

Broadband Uses of New Digital Media Literacies

Providing Training for New Digital Media Literacies Using an Internet 2 Network:

Research Methodology

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Introduction

Pennsylvania is currently in the process of installing the hardware for a dedicated high-speed network between the KINBER (Keystone Initiative for Network Based Education and Research) members. KINBER are currently exploring what will be the effective uses of this network. MAGPI (Mid-Atlantic Gigapop in Philadelphia for Internet2) is the Internet2 provider for this network and has experience with creating content for Internet2 users. This study will begin with an analysis of what the KINBER member user's think will be an effective use of this new network. The next step will be producing a new digital media literacy presentation that will give the group some ideas of possibilities. A cohort of interested users will continue to explore opportunities. The project will complete with a survey to see if attitudes have changed and ask what future directions might benefit from a dedicated broadband network.

Description of the Research Problem

This study will be using a mixed methodology to examine the possibilities of using a broadband network to teach new digital media literacies. As explained in the introduction, this is an area that is relatively unexplored. The research problem is finding out what potential users expect from this network, creating a user group, exploring options revealed in the survey and discussing solutions within that group and then making suggestions back to MAGPI and KINBER about the research results.

Purpose of the Research

In order to complete this project, the plan will be based on using a Mixed-Method: Exploratory Design method where the researcher will be emphasizing the qualitative data over the quantitative aspects. (Creswell) The exploratory method matches most closely toward the plan of achievement because it will to delve into how these literacies will be taught effectively

over a broadband network. The qualitative part will be getting a better understanding of what current expectations are in the state of Pennsylvania using a dedicated broadband network. Once there is a better understanding of the user expectations, the next step will be to perform a quantitative study using an attitudinal scale to find out what tools the user wants to know more about while using across this network. In addition, finally work with several users to provide effective examples of how the users will be able to take advantage of this advanced technology.

Methods to be used in the action research study and a rationale

The original survey will be broad and qualitative in that it will be interested in learning what people think they know about the new network and to get an understanding of what they are expecting with these new capabilities. The researcher wants to be careful with this survey not to lead the users, so it will be important to have open ended questions especially in the beginning. The full survey (appendix) will be about five total questions so the user will feel it is easy to complete the survey. (Mills 2010) Once the researcher has analyzed the responses to the qualitative section the next step will be to begin the quantitative task of getting some more detailed attitudinal information. Depending on the results this part may change but the researcher expects that new digital media literacies will be a possible topic of the qualitative section. If this is the case the null question would be “new digital media literacies will not be used effectively used in education over a broadband network”. The reverse being that the literacies would be effectively taught over a broadband network. The dependent variable would be the digital literacies and the independent variable would be their effectiveness over a broadband network. (Mawritz)

The next step of the research project will be to present some of my findings to a group of MAGPI and KINBER users and make a presentation on how some of these ideas could be utilized for academic purposes. The final step would be a post experience survey.

Inclusion of plans for validity and reliability

Because of the expected relatively small sample size, both of these topics may be difficult to apply to a larger audience. However, as Mills explains, action research is usually meant for a small application and may not have an application outside of the study group. The validity will be established just for this group, in that it will be a group of potential users of the network. But, because of the diverse nature of our state it may be difficult to suggest the results will fit everyone across the entire user network. In addition, depending on the variety of results, the reliability may be difficult to duplicate. Again, if the study has a fairly narrow range of answers then the results may be reliable but not necessarily valid (Mawritz 2012). For the results to have validity this study may need to be compared to related studies, or repeated until a body of evidence establishes validity.

Constituents and Rationale for Selection

The obvious constituents will primarily be KINBER and MAGPI members, but it might be possible to contact other constituents to find out what a broader audience has envisioned. The rational for them is they will be the primary focus of the study. Another group that might have effective information could be the New Media Consortium, they may have an interesting insight into the research subject matter and the researcher is already involved in that group's list serve so getting them involved would be simple. Also, the state higher education libraries have a group interested in this subject already and have been looking into it for their own uses, it will be interesting to contact them for participation and other possible insights (Werle, Fox, 2009).

Finally, WHYY has a membership with KINBER and is already exploring new media literacies but primarily for a younger audience, they will have experience and tools that might be able to be shared. The cohort group will be interested volunteers who have a stake in the KINBER project and the effective use of this dedicated network.

Describe the survey instrument(s)

The original survey will be “Survey Monkey” or similar web based tool. The goal will be to get the survey out to as many potential broadband users as possible. It has been my experience that return rates can be very low for this kind of tool so the researcher will also be contacting key people to encourage participations. After the survey and evaluation is completed, the next step will be gathering a cohort of interested users to both continue the discussion as well as begin working on a new digital media literacy projects. During this period, the researcher will record both observations and progression in a journal. At this point in time, the emphasis will be to look at attitudinal changes in the participants to see if they see additional opportunities over this network. In addition, the conclusion of the process will be completed with an exit survey to capture any possible new directions.

Timeline

Because of the short nature of this project, the timeline will be tight. The survey will go under review with the gatekeeper at the end of this term. It will be send out as soon as possible to make sure there is time to collect and analyze the data. This process will be completed within the first four weeks of the next class. Analysis and gathering of a cohort group will take another two weeks. The cohort group will have three more weeks to receive the media literacy training and share their experiences. This will leave a week to assemble a presentation and defend it to both Drexel University and the MAGPI / KINBER groups.

Ethical considerations

Because of the age group of my constituent's, the researcher does not see many ethical issues involving this project. When individual new media literacy projects are created, there may be a need for permission to share those projects with a larger audience as part of the final presentation. All participation is voluntary to ensure ethical standards. Also there will be no evaluation of the projects so users should not fear how they performed doing the projects.

References

Creswell, “Mixed Methods Designs” pages 551 – 561

Mawritz, K. (n.d.). Retrieved from [https://learn.dcollege.net/bbcswebdav/pid-244295-dt-content-rid-](https://learn.dcollege.net/bbcswebdav/pid-244295-dt-content-rid-431592_1/courses/40883.201145/TT_EDAM528_jlp94_ImportedContent_20120228082409/Week%203/Weekly%20Presentation%20-%20Major%20Events%20Associated%20with%20the%20Quantitative%20Approach%20to%20Research/Presentation%20wk%203.pdf)

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Mills, G. E. (2010). Action research, a guide for the teacher researcher. (4th ed.). Boston: Pearson College Div.

Werle, J., & Fox, L. (2009). INTERNET2 and school libraries: THE TIME IS NOW (MORE THAN EVER). MultiMedia & Internet@Schools, 16(5), 16-20.

Appendix

Introduction Survey

This survey is for an action research project to examine the potential uses for a dedicated broadband network across Pennsylvania. The answer will remain anonymous but please let us know if you are interested in participating in a cohort group to explore this issue in greater depth.

1. What do you think will be the most effective use of a dedicated broadband network?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

2. Do institutions have content that to share across the network in a secure fashion?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

3. How could libraries share information or processes?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

4. Do you see academic advantages of a shared network?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

5. Do you see a potential to share new media literacy tools across this network?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

6. Would like to join the research cohort team

☐ Yes, if yes please provide a contact email address [Click here to enter text.](#)

☐ No

Post research survey,

These questions would include:

- Have your expectations for broadband usage changed? If yes explain.

☐ yes

☐ No

[Click here to enter text.](#)

- Do you see another opportunity to be shared with the group?
[Click here to enter text.](#)
- Are you willing to continue as a cohort to share and explore other new applications?
[Click here to enter text.](#)