Using Web 2.0 in Higher Tourism Education

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1. Aim

The aim of this booklet is to provide knowledge and inspiration about working with web 2.0 technologies in higher education. The introduction provides a brief characteristic of social media and web 2.0. An account is given of the theoretical basis for learning processes utilising web 2.0, together with ways of incorporating them into teaching. Following this, a design is presented for teaching programmes incorporating social media and examples provided from an actual course in International Tourism and Leisure management at the University of Southern Denmark, with particular focus on the INNOTOUR platform which was awarded the 2010 e-learning prize. Finally, we discuss how the use of web 2.0 tools and teaching methods places new demands on both participants and adaptation of curricula, including exam descriptions, so these reflect the new teaching forms and the philosophy behind web 2.0 learning and knowledge.

2. Web 2.0 characteristics

The Web 2.0 concept cannot be traced back to one single technological development. Rather, it can be attributed to a number of different elements that together constitute what may be called the “web 2.0 movement” (Alexander, 2006). The following is a brief description of the most significant elements. These are significant because the enrolled elements resulted in a shift from the more static web 1.0 way of thinking about web content. Many companies, for example, used their websites as a kind of business card with contact details and electronic copies of their product brochures. As a result, web content was sender-controlled, with poor opportunities for interaction. Web 2.0 changed that and provided an opportunity for ordinary users to generate content that could be shared, revised and communicated with other users.

“Web 2.0 refers to the principles and practice of facilitating information sharing and social interaction by users generating, altering and uploading web-based content (O’Reilly, 2005) whereas its predecessor, Web 1.0 limits users to the passive viewing and download of largely copyrighted information.” (Liburd, 2011a)
2.1. The three elements of the Web 2.0 movement (based on Alexander, 2006):

Web 2.0 is primarily about "micro content", i.e. about user contribution; comments, tags, videos, pictures and more. It is the users themselves, who produce, share and comment on one another's content. The result is a highly social and often collaborative process. The focus is not the web page, but small items, such as comments on someone’s wall or blog.

Another important aspect is openness, both in relation to ideology and technology. The possibility for multi-directional communication and easy access for users is essential. They should be able to readily create a profile, create and share content etc. The web 2.0 movement is therefore a movement away from production and storage of items in personal folders and on personal hard drives and a movement toward the use of open, networked services, where, with a single click, users can choose to share their material with the world. Access is not limited to one’s own material, but it is also possible to access other users’ resources. Use and reuse, including modification and/or additions to others' texts in, for example, a wiki is an important element of this openness.

The final item that is to be mentioned here is "folksonomy". This is the users’ own way of categorising or "tagging" the content they produce and/or link to on the web. In other words, Web 2.0 is the users’ voice, what might be called "wisdom of the crowds". Some have sharply criticised this openness and accompanying democratization of knowledge on the basis that academic standards are undermined (Carr 2007). However, this critical perspective does not present a solution to the trend towards closed production of knowledge in higher education. In conclusion, it can be said that web 2.0 is “A way of making, sharing, and consuming digital documents” (Alexander, 2006:34).

Web 2.0 is therefore not just a series of new services, such as blogs, wikis and social networks etc. on the internet. It is also a new practice amongst users, characterized by social and egocentric behaviour with participative and narrative focus. It is the users’ desire to share anything and everything in their lives with others via text, pictures and video that is the driving force behind web 2.0. In addition, it meets a need for visibility and public statement of opinion in the form of small
comments, "likes" and smileys etc. As a result, a web 2.0 practice based on these elements has arisen:

- Create, write and store (user-generated content)
- describe, tag
- Share – "push out"
- Rewrite
- Use and reuse of material
- Subscribe to news via RSS feeds. Fetch relevant news content
- Use relationships to find new knowledge
- Distributed authorship. Copyright claims are waivered or shared with other users
- Creative Commons – a more lenient form of copyright in the digital age, allowing one to tailor copyrights to published material. see [http://www.creativecommons.dk/om/](http://www.creativecommons.dk/om/)

2.2. Social media

Social media are often referred to in the web 2.0 context as the designation for web-based tools that connect people, and make it possible to share information, pictures and videos etc. These tools and features comprise blogs, wikis, social bookmarking sites, trackback, podcasts, video blogs, YouTube, Slideshare, Flickr and social networks such as My Space and Facebook.

