Managing Course Content Using a "Personal Repository"

Dr. Rick Jerz
The University of Iowa

Managing Internet-Based Resources in Moodle

- Create a **URL link** to them in Moodle

- Examples
  - Wikipedia
  - YouTube
  - Amazon

Managing Your Own Resources in Moodle

- Example: An **Excel** file

- Example: A "Page" resource

Problems with this Approach

- Managing these resources is not so easy

- Changing Excel file
  - Download it
  - Edit it
  - Delete the old
  - Upload the new

- Changing Page contents
  - Must be connected (on the Internet)

4   © 2018 rjerz.com

Resource Management

- Easier on my own computer

- Excellent file and folder management tools
  - Easy naming and rename of files
  - Easy folder management
  - Faster
  - Much more control

5   © 2018 rjerz.com

Creating Content

- Moodle's editors
  - ATTO
  - TinyMCE

  - Okay, but not robust

- Computer-based editors (Dreamweaver)
  - Very robust

  - Styles
  - Templates
  - CSS

6   © 2018 rjerz.com

Best of Both Worlds?

- Advantage of using one's computer
- Off-line editing

- Getting computer files into Moodle

- Easy to learn
- Inexpensive

© 2018 rjerz.com

"Personal Repository"

- A personal website outside of Moodle

- Don't be alarmed!
  - Wikipedia, YouTube, Amazon are outside of Moodle
  - On a website!

© 2018 rjerz.com

How?

- Maybe...
  - Google Docs
  - DropBox
  - MS OneDrive

- Problem: Need a URL that when clicked, it simply opens
- No login credentials to get to content

- A website provides clean URLs that open

© 2018 rjerz.com

Rick's Solution

- Carefully organize files on computer
- c/analytics/Excel/Excel-01

- Example

10
© 2018 rjerz.com

Two Additional Requirements

- A website
  - Some school IT departments provide this for free
  - Or you can buy your own for around $5US/month

- FTP software
  - Many products, both free and purchased
  - I like Dreamweaver, it has both FTP and a web page editor

11
© 2018 rjerz.com

How is Excel-01 Made Available?

- On computer:
  c/analytics/Excel/Excel-01.xlsx

- As seen in Dreamweaver:
  c/analytics/Excel/Excel-01.xlsx

- Right-click, "Put"

- In Moodle, create URL link to it

12
© 2018 rjerz.com

Create Content Web Page and Post in Moodle

- Create and edit in Dreamweaver
- "Put" this to my website
- Create a URL link to it in Moodle

13 © 2018 rjerz.com

Moving Many Files

- "Put" folders
- "Put" all files

- Dreamweaver figures out which files have changed and only moves these

14 © 2018 rjerz.com

Upfront Work

- Create the URL links in Moodle

- On computer
  C:/My Documents/c/analytics/Excel/Excel-01.xlxs

- On website
  https://domain_name/c/analytics/Excel/Excel-01.xlxs

15 © 2018 rjerz.com

Additional Work in Moodle

- After creating URL links, **little** maintenance is needed
- **Create** and **edit** content on your computer, then **synchronize** it to your website

- Suggestion: use the "**_**" **underscore** character instead of " " **space** character in filenames.

16 © 2018 rjerz.com

Content is **Independent**

- You can use your URLs **anywhere!**

- Example: **MoodleCloud** course

- When editing content, changes are reflected **everywhere** this content is used!

17 © 2018 rjerz.com

Videos

- I use a **free** university (video server) website

- **Create the URL link in Moodle**

    http://streaming.iowa.uiowa.edu/business +

    c/analytics/my_video.mp4

18 © 2018 rjerz.com

Advantages and Disadvantages

- **Advantages**
  - Content can be used **anywhere**
  - **Backups** of content on your own computer
  - Moodle backups are **smaller**

- **Disadvantages**
  - Might have a small **cost** for web space
  - **Modifying** file and folder names on computer requires **changing** URLs in Moodle
  - **Warning!** Some LMS administrators don't like this method (they lose **control!**)

19

© 2018 rjerz.com

Conclusions

- I have always used this technique, **20-years**
- **LMS file management and editors** are relatively **weak**

- I have used my content in other LMSs, such as Blackboard, Desire2Learn, and Canvas
- **Students don't care!** They often think that my content is within the LMS

20

© 2018 rjerz.com

The End

- For **more support**, including this video, go to

www.rjerz.com

21

© 2018 rjerz.com