As the former NCTE has become PDST Technology in Education, the online learning platform used by NCTE to provide online term-time and summer-time courses to teachers is also changing. TeacherCPD.ie will be the new name for the online professional development service provided by PDST, taking over where NCTE learning online leaves off.

The online learning service provided by NCTE over the past few years will continue to be provided via the new service TeacherCPD.ie.

One online course is planned for delivery by PDST Technology in Education this summer via TeacherCPD.ie on using interactive whiteboards to support literacy. Enrolment for this course will commence soon after the new service is up and running. Term-time courses also continue to be available, with Podcasting for Learning and Creating your School Website using Scoilnet Blogs opening for enrolment soon after Easter.

All information about PDST Technology in Education (formerly NCTE) online courses is available via the usual web links and relevant old links will redirect to the new service in due course, making information easily accessible during this period of transition.

Check out: www.ncte.ie/onlinecourses

Coming soon: www.teacherCPD.ie

Teaching Matters

These days we’re told that we have a carbon footprint and we need to monitor and manage it carefully. Since the internet came along we’ve also been leaving digital footprints and, unlike footprints on the beach, these aren’t always easily washed away by the next wave. Whether your interactions on the internet have left large or small footprints, it is something that you need to be aware of and actively manage.

The internet was once a simpler place but, since social media arrived on the scene, we all now share more information about ourselves. Do you use Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or have a blog? We’re using our favourite online services to share birthday party photographs, holiday snaps and sometimes exactly where we are standing on the planet at the very moment we press ‘share’ on our mobile phones. This is how companies can show you advertisements from shops and services near to you. “There’s no such thing as a free lunch,” a wise person once said. Another equally wise person also said “If you’re not paying for a product (or service) then you’re the product.”

Here’s how you can find out about and, more importantly, manage your digital footprint.

‘Ego Searching’

Google your name. This is called an ‘ego search’. It is the quickest way to discover what others would be able to find out about you and the digital footprints you’ve left behind. Click on a few links/images to see what has turned up. Remember, the more common your name, the harder it might be to actually find results that are directly connected to you.

Do an ‘ego search’ for your school as well. In general, the less links that appear in the search results, the less there is about you or your school on the internet.

This, however, is not necessarily a good thing. If you’re looking to improve and manage your digital footprint then you should really ensure that you appear in these results – but in the way you want to be seen.

You need to manage your online presence pro-actively. This way you are always putting your best digital foot forward.

Be alert and try Alerts

Instead of simply ‘ego searching’ for your own name, why don’t you set up some Google Alerts based on your name and any other information you deem relevant? You can enter the information you want and then use various filters to set how and when you receive the information. The results will be emailed to you. Whenever updates to the information you’re looking for appear on the web, they also will be emailed to you automatically. You don’t need a Google email account to use this service, but it is required if you want to manage your alerts over time. See www.google.ie/alerts

Once you’ve looked into managing your own digital footprint, maybe it’s time you took a look at your school’s digital footprint too?

For more information on all matters concerning internet safety for schools, see www.webwise.ie

Compiled by Fred Boss, PDST Technology in Education

Picture shows setting up Google Alerts

Coming Soon – TeacherCPD.ie

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