For the Love of the Tech

by Michael Hakkarinen, UCET President

Remember the LiveScribe Pen? That was a great tool. For about a year, and then it was an expensive fad. What about SmartBoards? Or did you prefer Promethean ActivBoards? Epson BrightLink? Maybe you were the first teacher in your school to get an iPad? You probably felt like the coolest teacher in the school. For about a year. And then the iPad2 came out with dual cameras, a faster processor, and a nicer body shape that was both lighter and easier to carry around.

As new technology comes out it’s easy to fall in love with a new gadget, device, or piece of software. The problem with this industry, however, is that a new item seems to become available every 15-20 seconds. From MacBooks to MacBook Airs to MacBook Pros to MacBook Woes, you’re lucky to have the “new thing” for an entire calendar year.

The problem with these fickle waves of technological advancements is that we sometimes go a step farther than falling in love with a new device. Sometimes we get married to it. This is exceptionally dangerous in our dynamic fast paced work place. It’s not uncommon to see arguments break out between EdTechs that prefer Smart Notebook to Promethean ActivInspire. Support specialists are quick to judge users in their school by whether they have a Droid phone or an iPhone. iPhone User?!?! Ever heard this - “You must be an “Apple Fan Boy”, I can’t help you, you’re a Mac User, you don’t think like me.”

These divisive forces can quickly tear apart a team of educators.

So how do we keep an open mind about all the possibilities that exist to help us do our jobs? How do we balance “falling love” with “making an informed decision” as we select technology for our schools? The answer is in our questions. As we look at the technology that is being purchased for schools we need to consider three specific “ingredients” to ensuring it’s success. Conveniently, these ingredients come in “cans”:

- Can the current infrastructure support this?
- Can we afford to maintain this item?
- Can the item connect to curriculum?

The reality, however, is that unlike with marriage, there is rarely one simple answer. Instead, we may have to look at more than one device. An iPad, for example, is an excellent device for our younger students in Pre-K, Kindergarten, and grades 1-2. But when a student starts more complex writing activities and doing more online research it might be time for a Chromebook. And then, when the third-sixth graders move on to secondary schools they may need more robust machines like Windows based laptops or MacBooks.

To make matters worse, if the support structures like a strong wifi network and ample funding for professional development aren’t in place then there’s pretty much no chance of any money spent on buying technology having any positive impact on student learning what so ever.

The only magic answer is this - be open. Be open to trying new things. Be open to thinking outside of the box with technology. Be open to working with other school districts who may have had experiences beyond your scope. Be open to sharing. Be open to listening.

Listen to your administrators, curriculum specialists, teachers, special education teachers, and most importantly - listen to the students.
# UCE T17 Grants
by Pam Turley, UCET Board Member

We’re giving away money! Certified classroom teachers who attend all sessions of #UCE T17 March 16-17 can apply for a $1500 grant from one of the UCET vendors. Last year these grants funded Lego Mindstorm sets, lighting and sound equipment for student video production, an Ozobot Classroom Kit, and funds toward a zSpace Machine.

More Grant Information

Krita: A Free, Open Source Painting Application!
by Nathan Smith, Utah State University

https://krita.org/en/

Krita is a professional FREE and open source painting program. It is made by artists that want to see affordable art tools for everyone.

- concept art
- texture and matte painters
- illustrations and comics

It is available for Macintosh, Windows, and Linux operating systems. I’ve found it to be fast, efficient, and works well with a Wacom tablet.

Free STEM Education Webinars From NASA Educator Professional Development

February 1, 2017, at 6:30 p.m. ET

**Technology Enables Exploration: Detecting Exoplanets** (Grades 9-12) -- Participants will get an overview of methods used by NASA to detect planets outside of the solar system. Learn about NASA education resources related to these methods and discuss possible modifications to adapt to your classroom. This webinar addresses the Next Generation Science Standards PS2, PS4 and ESS1. Register online to participate.

https://www.etouches.com/223283

February 2, 2017, at 6:30 p.m. ET

**Technology Enables Exploration: Strange New Planet** (Grades 4-12) -- Participants will get an overview of the "Strange New Planet" activity from the Mercury Messenger Mission education module, "Mission Possible." Discussion will include modifications of activities and accommodations. This webinar addresses the Next Generation Science Standards PS4 and ETS1. Register online to participate.

