Assignment 1

by
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Management and Evaluation of Instructional Technology and Distance Education Programs

SoftChalk

SoftChalk LLC. is a privately held company that was founded in 2002 by Sue Polyson Evans, Robert Godwin-Jones and Peter Huneke (SoftChalk, 2012). The company is currently located in Richmond, Virginia and continues to strive towards innovation and being the best e-learning content solution for educators. This year the company launched a new product called SoftChalk Cloud, a portable option for educators to create and deliver e-learning content. The company's main product is called "SoftChalk" which is a content authoring software created for educators that requires minimum effort to create a refined and interactive e-learning content. SoftChalk's company website offers tons of examples, showcases, videos and information on how SoftChalk works and can be used. Check the website out to learn more at: http://softchalk.com.

Products and Services

As of this year SoftChalk LLC. offers two e-learning authoring solutions: SoftChalk and SoftChalk Cloud. The SoftChalk software is a content authoring tool that allows educators to easily create interactive lessons. The main editing window (see Appendix A) is very similar to a word processor window. By simply typing text or by copy and pasting content, one can create an e-learning lesson. SoftChalk allows educators to a) customize the design and layout of lesson with a wide selection of templates b) insert media such as video, audio, and images with a click of a button c) add interactive activities and quizzes from a variety of pre-built selections. Once you've added your text and selected a template, SoftChalk quickly publishes an interactive lesson with navigation and if you select the "print lesson" option, it will also be displayed in your lesson (see Appendix B).

Every lesson is also mobile friendly and automatically detects the appropriate delivery format for each device. SoftChalk prices are very reasonable and they do offer educational discounts (see Appendix C). SoftChalk Cloud launched in 2012 and offers everything that SoftChalk for the desktop does, but with the ability to be accessible from anywhere via the web. SoftChalk Cloud also gives the user the ability to manage, share and track the lessons online. This new service provided by SoftChalk LLC. makes their authoring tool option more accessible and portable for all users.

SoftChalk's Value for ITDE Managers

Instructional Technology & Distance Education (ITDE) managers can benefit from great tools like SoftChalk and SoftChalk Cloud because of how easy they make creating online instructional lessons. As ITDE managers become busier and are required to produce highly engaging and interactive lessons, SoftChalk offers an affordable and professional solution. ITDE managers are given an opportunity to focus on their content and not worry about learning how to use difficult software. With SoftChalk Cloud an ITDE manager is able to work from home and work on the same file as well as manage and track their students' lessons. The lessons are accessible at any time, they are professional-looking and interactive games and activities can be developed with ease.

References

SoftChalk (2012). *About Us*. Retrieved from http://softchalk.com/about

SoftChalk. (2012). *SoftChalk.* Retrieved from http://softchalk.com/products/softchalk

SoftChalk. (2012). *Cloud.* Retrieved from http://softchalk.com/products/cloud

SoftChalk. (2012). *Buy Now.* Retrieved from http://softchalk.com/buy-now

Appendix A

SoftChalk Software
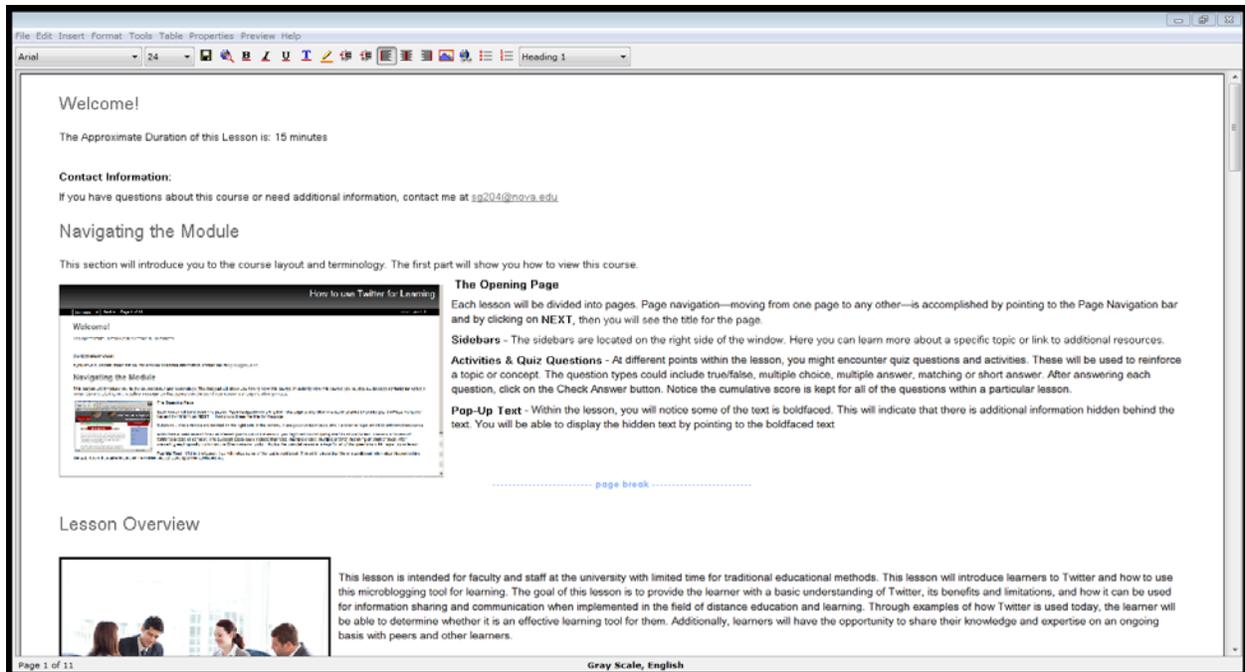
Figure 1. SoftChalk Software. This figure illustrates how the SoftChalk's main editing window looks; its appearance and functionality is similar to that of a word processor.

Appendix B

SoftChalk Lesson

Figure 2. SoftChalk Lesson. This figure illustrates a sample of a lesson created with the SoftChalk software.

Appendix C

SoftChalk Pricing

SoftChalk (individual license)	Pricing
• You must be a faculty or staff person at an accredited educational institution to qualify for this educational pricing.	**$695	Cloud: $395/year - Educational Price**
• You must be a current student at an accredited educational institution and provide documentation of this prior to purchasing SoftChalk at this special student price. Please fax or email a copy of your current student id to 757-257-0027 or sales@softchalk.com prior to completing this purchase process. You will not receive your license key until appropriate documentation is received by SoftChalk.	**SoftChalk 7: $150	Cloud: $150/year — Student Price**
• You must be a government/military employee to qualify for this pricing.	**SoftChalk 7: $950	Cloud: $495/year — Government/Military Price**
• Standard retail pricing.	**SoftChalk 7: $1200	Cloud: $795/year — Retail Price**
SoftChalk Enterprise/Multi-license/Site-license Pricing	
For pricing information for Enterprise, Multi-license and Site-licenses or to purchase using a purchase order, contact the SoftChalk sales team. **E-mail:** sales@softchalk.com **Hours:** *Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.* **Phone:** *877-638-2425 (toll free US/Canada)*	**SoftChalk 7: *$3,869.50 (current site-license pricing for a local university)***

Table 1. SoftChalk Pricing. This table shows the pricing options for SoftChalk and SoftChalk Cloud.