Social software is what facilitates "the creation of communities and resources in which individuals come together to learn, collaborate and build knowledge” (Owen et al., 2006). This booklet focuses especially on the social media: discussion forums, blogs and wikis, since they facilitate a series of learning processes that both engage and challenge students.

"Web 2.0 activities are largely centred around students’ production of material, editing their own and others content, use, reuse and adaptation of content across a variety of contexts. There is therefore, great potential for what John Biggs calls >>in-depth learning<< - in contrast to >>superficial learning<< (Biggs, 2003): such activities encourage and support students’
individual and joint knowledge construction rather than simply paving the way for relatively uncritical and unconsidered acceptance of information from study material.”

(Dohn & Johnsen 2009: 28. Authors’ translation.)

2.3. Teaching philosophy perspectives

Involvement of Web 2.0 in higher education rests on the socio-cultural learning theories formulated by Piaget (1972), Vygotsky (1992), Kolb (1984), Lave and Wenger (1991), Perkins (1996) and Salmon (2002). These theories focus on students’ differing learning styles, the importance of the learning environment and the advantages of collaborative learning. The most important elements are interaction, creating something jointly, critical thinking and collaboration between students and teachers, both in the classroom and in the virtual teaching environment. This constructivist, practical perspective is supported further by a phenomenological inspired angle (Merleu-Ponty, 1962), where learning practices, attitudes and technology mutually inform each other in a dialectical relationship (Liburd & Tribe 2011).

3. Educational design with Web 2.0

First and foremost, the involvement of web 2.0 in teaching places students in an active role, with increased opportunities for expressing themselves on a subject and for discussing interpretations and points with their fellow students. Online activities with social media can help create a framework for individual student preparation. This increases the visibility of the students’ efforts between teaching sessions and places focus on continual immersion and learning rather than final examinations. As a result, these online activities can aid students in finding the time and necessary room to immerse themselves in the material in a way which is not always possible during the physical teaching sessions. Furthermore, this online interaction challenges students’ attitudes and understanding of topics and promotes learning.
Social media based teaching spans from individual contemplation and reflection in, for example, personal blogs to collaborative learning in connection with the creation of a knowledge base in a wiki, where students must discuss and agree on the correct interpretation, content and structure etc. It is the constructivist teaching processes in particular that are supported when social media are integrated into teaching and learning activities. The involvement of social media can contribute to a practical and application-oriented approach, which we will illustrate below.

3.1 Underpinning project working methods

Social media provide a unique opportunity to support collaborative learning in connection with project work. Using a wiki, a project group may create a common knowledge base. Nothing is lost or inaccessible on a personal computer. A blog can be used to document and maintain group working processes. Interestingly, these social media simultaneously provide teaching staff with a means of observing and making relevant input at the right time.

3.2 Activating and challenging students with blogs and wikis

Furthermore, use of blogs in academic discussions can contribute nuances and perspectives that aid the individual students in their learning. Blogs provide an opportunity for expression about actual academic topics and for response to other student’s opinions and interpretations. In this way, students’ immediate personal perceptions are challenged and they are forced to work more intensively with topics in order to make sense of them. Hence a discussion in a blog can be used as prelude to classroom discussions to prepare them for discussions when they meet in the classroom.

In the same manner, a group of students can be challenged by asking them to create a joint knowledge base on an academic topic in a wiki. To do so, the group must go through a process where they agree on structure and contents. In order to formulate content, the students must negotiate opinions and compare their different understandings of the subject matter amongst themselves. In the course of this process, students test their own interpretations and work through
the subject matter thoroughly. This allows for a greater depth of learning and a more intensive learning process than, for example, with traditional lectures.

