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Spring 2007 Survey Educators in Second Life

Each spring, the New Media Consortium (NMC) conducts a comprehensive survey intended to capture insights about the work of individual educators; these typically focus on a specific new-media-related topic. Given the NMC's expansive projects this year in virtual worlds, the Spring 2007 NMC survey was intended to gather information on the activities, attitudes, and interests of educators active in Second Life.

A survey was sent to by email to individuals on the consortium's list of contacts, the Second Life Educators Listserv (SLED) and to those people who had elected to be listed in the NMC Campus Online Directory (<http://sl.nmc.org/directory/>). In addition, we sent a notice within Second Life to the members of the NMC Guests and NMC Members groups.

The results below are from the 209 completed surveys collected between May 1-29, 2007. Slightly fewer than sixty percent of the respondents identified themselves as affiliated with an NMC member organization.

The complete set of responses to the open ended questions are listed in Appendix A.

A. Respondent Demographics

1. How long have you been using Second Life?

6 months- a year	80	39%
1-6 months	64	31%
1-3 years	41	20%
Less than a month	16	8%
longer	6	3%
Total	207	100%

2. Gender

Male	99	48%
Female	106	52%
Total	205	100%

3. Age Range

36-45	68	33%
46-55	65	32%
> 55	34	17%
26-35	30	15%
18-25	8	4%
Total	207	100%

4. I am affiliated with an NMC Member Organization.

Yes	116	57%
No	89	43%
Total	205	100%

5. My role/title in an educational institution is or is most close to:

Faculty	57	28%
Other	35	17%
Technical Support Staff	34	16%
Director / Dean	22	11%
Faculty Support Staff	16	8%
Department Head	13	6%
Library Staff	13	6%
Student	12	6%
Administrative Support Staff	4	2%
Vice President / Provost	1	0%
Total	207	100%

B. Experience Level (with Games and Technology)

6. As a youth I played games like: (multiple answers allowed)

Pac Man	119	58%
Pong	100	49%
None of the above	60	29%
Doom	47	23%
Grand Theft Auto	23	11%

7. Other than Second Life, have you participated in other virtual environments?

Yes	84	42%
No	117	58%
Total	201	100%

8. Have you ever participated in any Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games?

Yes	55	27%
No	151	73%
Total	206	100%

9. Do you own / play any console game systems?

Yes	65	32%
No	139	68%
Total	204	100%

10. How many computers do you personally own?

3	55	27%
2	52	25%
1	34	17%
4	27	13%
more than 5	27	13%
5	9	4%
Total	204	100%

11. I own/use the following types of technology devices: (multiple answers allowed)

Wireless home network	171	86%
MP3 player	161	81%
Internet capable mobile smart phone/PDA (e.g. Blackberry, Treo)	95	48%
Digital Video Recorder (e.g. TiVo)	80	40%
GPS navigation device	51	26%
Portable video player	50	25%

12. What is the operating system on the computer you use the most for Second Life?

Windows XP	116	56%
Mac OSX	80	39%
Windows Vista	7	3%
Other	3	1%
Total	206	100%

C. Experience Level (with Second Life)**13. Are you currently involved with an education-related activity in Second Life? If you answer "yes," please describe the course discipline (104 open-ended responses)**

Yes	105	54%
No	88	46%
Total	193	100%

- Faculty Development, SL Support, Library, Training (36) 34% of 104
- Technology, Computer Science (13) 12%
- Social Sciences (9) 9%
- Art, Theater, Performance (8) 8%
- English, Writing, Languages, Liberal Arts (7) 7%
- Healthcare and Social Services (6) 6%
- Other (6) 6%
- Communities of Practice, Informal Groups (5) 5%
- Taking Classes. Training, Learning (5) 5%
- Sciences (5) 5%
- Business (4) 4%

