

Social Media and the Future of Further Education

emCETT Practitioner-Led Research Program 2014-2015

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by John McMahon



- Get the learners involved in setting up the group
- Use in the classroom as well as outside the classroom
- Ask questions to draw learners out
- Create a comfortable space for learners to communicate
- Build trust
- Maintain a clear distinction between your social and professional presence online

"You shouldn't behave on Facebook in a way that you wouldn't behave in a classroom"

Recommendations

Social media can provide some of the tools we need to build sustainable communities of learning which continue to live and breathe beyond course completion dates. Our emphasis should be on interaction rather than delivery.

All stakeholders must appreciate the positive impact that creative use of social media can have on education and the learner's experience of learning, otherwise the perceived risks will prevent engagement.

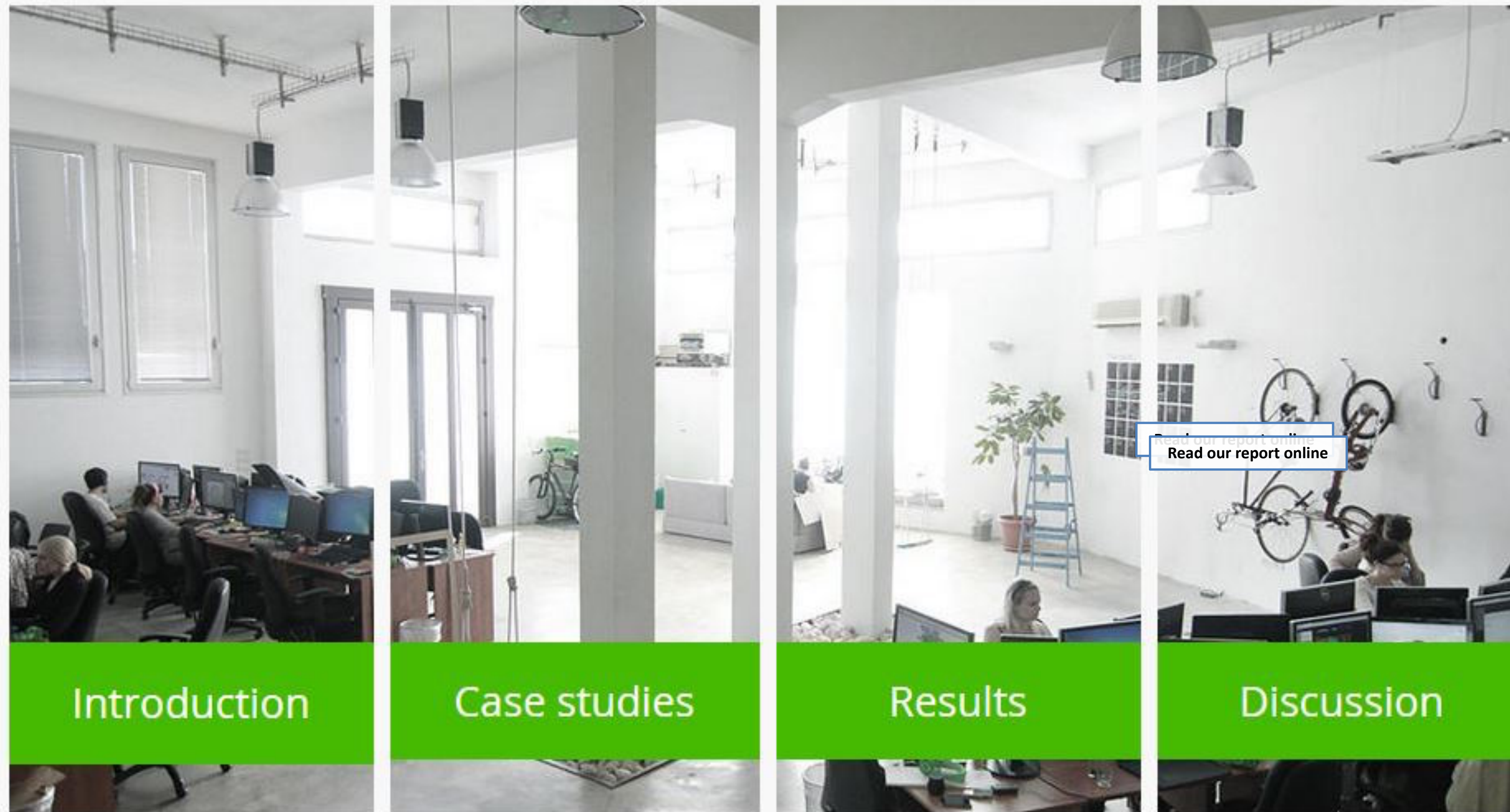
Educators must build trust with their learners, assuring them that their privacy will be respected.

In the context of social media as a learning space, teachers and learners should behave on social media as they would in the classroom.

Educators have a particular responsibility as role models, this includes how they use social media.

Accurate and current risk assessment and mitigation should be a shared responsibility across institutions and the sector. Liaison with agencies such as Childline should be regular and productive.

A coaching and mentoring approach to sharing effective and safe practice has been shown to be effective in this context.



Key Findings

It is evident from the pilot studies and subsequent research that, in the hands of a skilled educator, appropriate use of social media encourages quick and easy learner communication between learners and between learners and their tutor. While this in itself does not create a learning community, it can be highly effective in supporting it both in and out of traditional teaching time.

CASE STUDIES



- "What are the key factors required to provide both safe and engaging learning through social media?"
- Clear guidelines, so everyone knows how to be safe and behave appropriately on social media
- Listen as well as deliver, make sure it is what the learners find engaging...not just what you think they will find engaging!
- Short snippets
- Don't just duplicate what you did on paper

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