3.3 Design of teaching and learning activities with web 2.0

Web 2.0 learning can be regarded as "flexible, adaptable participation in practice", based upon activities which are “user-centric, and involve flexible production, use and modification of material across a range of contexts” (Dohn & Johnsen, 2009: 20. Authors’ translation.).

When integrating social media into teaching, it is important to organise online activities with caution. When activities are introduced in face-to-face teaching, many verbal instructions are often given and teaching staff are available to answer students’ questions about how to tackle tasks. In the case of online activities, it is important to ensure that all instructions are available to students, either in writing or in the form of a video or audio file. In addition, it should be ensured that students are prepared to contribute and become involved online. Most of the current generation of students are born online, (Benckendorff, et.al., 2010), but many are uncertain about what it means to use social media in a learning context. As a result students often have a hesitant approach to online learning activities.

"Students are not accustomed to using such Web 2.0-sites and activities for educational purposes, but only for voluntary social interaction with each other" (Dohn & Johnsen: 2009: 27. Authors’ translation.). We therefore recommend that you use Gilly Salmon's five-phase model when designing and running online learning activities.

Gilly Salmon’s five-phase model, seen in an edited version below, is a practical tool that shows how to effectively create a fertile virtual learning environment. The model is intended for use in virtual discussion forums but can, with a little adjustment, be readily employed with blogs, wikis and other social media.
The model comprises five phases. Students must complete one or more tasks or e-tivities in each phase in order to master it and successfully move on to the next phase. The model shows how to stage, or provide a scaffold for, student’s collaborative learning.

Phase 1 of the model focuses on bringing students online. Students try logging onto the e-learning platform, or the online service, that is to be used and they publish their first online contribution to mark their presence. The teacher, who is known as an e-moderator, welcomes students and ensures that everyone is able to find their way around the platform. In this phase it is important to provide phone and/or email support, so that students can get help to log on, if necessary.

After that the focus is on creating a good virtual environment and making students feel confident about contributing online and commenting on each other’s contributions. This can be done by presenting students with a series of small, less formal and socially oriented tasks where they present themselves online and tell a little about themselves and their background. If the course also includes face-to-face teaching in parallel with the online activities, and if the class is relatively small with only 20-30 students, it may not make sense to ask the students to do personal presentations in the phase two e-tivity. Instead, students can be asked to share their expectations towards the course, or about their prior knowledge of the subject. This can serve as input to the teacher when planning
future sessions. In this case, it is important to use online activities to go into depth with the topics that is in focus offline.

In phase 3, you can embark on the academic activities in earnest. The students are now online, confident in the online environment and therefore ready to contribute professionally. E-tivities at this level should be about exchanging information, including presentation, analysis and discussion of professional knowledge.

When phase 3 is successfully completed, it is time to begin with more demanding, collaborative tasks in phase 4 where students work together to build up knowledge, discuss interpretations and negotiate viewpoints.

Phase 5 is a more independent phase, where the students are so accustomed to their online learning environment, that they feel the need to expand their virtual horizons and go their own virtual ways. This can be done by the students choosing their own e-learning tools and independently beginning to network with external persons who have knowledge and interest in the field studied. This phase can, for example, be tied in with performance of individual tasks such as writing a thesis.

3.4 Netiquette

In the course of things, it may be necessary to focus on netiquette. It may be necessary to discuss and agree on a code of good, ethical behaviour online (forms of cooperation, tone, communication, knowledge sharing, respect, deadlines). Students often need to adjust their language when they move from using social media in their leisure time to using the same type of media in a learning context (Dohn & Johnsen, 2009). This means a shift from quick and superficial communication to a more considered and reflective language and critical thinking.

