Professional Networking for Chicago Public School Teachers

IPRO 320
Spring 2008
INTRODUCTION

- Chicago Public Schools: More than 600 schools and 25,000 teachers

- Teacher conferences and professional development seminars
  - Time consuming and requires a good deal of planning
BIG PROBLEM

- CPS teachers pressured to meet standardized test requirements
  - Lack of resources
  - Under-prepared students
  - Time constraints

- CPS teachers lack a way to communicate that is:
  - Simple
  - Shareable
  - Unmonitored
OUR CHALLENGE

- Social network that addresses teachers' needs
  - Examine existing solutions
    - Identify best practices
  - Incorporate findings from surveys and interviews
ALTERNATE SOLUTIONS

- Discovery Educator Network
  - Digital resources for teachers and students
  - Educator resources' page
  - Advance this concept with wiki-style edits and searchability
ALTERNATE SOLUTIONS, CONTD.

- First Class (CPS)
  - E-mail and collaboration tool used by CPS
  - Moderated by CPS administrators
  - Incorporate forum concept
GOALS: Focus Groups Team

- Primary goal:
  - Assess target audience’s interest
- Goals
  - Email teachers
  - 100 online surveys
  - Letters to teachers
  - 10 phone interviews
**SURVEYS**

- Paper surveys were not feasible
  - Created online survey

- Distributed through FirstClass
  - Low responses on surveys

- 115 responses
SURVEY RESULTS: Internet Use

Internet for work

- multiple times a day: 80%
- daily: 20%
- more than once a week: 10%
- when absolutely necessary: 0%
SURVEY RESULTS

Best Sources of Information

- Internet: 3.5
- Professional Conferences: 3.0
- Workshops: 2.5
- Staff Meetings: 2.0
TEACHER INTERVIEWS

- Difficult to work around teachers’ schedules
- Conducted phone interviews
  - Had them register onto site
  - Asked them to edit a Wiki and post on the forum
- Relayed teachers results to Development team
GOALS: Development Team

- Primary goal:
  - Meet the needs to audience

- Implementation
  - Fully functional site
    - Front page
    - Wiki
    - Forum
  - Article Base
**METHODS: Development Team**

- Put together a prototype web page with a Wiki, Forum, and FAQ features
- Created a logo and implemented a new front page layout
- Made changes to site after the team and teachers put forth their opinions
OBSTACLES: Development Team

- Visual appearance of front page
- User registration
- Hosting issues
ALTERNATE APPROACHES:
Development Team

- New logo and colors
FUTURE GOALS

- Register active users
- Increase use of wiki and forums
- Secure funding
- Expand to serve non-CPS teachers and non-high school teachers
Questions?