

M-learning education trends are popular in Students through iPod

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Abstract:

This paper examines popularity of i-pod mobile phones which has been increased in the whole world especially in Saudi Arabia. Most of the students are dependent on mobile phone and I-pod is too much popular in new generation.

In my preliminary research we found students were more willing to come to school, did more homework and used their iPod's more than laptops or desktop computers. Students expect a learning environment that accommodates a mobile lifestyle, integrates today's digital tools, adapts to individual learning style & encourages collaboration & team work. Every student is more comfortable to learn lectures at home or workplace through i-pod mobile phones like Samsung galaxy, PDA's and many more. These devices provides mobilized environment and have lead to the development of a new field of research which is known as m-learning.

This paper highlights the uses of i-pod in our education system and evaluates the strength and limitations of m-learning using i-pod.

Keywords: M-Learning, E-Learning, iPod, podcasting,i-tunes,PDA

I. INTRODUCTION

Universities have over the past few years begun either to use the Internet to enhance classroom learning by providing online access to lecture notes, assignments and additional course related resources or as a medium for facilitating virtual classrooms. With the virtual classroom it is now possible for the students to attend and participate in lectures from a remote location. In addition to the distance learning programs provided by the traditional brick and mortar universities, we now have virtual universities. These virtual universities exist online and allow students to enroll in online degree programs. Some of these programs allow students to adjust the pace of their courses according to their comfort and time constraints.

The popularity of such classroom learning highlights the importance of flexibility in the education system. The use of mobile devices in education has extended the idea of flexibility to new frontiers. M-learning concerns the issue of incorporating these devices into the existing web-based educational framework.

The major incentive for using mobile devices for educational purposes is their extensive penetration. Moreover, the advances of the features of these devices such as multimedia support, access to the Internet, increase of storage capacity, Bluetooth compatibility and better resolution have enabled them to be used as an information dissemination and learning tool. However, mobile devices have certain limitations, including low screen resolutions, small keyboards, and limited processing capability that has limited their widespread acceptance in the context.

Another form of technology that is being paid much attention is the use of Apple's iPod and podcasting in education. Podcasting is the method of distributing music files and videos over the Internet using RSS feeds. Podcasting originated with the increase in popularity of iPods and was primarily used for downloading music using iTunes or similar applications. Podcasting is now gaining impetus in the field of education and is being used in the distribution of lectures and other study materials.

II. EXISTING SCENARIO

The use of iPod devices in education is a relatively new concept. Literatures [1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6] discuss the efforts taken by various academic and non-academic organizations to incorporate iPod learning tools into the existing educational framework. Some of the possible uses of these devices are accessing lectures notes over the iPod equipment, taking tutorials and quizzes, participating in group discussions, information sharing among students and replying to discussion threads. In addition, iPods devices are being successfully used enhance individual learning experiences through quick access to reference books and dictionaries, language translations and note taking.

The two features that most contribute to the success of iPod devices among students are mobility and flexibility.

A study of students' perspective on the use of iPods device as a learning tool indicated that 87 percent of the market share, the iPod has already proven its popularity with students. Apple's iPod University lets professors make lectures available to students for free download. The iPod's many add-ons increase its functionality, and it's great for students on the go. It appeals to digital natives' need for immediacy of information. However if you consider the cost of iPod may be affordable for all students.

However, certain challenges need to be addressed before mobile devices can be widely used in individual learning. These devices have lower screen resolution than personal computers, which makes reading text on a small screen difficult. The limited processing and storage capabilities also act as a limiting factor in large-scale deployment of these devices for educational purposes. Moreover, the current market is teeming with a large variety of mobile equipment with varying configurations and features. Due to this diversity, deployment of applications over mobile devices has become difficult.