3.5 E-tivities as a starting point for learning activities

Above, the ”e-tivities” concept was introduced to refer to online tasks posed to students. The concept was devised by Gilly Salmon (Salmon, 2002) and denotes ”a framework for active and interactive online learning” (Salmon 2002: 1).
An e-tivity thereby provides students with guidelines for solving a specific online task, but also comprises elements to motivate and engage students in active participation online. The template below can be used for preparation of e-tivities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task title and subject / Motivating input:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resources / tools:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your task:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadlines:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2: E-tivities template. Adapted from Salmon 2002.

A task title and subject are written in the top row. At the same time, a motivating factor is described, informing students why it is interesting to deal with this topic and how they benefit.

Under the resources / tools heading attention is drawn to texts and other material to be studied and where the task should be carried out – e-learning platform, open source system, discussion forum, blog etc.

The aim describes the specific learning outcome that is fulfilled, when the student completes the task. This provides a direct connection to the curriculum.

Following this, specific instructions are given about the task the student should complete. Note, that there should always be two elements; “your tasks” and “response”. Your task denotes what students should do, for example, make written contributions to a blog or start a wiki on a specific topic. Remember to include qualitative and any quantitative requirements in order to make the task as transparent as possible. The response is that which creates online interaction and thereby supports the rewarding collaborative learning processes. The response may be that the student should read and comment on the blog posts of at least 3 fellow students. Qualitative and quantitative requirements may also be defined.

Deadlines are essential in order to initiate and drive online learning. Completion dates should preferably be early. This ensures that there is something to “respond” to in the second part of the task. Set a second deadline that is a little later, for this response. If desired, a third deadline may be
set, for students to return to their initial input and study the comments received from other students and formulate new content taking these comments into account.

It is the responsibility of the teacher/e-moderator to follow up on whether students meet deadlines and requirements. It is especially important to follow up on the first e-tivities and send reminders to students who do not contribute. This is to signal the importance of participation and engagement in dialogue, as well as to emphasize that in this part of the course, learning takes place online.

4. Examples from Tourism Education and INNOTOUR

An example of the integration of Web 2.0 in tourism education at the University of Southern Denmark (SDU) is described below. It shows specific examples of e-tivities and the use of Gilly Salmon's five-phase model in practice.

4.1. SDU’s bachelor- and cand.negot (a Scandinavian equivalent to a Master’s degree) courses, specialising in international tourism have been offered at the Esbjerg Campus since 2003. There has been an adequate, but not overwhelming demand for the tourism programmes. Interest has, however, increased significantly since 2010 as a result of an Erasmus Mundus accreditation for graduate courses from the universities of Ljubljana in Slovenia, Girona in Spain and SDU. The fully integrated master's program, entitled the European Master in Tourism Management (EMTM), has resulted in additional exposure and manifestation of the international dimension of tourism studies. With a maximum of 35 students on the EMTM program, where only two may have the same nationality according to Erasmus Mundus regulation, teachers are challenged both academically and in their pedagogical approach by an interdisciplinary and multicultural learning environment.

At the same time, undergraduate tourism students at SDU were given the opportunity to participate in a joint venture on value-based teaching sessions for tourism students in Brazil, USA, Switzerland, Austria and New Zealand through cooperation in the Tourism Education Futures
Institute (hereinafter TEFI). Both of these ventures were instigated by compelling research-based and administrative initiatives, and where the INNOTOUR platform is of particular interest.

INNOTOUR is a web 2.0 platform that is based upon users creating and developing their own content. The platform acts as a virtual rendezvous for students, teachers, researchers and companies that are interested in tourism and innovation and who are seeking to enhance their knowledge, products and expertise. INNOTOUR is an English-language platform, since tourism as a subject and phenomenon has a broad international interface.

