The Potential of Personal Digital Archives in the Social Studies Classroom

Abstract.
Participants will be introduced to and provided with guidelines and an interface designed to show the potential of creating personal or community digital archives to teach the theme of time, continuity, and change. This interactive session will give participants an understanding of how to: 1) use a digital archive to support the concept of everyman/woman/community is their own historian; and 2) identify how and where to build such an archive to meet the goals and objective of their own classrooms, schools and communities.

Session goals

A number of last year's sessions highlighted the potential of technology in the social studies classroom. However issues of time, permanence of materials on line, and the pace of innovation that can quickly make products and artifacts stored years earlier unopenable and inaccessible, were seen as issues confronting the social studies educators who used technology. The concept of developing a digital archive is designed to overcome such problems while supporting such teaching activities as detailed in session focusing on teaching the doing of history through such activities as collecting oral histories. The goal of this interactive session is to provide participants with information about a resource/tool designed to address such concerns as detailed above, while encouraging the integration of technologies to support the teaching and learning of the doing of history. Participants will examine how to use, and develop a searchable, and evolving digital archive for their classrooms.

Session Content and Skills focus

The session is designed to examine and explore how a personal or community digital archive can be designed as a tool to encourage teachers and students to practice the doing of history within their own families, schools and communities. The session content will focus on how such a digital archive can be utilized: 1) to support disciplined personal and contextual historical inquiry and 2) to store an unlimited number of digital history resources, that can be downloaded, developed, categorized and stored over generations.

Presentation strategies
This presentation will begin with an initial overview of the possibilities of using and developing a personal digital archive. This will begin with examining guidelines that would inform the development of a digital archive and a user interface in order to highlight how teachers and students can begin to develop personal and or community digital archives that provide the opportunity to make solid conceptual connections to such themes as time, continuity and change. Discussions will focus 1) where and how to find storage facilities for the archive 2) visions of the possible for its implementation in schools and surrounding communities; and 3) how to use the interface to begin to build a digital archive.