14. What kinds of educational activities have you done in Second Life?

	I have done	Plan in 6-12 months	N/A
Took a class held in Second Life	79 (43%)	31 (17%)	74 (40%)
Taught in Second Life (real life education or SL skills)	57 (29%)	55 (28%)	82 (42%)
Supervised real life educational class projects and/or class activities	46 (24%)	51 (27%)	93 (49%)
Conducted research in SL	45 (24%)	40 (22%)	99 (54%)
Held one or more class meetings in Second Life with students from your school	44 (23%)	51 (27%)	96 (50%)
Taught a class in that focused on learning SL skills	34 (18%)	41 (22%)	114 (60%)
Held virtual office hours	34 (18%)	55 (29%)	101 (53%)
Mentored student research projects in SL	27 (15%)	35 (19%)	123 (66%)
Host student services and support activities	21 (12%)	41 (23%)	120 (66%)
Taught a real life class entirely in Second Life	14 (8%)	35 (19%)	134 (73%)

15. Are you planning any new educational activities or projects in Second Life? If so, please describe (110 open-ended responses)

Yes	118	65%
No	63	35%
Total	181	100%

- Integration into Existing Courses / New Course Development (55) 50% of 110
- Faculty Support / Development / Community Building (22) 20%
- Unsure (21) 19%
- Exploring / Researching (14) 13%

16. Current ownership of land...

	Currently	Plan in 6-12 months	N/A
The organization I am affiliated with owns a sim (island)	70 (36%)	45 (18%)	88 (46%)
The organization I am affiliated with rents land (a sub-parcel)	33 (19%)	11 (6%)	131 (75%)
I own a sim (island)	17 (10%)	10 (6%)	143 (84%)
I rent land	31 (18%)	12 (7%)	132 (75%)

17. What is your experience with the NMC Campus in Second Life?

I have been there several times	107	52%
I have been to an event or an activity there	47	23%
I have heard about it but I have never been there	32	16%
None, never heard of it	10	5%
I never leave NMC Campus!	9	4%
Total	205	100%

D. How Respondents Use Second Life**18. What percentage of your time in Second Life is done ... (195 responses)**

	0-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%
At school/work	74	38	13	42
At home	33	26	20	92
At public access locations (cafes, libraries, etc)	56	0	1	2

19. When using Second Life, what is your internet connection speed?

Direct line high-speed home cable/DSL	105	51%
Direct line high-speed LAN (Local Area Network)	67	33%
Wireless connection	32	16%
Satellite broadband	1	0%
Dial-up	1	0%
Total	206	100%

20. How many different accounts do you have in Second Life?

one	138	67%
two	42	20%
three	15	7%
More than three	12	6%
Total	207	100%

21. If you answered the question above with a response of more than one, describe why you have more than a single account (70 responses)

- To separate work and play, testing (51) 73% of 70
- Doing special tasks in SL, because of limitations of SL (8) 11%
- Privacy (5) 7%
- Problems with account (3) 4%

22. When you enter Second Life, where do you typically start (what is your “home” location)?

The last place I was at	111	54%
My own land	44	21%
Land my organization owns	25	12%
NMC Campus	16	8%
A specific destination (e.g. via a SLURL in email or from a web site)	17	8%
I do not remember	4	2%

23 . What kinds of general activities have you done in Second Life? (check as many as apply)

Random wandering	187	91%
Meeting new people	158	77%
Listening to presentations and talks	152	74%
Participating in meetings	138	67%
Building things	111	54%
Shopping	107	52%
Attending music/art performances	95	46%
Dancing	84	41%
Owning and working on my own property	72	35%
Other activities, see blow	59	29%
Selling things I created	19	10%

Other activities listed (41):

- Teaching / learning (20) 10%
- Creating / building / scripting / documenting (15) 7%
- Leisure / fun / events (8) 4%
- Supporting / community building (8) 4%
- Exploring (7) 3%
- Just getting started (3) 1%

24. For the avatar account you use the most, your Second Life profile:

includes only basic information	76	37%
completely filled out and updated	59	29%
includes no First Life information	52	25%
not edited / did not know there was one	17	8%
Total	204	100%