![INNOTOUR Front Page](https://www.INNOTOUR.com)

Figure 3: Picture of INNOTOUR front page, [www.INNOTOUR.com](http://www.INNOTOUR.com)

4.2. The global TEFI courses

INNOTOUR is built up as a joint platform for students, teachers, businesses and researchers, with subdivisions for each of these groups. In accordance with INNOTOUR’s highly integral philosophy, these different user groups share resources to a large degree. Most resources are freely available to everyone, but users must register in order to contribute or use the interactive options available. From its inception, INNOTOUR was designed for an international learning context, and is available as a tool and dynamic collaborative interface with partners in other universities.
Lecturers from the countries mentioned above, contribute input on thematic areas of expertise; the individual lectures are streamed and uploaded to INNOTOUR. Corresponding value-based student assignments are provided and are to be solved in groups comprising students across the six campuses, by the use of blogs, wikis and discussion forums. The web conference programme Adobe Connect is widely used for online lessons. As far as possible, each lesson addresses the five core values: ethics, professionalism, mutual respect, knowledge and sustainability that are developed under the Tourism Education Futures Initiative (Sheldon et al. 2008, Liburd 2010). In practice this means that students watch online teaching videos with accompanying literature and slides which are uploaded onto INNOTOUR’s student pages under ‘TEFI Courses’. This is followed by a new e-tivity that describes which resources to use, the aim of the task and its content as well as the deadline for contributions. If working with blogs and wikis, several dates are often given for upload and contribution of comments, so that students from other campuses are able to reach the same deadlines.

An example of an e-tivity from a teaching course with other TEFI-partners is illustrated below.

Figure 4: TEFI e-tivity 3. Source: "Introduction to Tourism" (Liburd 2011b).
Completion of this e-tivity for Ba students presented an opportunity for the library to tailor its introduction for tourism students so that they both learnt to search for relevant articles and databases and became acquainted with academic concepts about validity and reliability. The combined quantity of articles generated in just one week, and supplemented with contributions from other TEFI-students, was likewise an eye opener to the extent of the existing relevant academic knowledge that is available around the world.

By integrating TEFI-values throughout web 2.0 -based teaching activities students learn to act as 'professionals’ by having to meet specific deadlines across international time zones; they must show ’mutual respect’ for differing points of view and ways in which to handle tasks; they must learn to be critical of how we know and thereby increase their ’knowledge ’; they must reflect on ethical perspectives and the meaning of sustainable development. Through exchanges with other students in blogs and wikis in a real, multicultural and global context, the students explore the significance of these values that create reflection, interaction and new understanding of more or less complex issues. The international focus of the tourism education programme is thereby not limited to the English language employed in the teaching sessions and the literature. Both the students’ learning, and the learning environment, are greatly enhanced through the open, international collaboration.

4.3. The local global classroom

At the graduate level, the INNOTOUR platform is primarily used as a learning environment for the students in synchronous and asynchronous activities. Due to the Erasmus Mundus status and its requirements for global uptake and forced mobility between the three consortium universities, the learning environment is always already multicultural and international. Here, web 2.0 activities are employed to a far greater extent in order to make use of joint knowledge and the experience of the team, whilst the individual students become familiar with educational requirements to academic writing and expected professionalism. Similar to the Ba-level, traditional classroom teaching is supplemented with online e-tivities, but also with public-private sector cooperation.
An e-tivity in connection with a field excursion to Fanoe is illustrated below. Here graduate students of 'Sustainable Tourism development’ should employ various methods to document representations of sustainable tourism on Fanoe.

![Fanoe field visit](image)

**Fanoe field visit**

*Inter-active activities*

- **Your task:** You are to describe Fanoe by use of pictures/video, painting/sketching, merchandise, sounds, words, etc that address the theme of sustainability/sustainable tourism development.
- **Purpose:** Facilitate translations and context specific understandings of sustainable tourism development.
- **Methods:** Auto-ethnography, interviews, recommendations by locals, tourists,
- Upload to INNOTOUR (EMTM Blog)
- Review and discuss (E-tivity 2 rephrased, deadline Sep 21)

Figure 5: E-tivity at BA level. Source: ”Sustainable Tourism Development Syllabus” (Liburd 2011c).

