

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES: FREE CONTENT FOR LEARNERS*

Angela Secrest

This work is produced by OpenStax-CNX and licensed under the
Creative Commons Attribution License 2.0[†]

Abstract

A slide show originally presented in February, 2007, updated January, 2009. This presentation lists considerations for start-up programs. The primary audience would be faculty who want to know more about the issues involved in using and creating open educational resources, or who are interested in using OER's as replacements for expensive textbooks.

1 Open Educational Resources : Free Content for Learners

2 What are OER's?

Content openly available for learners

- Courses, articles, modules, learning objects

- Software, tools for learning

- Available to use, re-use, remix, redistribute

- Licensed but free to the end user

3 Why use them?

Reduce the costs of education to learners

- Make education globally accessible

- Collaborate, share and partner to use and provide open content

- Recognize creators

- Increase quality while localizing content

- Conversely, content can be internationalized as well

- Improve our competitive edge

- Avoid duplication of effort

- Change a culture

4 Why would anyone provide free content? They think that

Knowledge should be free

- Education is a basic human right

- Barriers to education must be removed

- Education should be customized & localized

*Version 1.2: Jan 8, 2009 9:39 am +0000

[†]<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>

5 Is it possible? We have

- A model unique to digital resource development
- A successful web-based business model
- Costs offset by tangible and intangible benefits
- Means to overcome obstacles

6 You are

- Interested in using Open Educational Resources in your classes?
- Already using or developing OER?
- Concerned about the quality of existing resources, or their applicability to their classroom?
- Doubtful that you now have the time and skills needed to develop open content materials, or to adapt existing ones?
- Concerned about giving away intellectual property?
- Doubtful that you could successfully transition to using OER?

7 Would you be more interested in OER's If you could

- Be compensated for the additional time and effort spent on resource development?
- Gain global recognition for your work?
- Reserve selected rights to your intellectual property while allowing maximum use for educational purposes?
- Realize a royalty income that may exceed that for commercially published work?
- Increase enrollment in your classes?
- Offer your students resources tailored to your own pedagogical style and workflow?
- Offer your resources worldwide?
- Update your teaching resources at will?
- Collaborate with colleagues around the world?
- Experience a smooth transition into a brave new world?

8 Those were some of the benefits ... Now for the small print

9 How do we pay for

- Technical infrastructure
- New skills and knowledge
- Time
- Lost revenue (royalties, commissions)

10 How do we account for

- The course as an asset
- Depreciation
- Long term fiscal impact
- Institutional effectiveness
- Global impact
- Effects on enrollment

11 Put It All Together : Common Themes, Considerations, Opportunities

12 Collaborate and partner

Partners may be profit, non-profit

- Partnerships may be formed within the institution
- Keep costs down, share costs
- Avoid duplication of effort
- Share technical, financial, and staff resources
- Take advantage of external expertise while building internal knowledge base
- Increase revenue streams
- Scale early projects to benefit the most users

13 Identify possible partners

Existing projects

- Connexions (Rice University)
- Sakai
- Many others (see list of clearinghouses in final section)

Local corporations

- Local charitable foundations
- Other schools at all levels

14 Utilize existing resources

Review existing projects for usability

- Take advantage of existing staff development opportunities
- Library resources are always free to students and faculty
- Start small with a core group and build on success
- Integrate projects

15 Maintain quality

Content and presentation

- Meet needs and expectations
- Peer review
- Currency
- Adhere to existing standards
- Accessible, localized
- Require constant evaluation

16 Compensate developers

Pay for time spent on development

- Reward finished product
- Protect intellectual property
- Replace lost revenue streams

17 Protect intellectual property

New licenses reserve some rights – mix and match your own choices

- Plain language presentation to users with a legal language counterpart

- Education-friendly – what Fair Use should be

- Use, re-use, adapt . . . and attribute

- More publishing opportunities

18 Manage sustainability

Revenue streams must extend beyond start-up

- Infrastructure must be upgraded continually

- Content must be upgraded continually

- Plan for staff development

- Market and measure the benefits to students

- Market and measure the benefits to developers

- Evaluation must be built-in

- Effectiveness must be measurable and proven

19 Transition smoothly

Decrease and share costs

- Increase benefits

- Start small

- Utilize existing resources

- Follow a well-considered plan

- Embrace participation

- Create sustainable success

- Respond to changing environments

20 What can individuals do?

Take advantage of faculty development opportunities

- Start small by identifying usable content already available in an OER project

- Develop collaborative relationships within and external to the institution

- Communicate with students, administration, colleagues

- Learn, explore

21 What can institutions do?

Identify partners, revenue streams

- Provide legal support (licensing)

- Build technical infrastructure, tools

- Provide staff development opportunities

- Manage quality

- Measure impact to institution

- Promote, market

22 Learn more

Center for Open Sustainable Learning: <http://cosl.usu.edu/>

Creative Commons: <http://creativecommons.org/>

UNESCO: http://www.unesco.org/iiep/eng/focus/opensrc/opensrc_1.htm

Open CourseWare Consortium: <http://www.ocwconsortium.org/index.html>

Connexions: <http://cnx.org>

Sakai: <http://www.sakaiproject.org/>

Merlot: <http://www.merlot.org/merlot/index.htm>

Clearinghouses: <http://library.hccs.edu/OER/?Clearinghouses>