https://www.etouches.com/223286

February 6, 2017, at 4:00 p.m. ET

**From Hidden to Modern Figures: Bringing Katherine Johnson's Story Into Your Classroom** (Grades K-12) -- The film "Hidden Figures," based on the book by Margot Lee Shetterly, focuses on the stories of Katherine Johnson, Mary Jackson and Dorothy Vaughan -- African-American women who were essential to the success of early human spaceflight. This session will
focus on K-12 classroom activities, related to current NASA projects, that are perfect for English, social studies and history, science, math, and engineering. Additional resources and adaptation recommendations will be included for activities that tie directly to the work portrayed in the movie. Register online to participate.

https://www.etouches.com/224199

February 7, 2017, at 4:00 p.m. ET

Technology Enables Exploration: Engineering Design Activities (Grades K-8) -- This interactive webinar will provide a brief introduction of engineering design in the classroom and at NASA and will look at two hands-on engineering activities (Touchdown and Low Density Super Sonic Decelerator) for K-8 students. These activities are found in the NASA educator guides "On the Moon" and "NASA Beginning Engineering Science and Technology," which provide teachers with 15 design activities for students. Register online to participate.

https://www.etouches.com/226007

February 9, 2017, at 7:00 p.m. ET

Lava Layering: Making and Mapping a Volcano (Grades 5-8) -- The focus of this webinar is on interpreting geologic history through volcano formation and excavation. Baking soda, vinegar and play dough are used to model fluid lava flows. Various colors of play dough identify different eruption events. Students will: (1) Construct a model of a volcano (2) Produce lava flows (3) Observe, draw, record, and interpret the history and stratigraphy of a volcano produced by other students (4) Make the connection between the life cycle of a volcano and see these features on Earth and Mars. For this lesson and more, go to jpl.nasa.gov/edu

Register online to participate.

https://www.etouches.com/227876

Digital Learning Day 2017

Digital Learning Day 2017 is less than one month away and our Digital Learning Day map is starting to fill up!

On February 23, 2017, educators and students from around the country will participate in the nationwide celebration highlighting great teaching and demonstrating how technology can improve student outcomes. Will you join them?

Texas, Wisconsin, and North Carolina have the most events on the map. Want to bump up your state in the rankings? Add your event today!

Interested, but not sure what to do? Visit our interactive lesson plans page for ideas and inspiration.

If you're planning to participate, add your event to our map! Then visit our graphics page to help spread the word about your event.
Get this Awesome Free App for Android & iOS:
David Attenborough's Story of Life

Description
Join broadcast legend Sir David Attenborough to explore more than 1000 of the greatest wildlife moments ever filmed.

- Explore the most comprehensive collection of Sir David's work ever released online.
- Includes six decades of highlights from more than 40 landmark BBC programmes, including Planet Earth, Blue Planet, The Life of Mammals, Africa and others.
- Watch unique collections of films curated by Sir David and others.
- Create and save your own collections and share them with friends and family.
- Hunt for hidden films featuring Sir David, recorded exclusively for the app.
- Explore extraordinary sequences of animals and plants, from iconic large species to rarely seen enigmatic creatures. See them hunt, mate, eat, travel and communicate in their natural habitats; ranging from the high mountains to the deepest oceans, across deserts, forests and the polar ice caps.
- Watch lions, polar bears, whales, sharks, eagles and giant lizards and many more.
- Use wi-fi or ethernet for the optimum experience.

This App contains:
- links to selected social media sites
Teacher Advisors Needed: NASA / WGBH's 'Bringing the Universe to America's Classrooms' Initiative

Public Broadcasting Station WGBH/Boston, supported by a NASA cooperative agreement, is developing new instructional models and digital media tools for STEM classrooms. WGBH is looking for 50 K-12 educators to act as advisors in the development of the new resources.

Teacher Advisors will work with media producers and education researchers to design new ways to engage students around topics in Earth science. The main activity will center on the evaluation and testing of instructional modules that incorporate cutting-edge, scientific-data digital media tools (e.g., data visualizations, interactives, virtual field trips, etc.) and address educational standards.