During the field trip a presentation by a municipal project manager and a nature guide was arranged along with a walk through one of the islands two urban environments. Despite the trip ending with a visit to the Fanoe brewery (planned by the teacher as part of a mixed-learning approach), the results were both creative and well considered. The students had produced a film, carried out interviews, written poetry, painted, photographed and tasted local Fanoe products etc. All contributions were uploaded as indicated, and discussed both in blogs, and more critically in subsequent lessons. Below are a small selection of the representations from the Fanoe task depicted on INNOTOUR from 'EMTM 2011, Student blogs’ (http://www.innotour.com/studentBlog/category/2011-emtmcand-negot-blog/).
Video can be seen from the same site or the following link

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ubWYoGTVyAY.

Figure 6: Student contributions to the Fanoe task
Figure 7: Student contribution to the Fanoe task
In summary, the use of web 2.0 technologies and the INNOTOUR platform can be viewed as one suggestion as to how to prepare students for a future field of practice. This pro-active and extrovert way of working in tourism education reflects modern tourism as a phenomenon that is characterized by global, socio-economic movements, technical innovations and cross-border flows of resources etc. It occurs through an embedded understanding of professionalism, mutual respect and sustainability that reaches far beyond a traditional transmission of knowledge from teacher to student.

The crucial point is that knowledge, and the learning environment, are significantly expanded with the use of Web 2.0 technologies. This movement simultaneously emphasizes learning processes and implicitly challenges the traditional view of knowledge, so that the teacher is no longer the only one to challenge and assess the students (Liburd et.al, 2010), which is discussed below.
5. New requirements and adaptation

When web 2.0 tools are integrated into teaching, it is not only new educational tools that are integrated. It is also a radically different way of looking at knowledge and learning. There is a shift of focus from knowledge, and epistemic relations, as to how one can know. In many ways this is an epistemological shift from a Cartesian view of learning and knowledge transfer from teacher to student, to a social view of learning and knowledge (Dohn & Johnsen 2009). This revised view of knowledge, from the individual thinking man: "Cogito ergo sum", to the social: “we participate, therefore we are", is illustrated below.

![Cartesian View of Learning vs. Social View of Learning](image)

Figure 9: (Brown and Adler 2008: 19)

The traditional view of knowledge is especially challenged by new technologies, relationships, institutions, networks and practices with other forms and norms of “true” knowledge, that are not limited to the higher education environment (Liburd 2011a). In a web 2.0 context, it is not only via academic collaboration between scientists who agree on the conditions for its truth and validity that
knowledge is given authority. Knowledge can arise in a variety of communicative environments through competent conversation, collaboration and action (Habermas, 1984 and 1987; Leadbeater & Miller 2004; Blok, 2005; Liburd, 2011a). Also the Connexion platform developed at RICE University, USA, can be highlighted as an especially ground breaking development in the opening of higher education in addition to the Open Educational Resources movement, which has also been an inspiration to INNOTOUR.

Since web 2.0 activities implicitly view learning as participation, and knowledge as process and activity, there is little correlation with traditional final examination forms such as individual written assignments or oral exams. The involvement of web 2.0 requires rethinking of evaluation and assessment (Christensen, 2009). A central issue in working with web 2.0 is how to ensure consistency between semester activities and their evaluation /assessment; also called alignment (Biggs & Tang, 2007). It is not only important to focus on the process in the assessment, and less on the end result. It is also essential to hand over part of the assessment procedure to the participants, for example, in the form of peer reviews, comments from fellow students and constructive criticism during the process. This requires significant adaptation of the established teaching system, and not least acceptance of the idea that students should play a greater role in evaluating, learning and assessment (Liburd et.al, 2010). In addition to the assessment of academic tasks and educational processes, Blok (2005: 187) points to a need to evaluate students’ behavioural patterns and practices. Here, the quality and quantity of online contributions, cooperation, satisfaction, confidence and motivation can be involved in the overall evaluation portfolio. It will often be necessary to undertake extensive revisions to the curriculum in order to ensure consistency between web 2.0-based learning processes and their evaluation. It is important to use the necessary resources for this work in order to create clear links between activities and the new view of learning so as to enhance student’s perception of their relevance and meaning.