To make m-learning popular, there is a need to develop an architecture that can address two main concerns- namely, integration of mobile devices with already existing educational tools and establishment of mechanism that can bypass the limitations of size, capability and bandwidth associated with mobile devices. Many solutions have been proposed for such integration of mobile devices to the already established educational framework. One such proposed architecture is the mobile Learning Management System [8]. The mLMS involves the implementation of components that enable mobile devices to function over the traditional eLearning system. This architecture uses modules that determine the factors affecting the learning system and, on the basis of this knowledge provide mechanisms to present contents over the mobile devices and deal with users' occasional loss in connectivity.

III. I-PODS MOBILE IN EDUCATION

As research into ways to support learning through mobile devices continues, new alternatives are being experimented with. The latest breakthrough is the use of Apple's i-Pod in education. Ever since its release in 2001, i-Pod has been very popular as a digital music player. In an attempt to support mobile learning through iPods, Apple recently launched a variant of iTunes the iTune U. iTune U provides universities with free hosting capability for the lecture podcast. Students can be subscribing to iTune U and remotely download these lecture, which can later, either be synchronized to an iPod or burned to a CD. The advantage of using iTune U is that it is based on the concept of RSS feeds, which enables automatic download of any update to the lecture content after it is posted on iTunes U [10].

The new generation video iPods it is possible to provide both video and audio contents to these mobilized students. Students can download lectures to their iPods or even listen to them using traditional media players on personal computers and laptops.

The use of iPods provides a highly adaptive learning process. Students can download and re-visit the lectures later, or learn new material convenient times such as while waiting for a bus in the car or while walking down the street. Unlike PDA's and mobile.

Phones, iPods were initially designed as music players, so they do not support text entry through a keyboard. Hence, learning through iPods is based on listening and seeing. iPods have been successfully used in teaching foreign languages and music, history, and social sciences, as well as acting as a teaching aid in medicine, science and mathematics.

The advantages of using an iPod Touch in the class room for education:

iPod Touch in the classroom has many advantages. They are cost efficient, space saving, and easy to use. Student motivation is high when using these devices and the number of apps for educational use is on the rise. Following are the main advantages:

Priceless Portability:

The storage space required for 25 iPod Touches is significantly less than needed for 25 notebooks, or 25 laptops. They also take up less desk space. Students can have textbooks and notebooks out while using their iPod Touch, store them temporarily in a desk, or use them in any room of your building with ease.

Ease of use:

The touch screen interface of the iPod Touch is very user-friendly, and can quickly be learned by even the youngest students. It is intuitive, responsive, and highly motivating. The tactile experience that the device offers means that it will work well with visual and kinesthetic learners. Photos, videos and music can all be stored and played back with just a few taps on the screen, and the ability to return to the home screen at any time helps students instantly feel at ease with the user interface of the iPod Touch.

Versatility:

The iPod Touch is a very versatile device.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The rise in the use of mobile devices among students has motivated universities and colleges all over the world to consider the use of mobile devices as an educational tool. The growing popularity of m-Learning has proved that mobile devices are more than just communication equipment. With appropriate integration with the eLearning system, mobile devices can be a powerful and economical solution to a range of educational challenges. iPod learning programs aim to provide a flexible and adaptive learning environment and mobile devices extend these features.

M-learning will evolve along with improvements in mobile technology and equipment. However, for widespread acceptance of this technology in mobile learning there is a need for the development of a robust architecture supported by mobile devices of varying capabilities and features. In addition, this architecture should be able to deliver context-sensitive and timely information to and from the mobile devices.

The increasing success of iPods in education indicates the growing demand for simplicity and flexibility in the learning environment. The use of iPods in mobile learning will be particularly helpful for adult education, where ease of use is a desirable feature. Podcasts are easy to develop and with iTunes U distribution of these will become cost effective. Moreover, iPods do not have a continuous direct connection to the Internet, which is both a desirable feature and limitation. As iPods do not have an “always on” connection to the Internet, the threat of direct worms and virus attacks is minimized. However, this lack of connectivity to the Internet limits the usage of iPods as compared to PDS's and mobile phones.

The growing popularity of iPods has added an additional channel to increase m-Learning education.

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