

“Before you can be chosen, you need to choose yourself first.”
— Nely Galan

Section 1: Thought Leadership Goals

I love this quote because it reminds me that we all have something to share, but we need to believe it ourselves first before putting what we know out into the world. With that said, I will say proudly that **I am a teacher**. My professional sphere of influence is education in technology through materials, advice, lesson plans, pedagogic conversation, website reviews, and more. I especially love the English language, literature, literacy, and all things related to digital storytelling. My heart is to support fellow teachers who desire to successfully maneuver the minefields of technology in education.

Thought creation through scaffolded inquiry is at the forefront of my teaching. Starting organic conversations about the purpose of technology, tapping into what students/teachers already know is my point of contact. I am also a blogger and knowledge curator at thechyfishgrl.com. I have been teaching in one capacity or other for over 20 years and have acquired a growing library of resources on tech ed. I teach anything from simple mouse skills to Google apps and everything in between. I love to organize information in interesting and relevant ways, and create presentations teachers and students can use and enjoy. The wide-open landscape of the internet has added a stunning and varied dimension to learning and makes me very excited about the possibilities in education today.

My overarching goals for establishing a web presence for thought leadership are five-fold:

1. Mentoring Others – Sharing what I know inside and outside the classroom builds partnerships and trust that have mutual benefits. Technology can be stressful. Helping others with problems when they come up is an opportunity to teach problem-solving skills that can carry over to their home life and beyond. This also builds a repertoire of skills on my part as I catalog these problems into my own experiences. Embracing the problems together! This is the only way to learn and grow.
2. Be a Resource – Be the person your staff and educators from around the web can go to if they need to know how to do something. Be open and patient. Working in a library, I have found this to be very important. People would come to me to help them organize class books digitally, to effectively use Google docs, recommend keyboarding programs, and even to change the lightbulbs in their projectors. Creating a cache of resources online that you can point to, including your own research and discoveries, goes a long way to solidifying your expertise.
3. Write! – Blogging on my topic has been a great tool for connecting with others. Tweeting out my ideas has further enabled me to discover new people working in my field. I’ve learned new things too. Other’s working as experts in their field saw my reviews and considered my thoughts important enough to reach out and talk, joining my G+ group and engaging in conversation. This is truly powerful way to establish *authority* in spheres of

influence. A widely distributed literary footprint attracts a global audience and a permanent record of contributions made to your profession.

4. **Train Others** — Public speaking can be scary, but practice can help boost speaking skills. In addition to providing valuable PD at school, producing and sharing online tech tips and videos with others can boost confidence, while building out a nice tool kit for teachers to use. These can be posted to websites or sent via email weekly. Speaking at webinars for organizations like Google and software companies is another good way to establish credibility.
5. **Take the Lead** – This is the old adage to “take the bull by the horns.” Don’t sit back and stay silent if you have something to contribute. To me this involves conquering fear and being a risk-taker. I always tell teachers there is more out there than they can possibly teach in a year, so don’t be afraid to experiment. Throw out what didn’t work and try something new. This also includes online strategies: Take on those trends and issues you see happening in education. Is there a new technology being used in Europe you would like to see in American schools? Don’t just talk to your principal about it, blog about it, contribute to a journal on the topic, create some buzz online through commenting others’ blogs. K-12 technology curriculum ideas don’t just happen on their own, it takes the effort of many to put ideas into practice. (Scivicque, 2013)

Section 2: Role of Base Camp Site

The simple role of my Base Camp site is to manage good content and eagerly pursue what I learn/know. The essential tasks are to store, update and find the right content to answer people’s questions. **My number one goal is for people to find and utilize helpful information that matters to them.**

Thought leadership and information management go hand-in-hand. It’s about listening, organizing, and supporting others through these guiding principles

- **Being helpful and trustworthy** – I want to come to people’s mind and be contacted when they need some advice or help. I want to have the creative solutions and integrity that when I have something to say, it will be found as useful and others will listen. Being a thought leader in this way is earned through intelligent observation and perceptive insight into what people will pay attention to.
- **Having a targeted focus** – My base camp is the ecosystem where I can interact with a group of people and topics that I know about, in this case tech ed. I want to be a trusted advisor, so creating an online presence where I can be “visibly” focused on the teaching and technology gives teachers a go-to social “space” for professional growth and learning.
- **Be visible and speak out** – Through blogging, curating helpful resources, and responding to questions in my field, I can empower others to succeed by sharing lessons learned in the ever-evolving landscape of instructional technology. I can leverage my base camp as a platform to “shout from the rooftops” my practice and experience.
- **Building relationships** – Flash-in-the-pan trends do not forge relationships. It’s through delivering long-term results. I don’t want to be “popular” per se, but a voice that influences other decision-makers. That requires effort! It means paying attention and responding in a timely manner when needs arise.