There is a marked difference between working in closed e-learning systems, where it is only the teacher and fellow students who see and can evaluate individual contributions, as opposed to the built-in openness with use of web 2.0 tools. It can be beneficial to use Gilly Salmon’s five-phase
model and e-tivities concept, together with student’s articulation of netiquette, to align expectations at the start of a course.

Finally, web 2.0 activities and INNOTOUR enter into a widely debated field concerning copyright. INNOTOUR is built around Creative Commons that give license for others to reuse, modify and further develop existing material with recognition of the original version. An alternative approach is found in Copyleft that gives license to remove copyright restrictions completely, or modify them in new versions based upon the requirement that this right be maintained in future versions (Berry, 2008). This phenomenon is also known from open source software and offers significant new challenges to intellectual property rights (Liburd & Hjalager 2010 AND 2011), and to student’s confidence when acting in an open learning environment.

6. Summary

Web 2.0 refers to a number of freely available tools on the internet, the so-called social media, but also denotes a new practice associated with these tools. Web 2.0 is characterised by micro-content and openness. It is first and foremost the user’s voice which is manifest here. Web 2.0 practice is for users to generate content and share it with other users. Content is tagged, rewritten, used and reused. Thus there is a distributed authorship, and users’ exploit their relationships in the creation of knowledge.

When web 2.0 is involved in higher education, it is to design learning processes that encourage students to active participation and create in-depth learning through interaction – joint creation via critical thinking and collaboration. Learning with social media presents an opportunity for both individual reflection and immersion via personal blogs, and for collaborative learning through shared knowledge construction in a wiki. Social media can both support a more reflective approach to learning, but also offer the opportunity to make teaching more practical and application oriented.
Social media have been integrated into tourism education at SDU, via the open web 2.0 platform: www.INNOTOUR.com. The INNOTOUR platform is devised to address the fundamentally interdisciplinary and multi-cultural teaching environment of higher tourism education. INNOTOUR aims specifically to act as a gathering place for students, educators, researchers and companies interested in tourism innovation. It is the intention that users should mutually inspire and help one another with innovative initiatives and the creation of new knowledge within the field. Teaching is enriched and developed through the educators’ collaboration on the production of teaching materials. The students solve assignments across the participating countries, thereby working with communication and collaborative skills in practice. The INNOTOUR platform significantly expands students’ knowledge and their learning environment and contributes to a more reflective approach to learning.

When involving social media in teaching, it is important to organize learning activities carefully, so that students are gradually familiarized with the new online learning environment and the various tools that are used. Initially, focus should be on getting everyone online and on creating a good social environment, after which deeper academic assignments can be undertaken. It can be beneficial to use Gilly Salmon’s five-phase model, when a course is planned. The individual online assignments can be formulated on the basis of the e-tivity template, which headings aid in formulating clear and explicit instructions to the students, whilst incorporating motivating elements that can prompt learning. The teacher’s role is changed when web 2.0 is employed in education. Focus is now placed on the teacher as coach and mentor who guides the students through the individual learning activities.

The involvement of web 2.0 in education results in an epistemological shift, in the basis for how learning and knowledge are viewed. Focus is shifted to knowledge as a process and to activities, where learning is seen as participation. As a result, the involvement of web 2.0 necessitates not just new thinking in relation to learning activities, but also of evaluation and assessment where the new complementary norms and forms of knowledge are accommodated (Liburd, 2011a). Revision of curricula will therefore be necessary in order to create alignment to ensure that individual students experience the relevance and meaning with planned learning activities.
7. References

http://connect.educause.edu/Library/EDUCAUSE+Review/Web20ANewWaveofInnovation/40615?time=1223370802


