iTunes U: The Public Rollout
2010 Capstone Project
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Getting Started

“...The University of Missouri is finally ready (well, almost ready) to launch the public side of iTunes U, a platform to distribute regularly-updated multimedia content produced by MU faculty, staff and student that prospective students, lifelong learners, government officials and many other constituents can subscribe to. The team would work with the Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Studies to develop a strategy for launching the first content stream (perhaps wrapped around RJI and/or the Mizzou Advantage program) and with RJI IT Analyst Tyten Teegarden to build workflows in Podcast Producer to automate the branding and distribution of the content.”

What is iTunes U?

*The educational side of iTunes.* iTunes U brings the power of the iTunes Store to education, making it simple to distribute information to students and faculty — or to lifelong learners all over the world. With an iTunes U site, each institution has a single home for all the digital content created or curated by educators, which can then be easily downloaded and viewed on any Mac, PC, iPod, or iPhone.

Why don’t we already have one?

Mizzou was originally supposed to be a trial school when iTunes U was launched in 2006, along with Stanford, Duke, Michigan and Brown. Unlike the other schools, Mizzou never quite got their act together. Until this semester, our iTunes U page was never launched. We’ve heard the story from a few different people and it seems no one person was ever dedicated enough to gather all the content, create the workflows and upkeep the site, so it never happened.

Research

We looked at successful schools and decided what made their pages successful. The three we focused on were Stanford, Yale and Open University. The consistently made the “Tops Picks of the Week” list which highlights some of the best content on iTunes U. These three universities also have really clean and professional branding. We really liked the picturesque view of Stanford on their open graphics. After researching independently, we met and created the following list of Best Practices of iTuens U.
The Best iTunes U Sites are “Standarized”

- Design
  - School Colors, Watermarks, Titles, and Workflows
- Coding
  - Audio files with appropriate extensions
  - Audio – AAC, MP3 (.m4a, .mp3)
  - Video – MPEG-4 H.264 compression (.mp4, .m4v, .mov)
- Ease of Use
  - Loading Times 128kbps on audio and 256kbps paired with 320px X 240px video
- Categorization
  - At first categories will be based on our initial entrepreneurs who will host content with us.
  - Eventually we hope to have a diversity of content that can be categorized by the number of schools associated with the site
    - Law, Business, Art, Journalism, etc.

Initial Problem: Youtube vs. iTunes U

Mizzou currently has an educational YouTube account called The Mizzou Tube (youtube.com/TheMizzouTube). The channel currently hosts videos featuring research, traditions, athletics and other student life. The channel is easy to find and access. Also, the videos show up in both YouTube and Google search results.

We can add some of that content to iTunes U eventually, but an iTunes U page seems to be a more scholarly approach of other universities. There are some technical benefits to iTunes U as well, such as the option to subscribe to a podcast or download a podcast or video to one’s computer or MP3 player.
Establishing a Game Plan

What do we need before we launch?
- 150 pieces of quality content (RJI content from the server)
- Workflows branded to specific requirements
- Graphic elements to complete workflows
- Organization of content

Timeline for the Semester

October 4 - RJI logos created

October 11 - Complete RJI workflow

October 25 - Begin working on the process of setting up the public side of MU iTunes U site

November 1 - Create a Mizzou workflow, which will feature the MU logo, and will be applied to a wider range of content

November 8 - Two new employees should be hired through the Vice Provost Office
(Dr. Jim Spain). These employees will be working with us to help launch the public side of iTunes U. Their position will allow us to collaborate with other colleges on campus, and help publicize MU’s iTunes U. We intend to make sure they approve of our Mizzou workflow.

**November 15** - Complete Mizzou workflow, begin showing other colleges/student associations the capabilities of iTunes U. Encourage them to create content for the public side of iTunes U

**November 29** - Continue generating content for the iTunes site; create a video that demonstrates campus diversity for prospective students

**December 6** - Wrap up final projects, polish public side of site

**December 13** - Launch site; explain how iTunes U can be expanded upon in the future, and how it can become one of the most successful iTunes U sites

**Research: Branding Guidelines**

**Mizzou Workflow**

During the creation of the Mizzou workflow, we wanted to make sure that all logo use met university requirements. The MU logo has very strict rules that all users have to follow. Originally, the MU logo on the lower-thirds had a slight drop shadow, which we had to remove because the logo can not have any sort of motion or shadowing added to it. Lori Croy, Web Development, showed us where all the branding information was located online, and assisted us with questions we had regarding the placement and use of fonts.

Here are some examples of approved logos, notice the plainness. The logos do not have any shadowing or gradient effects added to the preface.

