

Using Wiki to Explore the Leisure Service Delivery Systems

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Introduction

According to Prensky (2001), "Our students have changed radically. Today's students are no longer the people our educational system was designed to teach." The students in Recreation programs today have grown up in a digital age. Because of their experience with video games, instant messaging, cell phones and the internet, students have developed different brain structures and different thought patterns. Dr. Bruce D Berry of Baylor college of Medicine as quoted in Prensky (2001) "it is likely that our students' brains have physically changed" as a result of how they grew up. The new Millennium learners are technologically literate, prefer group work, and are involved in many extra curricular activities. (Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005) With these characteristics in mind a student-centered project was developed using wiki technology that allows students to write and edit group work in an asynchronous manner. It also allows the professor to track each change. The Wiki project was implemented as a means to explore the leisure service field while fostering cooperation and incorporating writing into the curriculum in an introductory recreation class.

Wiki

A Wiki is a web page that is editable by users. It is a fast way of keeping content current. Wikis are used in a variety of contexts, most notably in the online resource *Wikipedia*. Anytime there is a group of people with expertise on a topic who want to be able to share that expertise with each other, a Wiki is an attractive solution. Although not experts, the students in this class were able to build expertise in the leisure service field in a cooperative student-centered manner through this project.

The Project

A Wiki was set up in *wikispaces*. A page was dedicated to each group of five students. Each group had layers of pages for their writing project. A page was dedicated to each of the major delivery systems (i.e. government, non profit, commercial, armed forces, campus recreation, employee recreation, private membership, therapeutic recreation, sport and tourism). This wiki is built in six weeks of group assignments. Each week had a three part assignment. This assignment is as follows:

Week 1:

- A. Find Government agencies (Federal, State, and Local) in Missouri and southern Illinois.
- B. Each member of your group must report on six different agencies (two federal, two state, two local) by including basic information. Basic information includes the name of the agency, the address, and the phone number or web site.
- C. Each member of your group will add to the some one else's previous posts by adding a summary (6 summaries). The summary includes mission, population served, programs, amenities and the name of the director, superintendent or someone in a leadership role. You may not add to your original posts.

Week 2:

- A. Find Non-Profits and Commercial agencies in Missouri and southern Illinois
- B. Each member will find and two youth serving non-profit and two commercial agencies. Include the basic information as above.
- C. Each member of your group will add to the some one else's previous posts by adding a summary (4 summaries). You may not add to your original posts.

Week 3:

- A. Find specialized leisure service organizations (therapeutic, campus, employee, private membership, armed forces)in Missouri and southern Illinois.
- B. Each member will find and one agency from each of the specialized leisure service organizations and post basic information.
- C. Each member of your group will add to the some one else's previous posts by adding a summary (5 summaries). You may not add to your original posts.

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Week 4:

- A. Find sports and tourism delivery systems in Missouri and southern Illinois.
- B. Each member will find and two sports and two tourism agencies. Include the basic information as above.
- C. Each member of your group will add to the some one else's previous posts by adding a summary (4 summaries). You may not add to your original posts.

Week 5: Each group should come up with a list of interview questions that will help you understand the job of the individual you are interviewing and or the nature of the organization. Each member should interview one person from each week's category. It should be from one of your original posts. It may be a phone interview and it should last about 10 minutes. The only 2 questions that I require you to ask is "What type of learning experiences or practical experiences does one need to be successful in the job that you do?" and "Why is your agency important to the people you serve"? As a suggestion, you should try to find out the different types of jobs in this agency and if they take interns. You should type the questions and the corresponding answer and post the interview on the wiki.

Week 6: Each member will add to the already posted summaries and edit all of their original posts for accuracy and completeness. As a final reflection assignment students were individually asked to write and summary of what they had learned about the opportunities for recreation in Missouri and Southern Illinois.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this assignment, students learned detailed information about recreation and leisure service providers regionally. They also learned to be a responsible team member through cooperation. Students learned technical computer skills, internet and research skills, and interviewing skills while writing and working cooperatively.

Recommendations for use of Wiki

As a result of this activity, students were able to explore leisure service delivery systems in a detailed and meaningful way. They were able to work cooperatively in a group asynchronously. This project can be used any time group work and cooperation are required to allow students to explore any topic.

References

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