- **Leading** – This harkens back to point five in section one again. Leadership is bringing people somewhere. It’s about getting something done and doing it in connection with many others through social networking. (De Clerck, 2016)

Section 3: Strategic Plan for Establishing Web Presence

1. Get a professional website

I have one! I’m pretty proud of this accomplishment. I can add WordPress skills to my resume now☺. Our website is not only a part of our ILT final portfolio, but I designed mine to be a “hub” for blogging and other teacher resources and plan to maintain it beyond my MA degree. I am planning to add more content in the future too. My next category section to work on is called, “Teacher Power: Classroom Management and Motivational Tools.” and I hope my site is a go-to spot for teachers to get ideas on incorporating tech into their classroom.

2. Regularly update your professional website

Blog – My blog focus is to inspire teachers in technology use. With this in mind, I plan to blog a lot on app reviews and how to use apps for lesson-planning. For example, I discovered two new tools lately: TouchCast Studios and VidLab that I absolutely love. TouchCast is a broadcasting app for iPad with green screen capabilities and interactive app overlays. VidLab is a really simple video editing/producing app that overlays images/sound effects etc....a much simpler version of iMovie that would be great for elementary kids. I want to create projects and post about my user-experience, guiding others through the process.

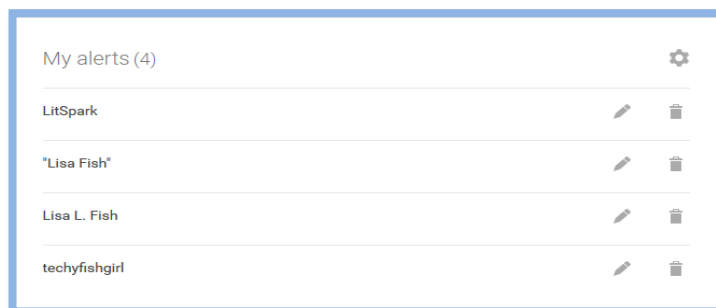
Manuscripts – I think this is a great idea. My research paper that is currently posted is “Moving Toward New Classroom Literacies: A Review of Literature on Changes in Reading Behaviors in the Digital Age.” This is a topic I am very passionate about and can definitely see pursuing and posting research in this area in the future.

Presentations – Again, a great idea. I already do have a number of videos posted in my blog feeds. Ideally I would like a separate section in my menu for presentations on several topics ranging on Google apps to tech tool tutorials. The nice thing about all this, if I need to share with teachers, I have easy access. Or if I am asked a specific tech question, I can (and do often) easily refer to my and others’ websites.

Teaching Materials – I would love to curate teaching plans from around the web. I have so many places where I draw ideas from, like Ask-a-Tech teacher, Pixton, Minecraft Edu, and many others. It would be great to centralize my favorites in one place. Not just links, but actual PDFs to share.

3. Track your traffic

I went ahead and indexed my URL with Google analytics and signed up for Google Alerts. I received my first alert today for LitSpark. It will be interesting to see what comes through. Here are my alert tags:



WordPress already has analytics set up through my Jetpack feature, so I've been enjoying seeing what articles people are most drawn to. I notice that most of my visits are to posts related to digital storytelling and social justice issues. For example, my post on Awra Amba: Rethinking a Beautiful World was one of my favorites. Not just because of the amazing story, but also for how well the media was used to support the story. After doing a critique and tweeting this story one of the creative directors contacted me to thank me. A few people from his network started following me and also read the post. It's one of my most popular posts with 43 views so far.

4. Publish your work via social media sharing sites

Good idea! We have, of course, started our NLS sites, which has encouraged my "outward" thinking concerning my work. I posted some blogs to the general Google+ community with the hopes of attracting some people interested in our focus. Sites like ERIC and others will be a goal for me, as well as publishing in open-access journals. Hopefully I can produce something worthy of it in the next couple years. I discovered SlideShare a few weeks ago, and that place is the BEST! They have this great list of alternative apps to create slides and I was happy to see one I had used recently: Flowvella. Flowvella can support more media (just about anything!) on their platform so I really like it. I made a [Cyberbullying](#) slide set and it's been passed onto a few school districts with 233 views so far! A note about sharing teaching materials. Sometimes companies ask teachers to develop curriculum for them and post on their websites. One is my friend Andrea who did this great Hero's Journey lesson plan for [Pixton](#). I'm seeing more and more teachers uploading directly to sites now as companies invite them to create with their software. It's nice, really, if you like a certain program to have a cache of materials there to use.

5. Leverage social networks

Through this class and INTE 5340, I have gotten into more of a habit of tweeting, something I hadn't done much of before. It's such a strange "thing" in our culture as I study it. I have never witnessed a president tweeting his thoughts before, and yet president elect Donald Trump does all the time. Tweeting seems to be this stream of consciences activity of the world of mostly internal thoughts, which we've never had access to before social media. It also seems to be good for posting activities. I haven't used it for that yet, but almost exclusively for posting my professional work, from which I've made a few nice connections. I need to work on LinkedIn over the break. There's a lot going on there that I haven't tapped into yet.