E. The Personal Experience

25. On average, how many hours per week do you spend on each of the following activities?

	0 never use	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	More than 12
Facebook	150 (74%)	46 (23%)	5 (2%)	1 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
MySpace	151 (74%)	48 (24%)	4 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
YouTube	24 (12%)	151 (74%)	22 (11%)	4 (2%)	4 (2%)	0 (0%)
Second Life	6 (0%)	74 (36%)	37 (18%)	27 (13%)	19 (9%)	42 (21%)
World of WarCraft	178 (89%)	9 (5%)	4 (2%)	3 (2%)	4 (2%)	1 (1%)

26. Has using Second Life shuffled how you spend your free time? What activities, if any, has your time in Second Life replaced? (multiple answers allowed)

Watching television	99	49%
None- I use it mostly at work	65	32%
Other activities	43	21%
Reading	32	16%
Exercise	16	8%

Other activities listed/comments: (43 responses)

- Internet time - web (7)
- no change (6)
- I really have only begun to explore SL (5)
- other work / consulting (3)
- crafts (2)
- MSN (2)
- sleeping (2)
- Study time (2)
- At first almost everything, it's very consuming
- bargain hunting / shopping in RL :-)
- drinking and carousing
- I am behind on my games, but my reading is fine.
- I don't watch tv. What few shows I watch I download
- I do it and watch tv
- It is actually a part of my work life! I am lucky!
- N/A
- other computer programming activities somewhat
- Professional development
- research, grading, church stuff
- Seem to work 24/7 but squeeze in time for SL...
- set time when usually too tired for other stuff
- the search for something interesting to read or do
- this is a depressing question

27. In terms of your avatar's appearance (check all that apply):

I have designed my avatar to resemble myself	94	46%
I rarely or never change it	81	39%
I regularly change my appearance (I have multiple outfits/representations)	79	38%
I have designed my avatar to be rather different from myself	60	29%
I am/sometimes appear as something not human (e.g. robot, cartoon, object)	17	8%
I am/sometimes appear as the opposite gender	17	8%
I am/sometimes appear as an animal	14	7%

28. The items you have purchased in Second Life include (check all that apply):

Clothes/skins/objects for my avatar's appearance	135	82%
Furniture	71	43%
Media devices (audio, video, web interaction tools)	60	37%
Landscape items (plants, trees, etc)	56	34%
Buildings	52	32%
Decorations	51	31%
Gift items	43	26%
Vehicles (cars, bikes, boats, planes, etc)	43	26%
Other, see below	44	27%

Other responses (44):

- Nothing (22) 13%
- Avatars and enhancements (9) 5%
- Scripts / scripted objects (8) 5%
- Land (4) 2%
- Image uploads (2) 1%

29. How many friends/contacts does your avatar have (estimated)?

1-10	90	44%
11-30	57	28%
31-50	23	11%
0	18	9%
51-100	10	5%
more than 100	8	4%
Total	206	100%

30. In what ways do you interact with your friends/contacts? (multiple answers allowed)

I send instant messages when I see they are logged in	156	76%
I offer them teleports to join me in different locations	140	68%
I share objects from my inventory with them	117	57%
I do not use or pay attention to this feature	33	16%
Other ways	23	11%

31. Describe your most positive experience in Second Life (165 responses, detailed in the appendix).

- Rich interactions, meeting new people, expanding networks, generosity of community (74) 45%
- Education events, teaching / learning in SL (46) 28%
- Attending performances, art, music, social events (14) 8%
- Exploring new places (14) 8%
- Creating / building (12) 7%

32. Describe your worst experience in Second Life (172 responses, detailed in the appendix).

- Technical issues / using SL (62) 36%
- Griefing / abuse (57) 33%
- Communication / uncomfortable interactions / inappropriate behavior (21) 12%
- Isolation / being lost / boredom (13) 8%
- None (10) 6%
- Embarrassment (8) 5%
- Other (1) 1%

F. The Professional Experience – Working in SL

33. Please describe how your professional network expanded or what professional gains, if any, have you made by being in Second Life (162 responses, detailed in the appendix).