Applicants must be full-time K-12 educators (U.S. or U.S. territories) who will be teaching Earth science topics in fall 2017. Eligible candidates must have a passion for using digital technology and media and a desire to gain instructional design experience.

Applications are due Feb. 8, 2017.

For more information and to access the online application, visit http://www.wgbhteacheradvisors.org/.

Please direct questions about this opportunity to carolyn_jacobs@wgbh.org.

Bring the Story of "Hidden Figures" to the Classroom With the "Who Is Katherine Johnson?" Profiles and Modern Figures Toolkit

In the 1960s, the U.S. was on an ambitious journey to the moon, and Katherine Johnson and her fellow human computers helped get NASA there. Bring the excitement of their story to your classroom with new resources from NASA Education.

Learn more about Katherine Johnson with the "Who Is Katherine Johnson?" profiles written just for students. Versions written for K-4 and 5-8 students are available.

- "Who Is Katherine Johnson?" -- K-4 Students Version
- "Who Is Katherine Johnson?" -- 5-8 Students Version

Also available online, the Modern Figures Toolkit is a collection of resources and educational activities for students in grades K-12. Each educational activity and resource includes a brief description, as well as information about how the activities and lessons align to education standards. Resources highlighted include videos, historical references and STEM materials.

Bring Katherine Johnson's inspiring story to your classroom by downloading the Modern Figures Toolkit at www.nasa.gov/modernfigures-education-toolkit.
U.S. Department of Energy's BioenergizeME Infographic Challenge

Registration is open for the U.S. Department of Energy's BioenergizeME Infographic Challenge. This competition challenges teams of high school students to research one of five specific cross-curricular bioenergy topics and design infographics to share what they have learned through social media.

Selected infographics will be promoted nationally on the Challenge website and via social media. One team of students will be selected to present their infographic at the Bioenergy Technologies Office's annual conference in Washington, D.C.

Registration for student teams closes on Feb. 3, 2017, and teams have until March 3, 2017, to submit their infographics.


Check out the interactive BioenergizeME Infographic Challenge Map to see submissions from teams across the country from prior years. Put your school on the BioenergizeME map by participating in this year's Challenge.

Please direct questions about the Challenge to BioenergizeME@ee.doe.gov.

Identifying Fake News: An Infographic and Educator Resources

Source: EasyBib.com

EasyBib has just posted a great infographic for students about identifying fake news. Click the thumbnail of the infographic at left to go to the post or click this link.

From the post: "We recently posted, “10 Ways to Spot a Fake News Article,” which highlighted key items to look for on a website when determining its credibility. The infographic found here summarizes the content from the blog post and students can use it as a guide when using news sources in research. Post, print, or share it with your students or others!

Looking for other resources related to website credibility? We've listed some of our favorites below the infographic!"

The issue of fake news has been prevalent for a while now. During the 2016 election year, much was reported by the media about fake news online altering people's views of the candidates in ways that may have altered the election results.

A good skill for everyone to learn, knowing how to identify fake news can help students eliminate questionable resources as they search for truth.
8 Great Movies for Black History Month - Common Sense Media

Toontastic 3D on Android
by Richard Byrne

Understanding Google Forms Question Types

How to Access Google Forms

How to use Toontastic 3D on Chromebooks
by Richard Byrne

How To Create A Quiz in Google Forms

Want kids to learn well? Feed them well | Sam Kass

Dictation on a Mac
Register to Attend the 2017 UCET Conference!

The 2017 conference for the Utah Coalition for Educational Technology (or UCET) will take place March 16-17, 2017 at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, Utah. If you’re interested in integrating technology into your teaching, this is the conference for you! Over 100 sessions, 2 keynote speakers, a large vendor area, a technology playground, short ignite and over-the-shoulder sessions to pick up new ideas, and so much more. It is one of the most reasonably priced technology in education conferences anywhere.

Conference Registration Fees

Early Bird Registration: (Early bird registration ends February 24, 2017)

- $60 for both days
- $42 for one day

Regular Registration:

- $70 for both days
- $52 for one day

College Student Discount:

- $30 for both days

We encourage you to come join us for two days of awesome learning and networking with other like-minded educators and administrators. Click here to register now!