

Research on Application of Micro-blog in Mobile Learning

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Abstract: As a new way of study, M-learning satisfies our needs on fast-learning in this information era. In this article, after introducing the definition and features of Micro-blog and M-learning, the writer has discussed the advantages of Micro-blog's application in M-learning. At the same time, he has also proposed the related potential problems.

Introduction

Along with gradual maturation of mobile internet technology and wireless communication technology, more and more people begin to use mobile phone, tablet computer and other handheld devices to search and spread information whenever and wherever, thus gradually evolved into a new way of learning—mobile learning. As one of the most popular tool of information dissemination, micro-blog has good flexibility and strong interactivity. Constructing mobile learning platform with the help of micro-blog can not only speed up the popularization of mobile learning, but also can play the advantage of mobile learning to a greater extent.

The definition and characteristics of micro-blog

Micro-blog is a platform of information sharing, communication and access based on users' relationship. The user can build his own community through Web, WAP and other clients, update information in about 140 words, and realize instant sharing. As a kind of high-efficient and fast new media application form, people can use short words to express their thoughts, feelings, attitude, which has attracted more attention.

As social media, micro-blog refers to the website and technology allowing people to evaluate, share, write, and exchange each other. That is to say, it has the general characteristics of social media. First, users centered. Truly consider and analyze users' behavior and demand, encourage everyone having interest and demand to participate to meet their own needs and provide convenience for others. Second, openness. As one kind of open social service, the biggest characteristic of micro-blog is openness. Micro-blog has no threshold and opens the door to the users who want to participate in. Meanwhile, each user registered can post, comment and share information in it. Third, instant interaction. Traditional media can only be used for information dissemination and have no good feedback mechanism. As social media, micro-blog is a kind of two-way exchanging platform. The users can not only publish their own information and get feedback from other users, but also evaluate others' information and give your own opinion. Fourth, resources are rich. Although micro-blog can only allow the creation of 140 character message, but its good external link function can make full hyperlinks with other websites and user resource, so that users can easily get rich resource needed.

The definition and characteristics of mobile learning

Briefly speaking, mobile learning is a kind of learning mode making full use of portable technology and across the geographical constraints. Alexander Dye and other scholars give a specific definition to mobile learning: a kind of learning at any time and any place with the help of mobile computing devices. Mobile computing devices used by mobile learning must be able to effectively represent the learning content and provide two-way communication between teachers and learners.

Mobile learning has the following characteristics. First, mobility. Mobility is the most important feature of mobile learning. As long as there is channel providing learning resources, learners can learn at any place (classroom, shopping malls, taxi, and park). Some scholars call the characteristic of mobile learning as multiusability, that is to say, anyone can learn anything at anywhere and anytime. The characteristic is consistent with the concept of lifelong learning, let people recharge themselves whenever and wherever to adapt to social development with fast pace. Second, diversity. Transmission and dissemination of mobile learning is diverse. Knowledge can be released through the mobile phone short message, mobile phone WAP website, mobile phone client, PC website, blog, IM software; the content can be presented by text, pictures, sound, video, animation and other forms; learners can learn through mobile phone, PDA, computer and other terminal equipments. The diversity reduces the threshold of carrying out mobile learning and is convenient to popularization. Third, fragment. While providing the convenience for people to learn whenever and wherever, mobile learning also makes learning fragmented. The complexity of learning environment and learning method make people's attention vulnerable to interfere and not to carry out systematic learning. The fragment of mobile learning determines that mobile learning is only suitable to the presentation of small information unit and simple problem. Fourth, autonomy. The diversity and portability of mobile learning makes learning more interesting. People can put forward request according to their own learning need and learn whenever and wherever after receiving feedback. The content, place, time, and form can be customized. The independent learning can stimulate people's interest, so as to achieve better learning effect than traditional learning.

The advantages of micro-blog in mobile learning

Application of micro-blog in mobile learning can promote the development of mobile learning and play the advantages of micro-blog, which is determined by the features and characteristics of mobile learning and micro-blog.

