VoiceThread

A guide to the collaborative slideshow software

LEARNING TECHNOLOGY SERVICES
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Objectives:

1. In your own words, describe what the VoiceThread tool is and list 2 ways that you can use it in your classroom.
2. List two VoiceThread resources for support.
3. In the student role, complete a VoiceThread assignment in this workshop.
4. As an instructor, develop one graded activity using VoiceThread in this workshop.
5. Administer and grade the VoiceThread assignment you developed to one student.

Overview

VoiceThread is a multimedia, cloud application that allows you to create presentations to share with others who subsequently can make comments using voice, text, and video.

“Cloud application” means there is no software to install. The only system requirement is an up-to-date version of Adobe Flash. VoiceThread does work on a Mac. VoiceThread will work in any modern web browser and on almost any internet connection.

Access to the secure UMD dedicated VoiceThread server is made using one of two routes:

1. umd.voicethread.edu login
2. ELMS (Canvas) server using the modules or assignments tools

If VoiceThread is created as an assignment, it is integrated with the ELMS grade book. Once the VoiceThread application has been integrated with your ELMS course, you can create a VoiceThread activity.

Creating Presentations

Both instructors and students can upload, share and discuss documents, presentations, images, audio files and videos. Over 50 different types of media can be used in a VoiceThread.
Commenting
Comment on VoiceThread slides using one of five powerful commenting options: microphone, webcam, text, phone, and audio-file upload.

Sharing
Keep a VoiceThread private, share it with specific people, or open it up to the entire world. Shared VoiceThreads privileges can be assigned as view, comment, edit.

Uses in your course

Non-graded assignments – add a VoiceThread presentation as a non-graded assignment in a module or embedded on a page. There will be no columns in the gradebook. This is useful for content review, extra information like annotating a video, or peers to review each others’ VoiceThreads.

Lectures – allows student to view and comment on a lecture. This can be graded or not graded. If graded, students must listen to the entire lecture to get the points. Useful for missed class days due to snow or travel. Remember to organize the lectures into 5-15 min chunks.

Graded assignments – students can get points for reviewing a posted lecture, commenting on an instructors’ VoiceThread or create a presentation as an assignment.

Groups – VoiceThread assignments can be used for Groups to present their work to the class without taking up class time,

Creating a VoiceThread

There are 3 steps in VoiceThread creation:

Step 1. Create | Step 2. Comment | Step 3. Share

Create

1. Go to http://ww.voicethread.com and register with your UMD email and any password.

2. A new VoiceThread can be added from the Home page by clicking the “Create” button in the bottom-right corner of the Course View.
3. To add content to a Voice Thread, click the “Add Media” button in the middle of the interface.

4. Select the media source. There are several ways to add media to a VoiceThread: from your computer, other media services, webcam photos and video, or a URL. The URL must point to a file (pdf, doc, mov). NOTE: You cannot upload YouTube videos.

5. The most common action is to add files from your computer. To do this, select the first option from the drop-down menu. Double-click or drag and drop files to this “Add Media” site from your computer to the “Add Media” icon. Files can be added as a group or one at a time. You can add images, video, audio, documents and PowerPoint, files.

6. All of the files you have added will appear in the VoiceThreads window. Reorder them by clicking an image and dragging it to the desired location.

NOTE: The “Add Media” link shifts to the upper left-hand side of the interface.
7. After all of the media has been added to the VoiceThread, complete the project by adding comments. The "Add Comment" link is at the top left. Comments can be added using the following methods: text, audio, video, phone comments, and files.

*NOTE: When using audio narration, you can annotate your narration using the pop-up colored pencils, to highlight areas you are talking about.*

8. When finished, click the "Share" link at the top of the VoiceThread. VoiceThreads can be shared with a link or embedded, as well as shared with the class. You can assign privileges to view, comment or edit your VoiceThread.

9. The VoiceThread will now show up in your list of VoiceThreads on the Homepage.
Adding a VoiceThread to your Course

There are four simple steps to adding a VoiceThread assignment to your ELMS courses:

1. Add VoiceThread to your course.
2. Set up your VoiceThread assignment.
3. Waiting for students to submit work. (See Graded Assignment information only)
4. Grade student work. (See Graded Assignment information only)

**STEP 1. Add VoiceThread To Your Course**

VoiceThreads can be added to your course as a graded or ungraded assignment. Steps below are for each assignment type.

**Non-Graded Assignment**

1. Navigate to the "Modules" area of your course.
2. Find the module to which you would like to add VoiceThread, and click the "Add Content" button.
3. Select "External Tool" from the menu.
4. Click inside the "External Tool Options" box to open a new window with a list of tools.
5. Select "VoiceThread" from the list of tools. Click the "Select" button.
6. Give your link to the tool a title if you’d like.
7. Click the Save button.
8. When finished, be sure to publish the assignment in Canvas by clicking the green “cloud” so that students can see the assignment in Canvas.
Graded Assignment

1. Navigate to the “Assignments” area of your course.

2. Create a new assignment by clicking on the blue “Assignments” button at the top.

3. Provide a name for the assignment and write a description, if you choose.

4. Under Submission Type, select “External Tool”.

5. Click on the text field below the “External Tool URL”.

6. Select “VoiceThread” from the list. Click the blue “Select” button.

7. Go back to the Assignment Setup menu and click “Load in New Window”.

8. Return to the setup page for the assignment. Click the “Save” button

9. When finished, be sure to publish the assignment in Canvas by clicking the green “cloud” so that students can see the assignment in Canvas.

