook
 - Reachable from MSN
 - Message = POST to both
 - FREE



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Other Web 2.0 Technologies

- Mash-ups
 - Campus Map
- Google Apps
- YouTube Channel
- Campus wide notifications
 - Bronx Alerts (SMS)
- RSS Feeds
 - blogCFC
- Vanity URLs
- Ajax
 - jQuery (De facto Standard)
- Social Sites
 - Facebook
 - MySpace
 - Twitter



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