

## AccessACE social software tools blogs, wikis, bookmarks and podcasts

The AccessACE project has developed a range of free online tools to extend the information gathering and information dissemination features of the project.

These tools are characterised by their ability to promote online collaboration and sharing. Blogs, wikis and other tools such as social bookmarking sites and podcasts, make use of a user generated tagging system, also called a folksonomy<sup>1</sup>.

### The AccessACE blog

<http://accessace.edublogs.org>

**The project blog enables everyone to get on to the same page – literally!**

The term 'blog' is derived from 'web log'. Blogs often provide commentary or news on a particular subject, or others function as more personal online diaries, and in our case it will be a journal of the progress and developments in the project. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of most blogs.

A project blog is as a great way to manage project communication. By running a project blog you automatically collect, organise, and publish the documents, ideas and discussions that are the lifeblood of the project. The blog helps to shape these raw materials into a coherent narrative.

The chronological, serialised nature of the weblog helps to make it the project's journal.

This kind of storytelling can become a powerful tool in disseminating information and keeping everyone informed on the progress of the project. Please feel free to join the debate by adding your comments on the blog comment section, or download and listen to a podcast of the blog entry.

### The AccessACE wiki

<http://accessace.wikispaces.com>

In contrast the project wiki is a place where there can be more active collaboration. A wiki is an editable web page, where you can add a word, sentence or paragraph on the page – either anonymously, or as an invited, registered user. Our project wiki allows you to freely contribute to certain pages of the wiki – for instance the *E-learning around the Regions* sections allows you to add your bit about the use of ICTs at your centre and in your region.

This is an excellent tool to gather collective wisdom around a particular topic. The online encyclopaedia, called *wikipedia* is an brilliant example of this.

The AccessACE wiki should be your first stop for up-to-date information on e-learning around the regions, a list of teacher tools and resources as well as the latest research on e-learning/blended learning in ACE.

### AccessACE social bookmarking site

<http://del.icio.us/accessace>

Social bookmarking sites are a popular way to store, classify, share and search links on the internet through the practice of tagging.

We use the del.icio.us site, but there are many others. Most of them are free.

The main use of a social bookmarking site is to store your bookmarks online, which means that you have access the same bookmarks from any computer and that you can add bookmarks from anywhere, too. Because you use tags to organise and remember your bookmarks, it is a much more flexible system than folders on your computer browser.

You can also use social bookmarking sites to share and access links that your friends and colleagues bookmark, and you can share links with them in return. So, if you tag your favourite sites with the AccessACE tag, it will be accessible to other AccessACE project participants.

Either way, you will have a collection of all your most useful and popular websites available online wherever you go. A very useful tool for a busy ACE teacher.

### AccessACE podcasting site

<http://accessace.podomatic.com>

A podcast is a short piece of digital media, in this case an MP3 file, that is recorded on a computer using free software such as Audacity, and then published to an online site such as [www.podomatic.com](http://www.podomatic.com)

The purpose of this tool is to add another level of interactivity and communication to our suite of tools. It enables us to share with you activities as they have happened. You have the choice of downloading this on to your computer and listening to it at your leisure. Or, you can save them on to your digital media player or burn them to a CD.

Like many of these tools, podcasts specifically cater for individual learning styles, and are an excellent way for you to access information on the development and activities of the project in your own time and in small chunks.

You can listen to our inaugural podcast where the Loddon Mallee regional director, Erica Rosat, gives an introduction to the AccessACE project at a recent meeting in Bendigo.

<sup>1</sup>A folksonomy is a user generated taxonomy used to categorise and retrieve Web pages, photographs, Web links and other web content using open ended labels called tags.