NOTE: If you are using “Modules” to organize your course but would like to add a graded VoiceThread Assignment, first create the assignment in the “Assignments” area and link it to “Modules”.

STEP 2. Setting up your VoiceThread assignment

After you have added VoiceThread to your course, you’ll need to decide what you want students to see when they click on that link. Here are the steps to set up the assignment.

Select the type of assignment - Start by clicking on the link you’ve just created. This will show you the VoiceThread Setup page where you can select the option that best fits your needs. These options are detailed below.

There are 4 options for VT Setup:

- Course View
- VT Home
• Individual VT
• Assignment Builder – *must use for graded assignments.*
Course View – Display the collection of VoiceThreads that have been shared with your course. Anything that has not yet been explicitly shared with your course will not appear here. This is a good option when you want students to find and comment on each other’s work or if you want to allow students to review all course materials prior to an exam.

VT Home – Display all of a student’s VoiceThread content in a single view. This includes all VoiceThreads and all courses that belong to them. This option is useful if you want to create a simple portal into VoiceThread without directing students to any specific content.

Individual VT – Display any VoiceThread that you have created. When students click on the link, they’ll see just this one VoiceThread. This option is the best way to create a VoiceThread discussion board or lecture. Students will not need to look through a collection of VoiceThreads to find the correct one; they will be taken straight to it.

Assignment Builder – If you want to integrate VoiceThread with your gradebook, you must use the Assignment Builder. There are three types of assignments to select:

- **Create a VoiceThread** – students will upload a VoiceThread that they created
- **Submit a Comment** – students get points for comments made on an instructor’s VoiceThread, with the option of indicating a number of required comments.
- **Watch a VoiceThread** – students get points for watching an instructor’s VoiceThread
1. **Create an Assignment - Ungraded** – After selecting the type of ungraded assignment you would like to create (Course View, VT Home, or Individual VT), you’ll be walked through the steps to complete the setup process. You can include a description for your assignment. You have the option to create a new VoiceThread from the VT interface or attach a VoiceThread you have already created. Students can add comments; however, they are not integrated with the ELMS gradebook.

2. **Create an Assignment - Graded** – All assignments that are integrated with the Gradebook are created *only* by selecting the Assignment Builder link in the Assignments area only.

   Select the assignment that you would like to create (see above), you’ll be walked through the steps to complete the setup process. You can include a description for your assignment. You have the option to create a new VoiceThread from the VT interface or attach a VoiceThread you have already created.

### Copying a VoiceThread and Removing Comments

If you would like to reuse a VoiceThread that had been Commented on (either by yourself or students in another course), you can copy it and reset the copy without comments.

1. Open the VoiceThread. In the upper left next to the VT title, click on the bars to access the menu. Click the “Edit” link. (see right)

2. This will open up the Edit view for that VoiceThread. At the top right, under your name, is a gear. Click the gear to access the drop-down list.

3. Select the “Copy this VoiceThread” link (see below)
4. The copy menu opens. You can give the copy a new name, description, and tags. Most important, you can select which comments to keep in the new copy – keep all comments, keep only your comments, or keep none of the comments.

5. Lastly, proceed with the copy.

**STEP 3: Waiting for Students to Submit Work (Graded Assignment Information only)**

1. **Waiting for students to submit work** - When students click on the link for a graded assignment, they will see the assignment you’ve created. They can immediately create or select a VoiceThread to submit for the Create Assignment, record comments on your VoiceThread for the Comment Assignment, or watch the VoiceThread for the Watch Assignment. As soon as they click on the “Submit assignment” button, you will be able to grade their work. You will be able to remind students to submit in the grading view. Here is an example of the student view. There is a Voice Thread student guide on the ELMS Support site.

2. **Grading Student Work** - When you’re ready to grade a VoiceThread assignment, simply return to your course and click on the VoiceThread assignment link again. This will display the grader. Students in the course are listed to the right with students who have submitted their assignment at the top. You can search on a student name or sort by name, submission order or grade.

   To grade a student’s work, click on that student’s name on the right to see their submission.
You can click on each comment below his or her name individually to jump directly to it. Enter a grade on a percentage scale (0-100), and hit “Enter” on your keyboard. This grade will immediately be entered into your ELMS course gradebook as a score.

NOTE: If you have set the assignment to be worth less than 100 points, still grade it on a scale of 0-100, and the score will be adjusted accordingly in your gradebook.

If you have students who have not yet submitted their assignments, click on the “Remind” button to send them an email reminder. Click “Remind all students” to send an email to everyone who has not yet submitted.

Support

Extensive up-to-date support materials can be found at: [http://www.voicethread.com](http://www.voicethread.com) > About > How-to

Our team of instructional designers is available to help you plan the design of your course. Contact us for an appointment at 301.405.2945 or learningtools@umd.edu.
The mission of the Learning Technology Services team is to help faculty design online instructional environments, content and activities that will provide students with effective, compelling and measurable learning experiences.

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