6. Be a good user of others' content

We regularly reviewed Digital Stories and post to the net. This has been my favorite part of INTE5340. I created rubrics according to Jason Ohler's Storytelling traits and rate on a scale of 1-30. Can't believe how much I've learned about DS doing this! I've enjoyed watching where these critiques traveled online and how they came back to me through responses by authors and their people within their networks. We also commented on peers' blogs bimonthly. This is an activity I will continue into the future. Reading and interacting with my classmates was one of the highlights of my semester. I also regularly comment on other indie writing and education sites that I like. I don't have a Delicious account, but I did sign up for DIIGO finally, which is similar. I got tired of losing my tabs when my computer updated and searching through a very long bookmark list for websites I marked. There's got to be a better way of organizing all that.

7. Complete all profiles

All my profiles that I participate in are pretty much complete. Like I mentioned above, LinkedIn needs a lot of work. I have a number of friends networking there, which I found surprising. What do people *actually do* on LinkedIn? Okay, here's a short list I found by marketing blogger, Anne Casey:

- If you're in business, someone who is unsure about you, will check you out
- Your brand
- Trust and reputation
- Get found and get a job
- Nurture and generate leads
- Reach beyond your regular network and find distributors, partners and providers
- Wealth of content and knowledge
- Stay up to date on what's happening in your network
- Groups- interest/support
- This is the future- be that early bird that gets the worm!

Hmmm, this is intriguing. Many articles have stated that LinkedIn is the “most powerful social media platform in the world,” so it's worth exploring further. (Lowenthal, P., & Dunlap, J., 2012)

Section 4: Preliminary Assessment of Plan's Effectiveness

I think this a “time-will-tell” proposition. There are a few things I have noticed over the semester. One is that when I tweet my content, I get more traffic on my website, especially my blog. And content that was tweeted a while ago and had been re-tweeted continues to get higher visitor counts. It seems the more I jump in on other social sites, the more ubiquitous I become. I recently boosted a post on Facebook and consequently had several people like one of my pages and my blog post visits reached 47 in one day.

I also notice that SEO helps to establish credibility in my field, which is tied in with my focal theme. When I began blogging critiques and tweeting them, I had one author re-tweet on her website. I also had one of the creative directors from another project message and thank me. This all helps to build my brand presence and increase web traffic:



Done correctly, SEO can be long lasting. It really is in the details. I have to pay attention to tagging, keyword searches, provide content for my target audience: teachers. And watch my analytics for trends. It's an investment of time and it positions me as my #1 salesperson of my web business. My plan is to constantly implement the above approaches and tweak what I see going wrong and turn it into something better. The internet holds many hidden treasures and I intend to tap into them. No other time in history do we have vast amounts of information and such high connectivity as we do now. This is a beautiful resource for education!

Section 5: Next Steps

- a. Ignite my [Implementation Plan](#)
- b. Seek out other professionals in my field on Twitter and other social networks and interact regularly: Be a network agent.
- c. Be a learner in the areas of business and ways that are normally not associated with education. Good teaching is often good salesmanship. Our world is becoming increasingly interconnected and picking up skills in marketing and other processes makes me a savvy-global-techno-nerd.
- d. Become Google Suite certified: This will make me marketable to teach in educational training seminars at the school level and beyond.
- e. Keep my ear to SEO trends. For example, G Suite is rolling out their apps to be implemented on websites. Paying attention to new and better ways to link my social sites will keep my platforms modern and up-to-date.
- f. Constantly educate myself and blog through the process. Web 2.0 technologies are evolving and are largely untried in the classroom. Being willing to jump “down the rabbit hole” and try new things will help to demonstrate a fearless drive to bring students into 21st Century literacies.
- g. **Be courageous.**

I know what motivates me. I care. I care about teachers and how hard they work for kids. I care about children growing up strong and smart, being ready for what the world throws at them; being flexible as the ever-changing digital landscape shifts beneath their feet. I want them to be thriving *participants* in this world’s technologies and not merely *spectators*. For me to help them do this, I need to be that too.

And Web 2.0 technologies fascinate me. I get bored easily, so this counts. 😊

Resources

De Clerck, J. (2015). Thought leadership: The role of trust, value and content. Retrieved November 28, 2016, from <http://www.i-scoop.eu/thought-leadership-trust-value-content/> Five goals for

Lowenthal, P., & Dunlap, J. (2012). Intentional web presence: 10 SEO strategies every academic needs to know. EDUCAUSE Review Online. Retrieved from <http://www.educause.edu/ero/article/intentional-web-presence-10-seo-strategies-every-academicneeds-know>.

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