First, provide many potential learners. As the latest technology of Web2.0, micro-blog quickly swept the world of the internet by features of its timeliness, truthfulness, kindness and quickness, which became the most popular network event in 2010. In the first half of 2011, Chinese new micro-blog users added 132000000 and reached to 195000000. The growth rate exceeded more than 200 percentage point, next to the half of use rate in net citizen. In all kinds of terminals, the use rate of mobile phone micro-blog grew by a large margin while the use rate of micro-blog also has raised one double by mobile phone net citizen from 15.5% by the end of 2010. On one hand, because micro-blog continued to improve function itself in 2011, rapid development provide convenient mobile phone micro-blog service. On the other hand, micro-blog application can give full play to advantage of mobile phone internet. The development of mobile learning cannot do without the participation of learners, and any other Web2.0 techniques have no the development speed and masses foundation except micro-blog. Establishing the corresponding curriculum resources on this basis may promote the development of mobile learning.

Second, give full play to the mobility and convenience of learning. The achievement of mobility

and convenience of learning cannot do without the support of mobile phone and other mobile devices. One of the reasons why micro-blog user group is large is its mobility. Micro-blog users can browse and publish information through mobile phone short message service to better promote the mobility and convenience of learning, which conforms to the 4A standard.

Third, it is conducive to establish positive and harmonious interpersonal relationship. Due to high degree of mobile learners' autonomy and study randomness, it is difficult to establish positive and harmonious interpersonal relationship in mobile learning. And micro-blog can promote interpersonal communication in mobile learning and help learners to build their own network. The importance of micro-blog proposed by Java and Song can be divided into three aspects: information sharing, information searching and establishing extensive circle of friends. The effectiveness of establishing extensive circle of friends is incomparable. Mobile learners can easily carry out real-time chat, forums, @ me, comment and private letters with other learners to communicate, build their own fans and concerns of the people, and establish their own circle of relationship. And micro-blog is more likely to achieve in-depth exchange and promote the construction of knowledge to people with common minds.

Fourth, combine with other techniques easily. Learners are weak in resource access and knowledge management ability, so they need a practical tool to integrate. Micro-blog can be easily combined with video, audio, pictures and other multimedia technology, making learning more effective. You can add the hyperlinks of picture information, voice and video in blog post of micro-blog. The description of 140 words enables learners to clearly understand the multimedia information, screen, integrate media, and improve the efficiency of learning. In addition to the multimedia technology, micro-blog can also be easily combined with other techniques and play a role.

Fifth, lower cost. Micro-blog has already deep into the lives of ordinary people, so constructing the mobile learning platform in this foundation only needs the expansion of function, unlike other special mobile learning platform. Similarly, micro-blog's compatibility to receiving terminal is good. Mobile phone, tablet computer, notebook computer can easily access, and learners of different levels can also be very convenient to use.

Related potential problems existing in application of micro-blog in mobile learning

Micro-blog is welcome due to its advantages. But as a new form of media, it also reveals some shortcomings. First, as social and open mass media, low demand and low threshold of micro-blog will cause information overload, complex, and difficult to identify. At the same time, information transmission of micro-blog is through attention, retransmission and other ways with virus outbreak, which requires learners to identify the authenticity and quality of information. In the process of learning, only paying attention to people with related knowledge and filtering information by some measures can prevent false information and harassment message. Second, "fragments writing" of micro-blog brings meaningless information complex, flooding and rumours, Hot micro-blog events such as "Yong Jin was killed", "Japanese tourist's car was stolen in wuhan" and so on, are the result of false information spread and retransmitted by information source and viral. Taking 140 words as a message, micro-blog brings great convenience to people to express thoughts, feelings and ideas in the form of content. But at the same time, the information expressed is relatively one-sided, not deep and complete, even a large number of ambiguous information crazily spread on the internet, bringing trouble to many users. In addition, brief content aggravates people's desire of expression and writing is more frequently, which may also lead to information overload. Third, because micro-blog belongs to the virtual world, it may cause a lot of people to indulge in fantasy.

According to statistics, more and more people slowly become “micro-blog control”. They always spend a lot of time into micro-blog content writing and reading, affecting normal work and life.

Conclusion

Micro-blog and mobile learning has gradually entered into people’s lives. Application of micro-blog in mobile learning can not only provide a large number of potential learners for mobile learning, but also can give full play to mobility and convenience of learning, which is bound to promote the development of mobile learning. Of course, micro-blog is not a specific network product designed for education, so it can only be used as a supplementary means of learning. Meanwhile, not all learning contents are suitable to be presented by micro-blog, which asks higher requirement to teachers and students. We should take a look at the development of micro-blog in mobile learning and believe that its prospect will be much lighter with the continuous development of micro-blog.

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