



## **Can Utilising Social Networking Deter the Learner's Engagement?**

**Eric Bates**

[eric.bates@dit.ie](mailto:eric.bates@dit.ie)

Dublin Institute of Technology (Ireland)

### **Abstract**

The Irish Standards Based Apprenticeship Programme involves a ten week block release course into a Higher Education Institute. Lecturing on such a course provides challenges for both lecturer and student. Working within a very restrictive time period meant looking for innovative ways to facilitate student revision. Online quizzes were decided upon as a means to interest the students in the revision process. Google Docs was utilized to produce online module quizzes. The production of the quizzes in this format was user friendly and almost intuitive. A platform was needed to host the quiz. Being cognizant of the power of social networking as part of the student's lives, it was decided to utilise Facebook to encourage student participation. A Facebook page was set up and various content such as videos and pictures were uploaded. This produced a favourable response from the students. The quizzes were then introduced through the Facebook platform. The results were surprising as the majority of students did not engage with the quizzes. Reasons cited included student's perception of an invasion by the lecturer into a private, non educational social forum. Emailing the link directly to the students proved more successful with 80% of the students engaging with this revision source and 70% rating it favourably. Further work needs to be done as the preliminary quizzes were of a multiple choice format. Such recitation of facts and the association with a surface approach learning is not the desired outcome. Time is an issue with utilising such innovations as the software requires practice for the user to explore all the possibilities inherent in such tools. This will not be a deterrent as this small research project has proved successful and will be further expanded upon.