- Expanded professional network, increased collaborations (94) 58%
- None (27) 17%
- Collaboration with local/regional colleagues, becoming local expert (21) 13%
- Professional Opportunities; ones not in RL (11) 7%
- Other (9) 6%

34. What locations have you visited in Second Life that you would most recommend to other educators? Why? Please include the name of the region and a brief description. (108 responses, detailed in the appendix)

Most mentioned locations:

- NMC (25) 23%
- NOAA (12) 11%
- Edu Island (12) 11%
- International Spaceflight Center, Spaceport Alpha (11) 10%
- Infoland (7) 6%
- ISTE (7) 6%
- Ohio University (7) 6%
- Others (27)

35. What potential do you see for Second Life in education? Please rate from 1= none to 5 = high potential.

	1 none	2	3	4	5 high
Teaching full courses	10 (5%)	27 (13%)	45 (22%)	63 (31%)	59 (29%)
Conducting training	4 (2%)	8 (9%)	37 (18%)	76 (37%)	69 (34%)
Professional development	5 (2%)	18 (9%)	42 (21%)	69 (34%)	69 (34%)
Artistic Expression	0 (0%)	6 (3%)	23 (11%)	42 (21%)	133 (65%)
Simulation activities / scenario based training	1 (0%)	4 (2%)	22 (11%)	61 (30%)	115 (57%)
Role-playing	0 (0%)	3 (1%)	10 (5%)	59 (29%)	132 (65%)
Team building	3 (1%)	11 (5%)	40 (20%)	73 (36%)	76 (37%)
Basic content concepts	9 (5%)	22 (11%)	57 (29%)	67 (34%)	43 (22%)
Distance Learning programs	6 (3%)	16 (8%)	32 (16%)	76 (38%)	72 (36%)
Group work / collaboration / meetings	2 (1%)	11 (6%)	30 (15%)	70 (35%)	85 (43%)

36. Pick one new feature that would be most important to you as an educator or student:

Built-in voice communication	67	33%
Special grid for educators	42	21%
Easier access to web content (HTML on a prim)	27	13%
Integration with other 3D modeling tools	20	10%
Easier tools to show presentations	21	10%
Other, please specify **	21	10%
An open source client	3	1%
Total	205	100%

Other responses (21):

- Unsure (2)
- A primer on getting started
- A really easy to use open source client.
- A way to easily share and store educational builds
- All of the above (except open source client)
- Allowing adults to work on more than one TG sim
- Better long form video functionality
- Both voice & easier tools
- Easier building and scripting
- Emphasis: integration with other 3D modeling tools
- Fixing the lag and increasing stability. K12 Grid
- LOL! All of the above!
- Low-res client for less powerful computers
- Mobile and blogging communications in and out from SL
- Not sure, but need to make it easier for students
- Offline (local to PC) or open source server.
- Open access of the educational site
- Open source server
- Reduce the sexual content of SL

G. The Second Life Environment/Experience

37. How strongly do you associate the following characteristics with Second Life? Please answer using a 1-5 scale where (1) is "No association" and (5) is "High association."

	1 None	2	3	4	5 High
Engaging	7 (3%)	16 (8%)	33 (16%)	58 (28%)	92 (45%)
Interactive	1 (0%)	10 (5%)	29 (14%)	61 (30%)	105 (51%)
Easy to use	19 (9%)	58 (28%)	75 (36%)	35 (17%)	19 (9%)
Realistic	17 (8%)	62 (30%)	73 (35%)	45 (22%)	9 (4%)
Social	4 (2%)	13 (6%)	26 (13%)	81 (39%)	82 (40%)
Global	4 (2%)	13 (6%)	30 (15%)	68 (33%)	91 (44%)

38. How do you feel about companies marketing their products and services in Second Life?

	1 It would diminish my overall experience	2	3 Neutral	4	5 It would be valuable to learn about companies' products and services
I feel....	27 (13%)	29 (14%)	77 (37%)	39 (19%)	34 (17%)

39. Please rate your experience with Second Life on the following attributes. Choose one rating for each using a 1-5 scale where (1) is "poor" and (5) is "excellent."

