

PREVIOUS AUTHORS' PERSONA

Name: Carol Hesse

Job Title: Assistive Technology Specialist

Area: T/TAC Online Region 4



Carol, 49, is married with 2 children and lives in Manassas, Virginia with her husband.

She joined George Mason T/TAC in 2001, with 21 years of experience teaching children with severe disabilities and administering special education programs. Carol had her B.A. in Education from Towson University in Maryland and a M.Ed. in Special Education from Virginia Tech University.

Her job at the George Masons Assistive Technology Center involves the development of training programs designed to help teachers and parents with special need children.

Due to budget constraints and number of hours spent traveling, her institution has decided to shift focus from face-to-face training to more online training programs. This would work in Carol's favor since it means spending more time at the office or even at the comfort of her home where she can use her personal computer and be able to create more training programs for her audience.

She is an expert with Microsoft Word and PowerPoint, a novice Flash, Captivate, Camtasia, Adobe Presenter, Adobe Connect and Podcast user. Carol would like to be assisted by an experienced user when it comes to the use of technological tools.

Carol learned how to create Webshops through the use of cheat sheets or "how to guides" and has created about 5 Webshops so far. This is due to the fact that though the online training template system is simple, easy to use, very consistent, has a lot of options including the ability to cut and paste, it takes a lot of time to create a single Webshop which is at least 3hrs and sometimes days.

It takes her all this time because of the following difficulties with editing such as her inability to make corrections to text once it is out there and the amount of time spent to reorder slides. There is also the problem of limited design options and technology that can be incorporated, such as outdated Web 2.0 and the lack of multiple video formats and also the current template system also requires HTML coding which takes forever to do.

It is also difficult for Carol to view what she has done and no data on how many people have completed each Webshop requiring additional time and work. The template system is also text based which limits her on the use graphics and the ability to upload more videos. Carol would like to be able to collaborate more with other creators and trainers either face-to-face or through email.

Carol would like to see the availability of or more format options especially video, interactive site, automatic HTML formatting and not have to use HTML for simple formatting, easy options for adding graphics, ease of accessibility, more user friendliness, and the inclusion of interactive type of e-learning. She would also like to have reminders and warning flags, auto save option, more e-learning through the use of video and narration, and the ability to track the number of people completing each Webshop.

According to Carol, her inability to know whether people actually uses her Webshops deters her from creating more Webshops and that unless the above problems are tackled, the motivation to create more Webshops would be low.

POTENTIAL AUTHORS' PERSONA

Name: Nellie Newman

Job Title: Instructional Consultation Team Specialist

Area: T/TAC Region 8

Education: BS Elementary Education/Masters Special Education



Nellie Newman, 37, is married and living with her husband and two children in Williamsburg. She has just started working at T/TAC as an Instructional Consultant Team Specialist after working for 15 years with special needs children. She is so passionate about this work because her sister's son has autism, although it has always been her desire to work with children who have special needs, even when she was an undergraduate.

Her job at T/TAC allows her to work closely with educators. Nellie is responsible for creating and facilitating face to face training workshops. She has accessed T/TAC Online and has perused the Webshops as a learner, but due to time restraints and her unfamiliarity with the process of creating a Webshop, she has never attempted to create online training on T/TAC Online. The Region she works with is interested in creating a future Webshop, and Nellie is very interested to know what the process entails.

Nellie believes that online training is a way to make training available to people without travel. It offers a person independence, in that they can do it at their leisure. Nellie also believes that due to the independent nature of online training, the facilitator has the added responsibility of providing enough guidance for the learner to grasp concepts. She believes that a good Webshop will provide live contact for follow up if needed.

Nellie believes that a good Webshop would offer feedback to the learners and a way to interact with the facilitator. She would like to see a Webshop with goals and objectives clearly available for the learner's benefit, as well as ways for the learner to interact with other learners via live chat, as well as a way for learners to share resources with each other. Everything should be "user-friendly"; Webshops easy to access for learners and if any forms need to enable the completion of a Webshop, the ability to do that electronically should be available.

Nellie is comfortable using cheatsheets, hints and online help as technical support. She is comfortable using PowerPoint, but hasn't been exposed to Adobe products other than Photoshop.