	1 Poor	2	3	4	5 Excellent
Ease of creating account	1 (0%)	14 (7%)	27 (13%)	92 (45%)	72 (35%)
Learning how to navigate	11 (5%)	38 (18%)	80 (39%)	63 (31%)	14 (7%)
Learning how to communicate	6 (3%)	28 (14%)	63 (31%)	77 (38%)	31 (15%)
Creating / modifying my avatar	7 (3%)	37 (18%)	68 (33%)	69 (34%)	24 (12%)
Meeting other people	9 (4%)	16 (8%)	48 (24%)	84 (41%)	47 (23%)
Creating objects and scripting	39 (20%)	67 (34%)	56 (28%)	30 (15%)	8 (4%)
Using rich media (audio, video)	37 (18%)	67 (33%)	58 (29%)	36 (18%)	4 (2%)

40. What topics would you like to know more about in Second Life? (check as many that apply)

Learning how to write or use scripts	133	67%
Learning more interesting places to explore	125	63%
Learning how to build things	117	59%
Learning how to create machinima (video)	116	58%
Learning how to interact better (gestures, animations)	92	46%
Learning how to improve my avatar	62	31%
Other, please specify (see below)	44	22%
Learning how to take photos	35	18%

Other topics suggested:

- Best educational practices, tips (8)
- Already constantly learning, creating, doing (2)
- Sculpties (2)
- A non-immersive 2nd life orientation
- Alternative guide systems for disabled users
- Connect learning objectives with SL possibilities
- Creating highly adaptive learning environments.
- Creating special environments for specific lessons
- Educational activity and audience dev outcome evaluation
- Finding ways to meet other educators.
- Flying and jumping around
- Furthering skills with hosting seminar/conferences
- How to build a customized client, import geometry
- How to create meaningful experiences in SL
- I want better and easier tools for my classroom.
- I'll start researching religion in SL soon.
- Learn how and where to promote educational events.
- Learning about educational tech tie-ins
- Learning how design learning objects.
- Learning how to collect data
- Learning how to manage knowledge building communities
- Learning how to perform live music in SL.
- Learning how to use skype and also live video feed
- Learning to host my own server when it is OSS
- Make radically non-human or non-organic avatar
- Navigation
- Pedagogy, pedagogy, pedagogy!
- Photoshoppery.
- Presenting, and presenter resources
- Sensor/motion data translation into SL
- Uses at the K-12 level
- Using SL multimedia to support trainings
- Virtual property laws; real estate transactions
- Voice communication

41. What online resources do you use to learn about Second Life? (check as many that apply)

Second Life Educators listserv	132	69%
Second Life site forums and knowledge base	106	56%
NMC Campus Observer	99	52%
SimTeach wiki	73	38%
New World Notes	39	21%
Reuters in Second Life	36	19%
Other resources (see below)	79	39%

Other resources listed (79):

- Other blogs, web resources (43) 22%
- Colleagues, / contacts (12) 6%
- In world organizations / resources (10) 5%
- Email lists (7) 4%
- None / not applicable (7) 4%

42. What is your prediction for the future of Second Life?

It will achieve some great applications but will not go mainstream	52	26%
It is the future of the web	48	24%
It offers great potential now, but will not be around in 5 years.	25	12%
It is mostly hype and will implode any day now.	5	2%
Other, please specify (see below)	72	36%
Total	202	100%

Breakdown of 72 other responses:

- Great Potential / Taste of the 3D Future (33) - 16% of 202
- Not the Future (14) - 7%
- Not Sure / Other (10) - 5%
- Becomes 3D Web / Part of Future Web (6) - 3%
- All of the Above (5) - 2%
- Not the 3D Web (4) - 2%