![MU Logo Variations](image)

Originally, on the lower-thirds of the Mizzou workflow, we used the black and white stacked MU logo. However, after meeting with Dr. Spain for final approval he suggested that we use the gold and black MU logo because it stood out more against the black background of the screen.
University Policy on Logo Use

- There is only one institutional logo for the University, the stacked MU. The icon is to be used as the logo for all schools, colleges, offices, centers, institutes, programs and other units of the University. It should be used correctly in all external communications. It is part of the design of the official University stationery.
- No other logo should be substituted for the stacked MU or used with it.
- (only one logo per page may be used).
- Note: Some flexibility to this restriction might be appropriate in advertisements or posters.
- The MU logo must have a 1/8-inch clear (safe zone) area around it to allow maximum legibility.
- Do not place elements near or on top of the logo.
- Do not alter, redraw or distort the MU logo in any way.
- Do not use the MU logo as a watermark or print anything on top of the MU logo.
- Restrictions two through six apply to all University logos, including Truman the Tiger, the Tiger Head, For All We Call Mizzou* and others.

“In accordance with Section 5:100 in the MU Business Policy and Procedure Manual and the MU Web Policies, the stacked MU logo should be used with the University of Missouri's name as the logo of all schools, colleges, offices, programs and other units of the University. It should be used in an approved form in all external communications. No other logo should be substituted for it or used with it.”

Colors
The official colors are black and MU Gold. The Web equivalent of MU Gold is: FFCC33, R=255, G=204, B=051.

Preferred Typefaces
The following fonts are recommended for use—serif fonts: Book Antiqua, Palatino and Janson (where possible); and sans-serif fonts: Arial, Helvetica, and News Gothic. As a general rule, the serif fonts work better at larger sizes and the sans-serif fonts work well for smaller text. Avoid using script or handwriting fonts for the “University of Missouri” text.
Acceptable Uses

- As a general principle, when black and MU Gold are available, the initials in the logo should be displayed in MU Gold and the shield in black.
- You may also use MU Gold as a background color, with the logo shield shown in black and the initials reversed in white.
- If the Web site background color is black or so dark that the shape of the shield is not clearly discernible, differentiate the shield from the background by using a thin (1-point or thinner) white outline around the shield.

There are several rules that we made sure to follow when using the title “The University of Missouri” alongside the logo. We used the approved font “Helvetica” on the opening frame alongside the black and gold stacked MU logo. The Helvetica font was chosen because it stood out the best against the background picture. The official MU vectors were available for us to download on the site as well. All branding information was found at: http://webcom.missouri.edu/policy/logo-guidelines.php

Branding Guidelines Continued: RJI Workflow

Like the Mizzou workflow, the RJI workflow did have certain branding guidelines that its administrators expected it to meet. While the guidelines for the RJI workflow were not as strict as the university, we still wanted to make sure we were doing everything correctly. As shown in the graphic below, the colors for the Reynolds Journalism Institute are teal and white. Because of this, we got in touch with Karen Stockman, Multimedia Specialist, and she told us which shade of teal to use and also sent us the official vectors of the RJI logo.

We really wanted to accurately portray the goals of RJI. During our initial brainstorming, we researched RJI’s Web site, and under the RJI Vision and Mission section on
the “About RJI,” a video displayed a series of words the institute commonly uses to portray itself. The words are “ideas, research, experiments and solutions,” and we incorporated them into the opening frame of the RJI workflow.

In the above picture, it shows the front of RJI, however, more importantly to the significance of our capstone project it shows very bold capital letters on the front of the building. This is significant because in the opening frame of the RJI workflow we used capital letters next to the lowercase “rji” because it followed the layout on the front of the building, and made the lettering stand out against the lowercase contrast.

**Creating the Workflows**

**Workflow - a series of tasks managed and carried out by a computer program without the aid or assistance of the user.**

In other words, we determined workflows are the key to streamlining iTunes U campus-wide. The workflow would upload content to a host server, notify iTunes U of the product, and branding titles, dates, or author information all after clicking “Publish”. However, even though the workflows were used save time, they didn’t exist by themselves. Our objective was to create these devices that would accomplish three tasks.

1.) Save time.
2.) Create an incentive: “Ease of Use”.
3.) Brand the product.

We relied heavily on knowledgeable faculty and IT experts as our guide. Our constant contact with IT specialist Tyten Teegarden provided us with the tools, programs, and support to finish the workflow elements. The skeleton of the workflow consists of an
opening graphic, a title slide, an overlapping video watermark, and ending graphic. Using Apple’s powerful flash server and OS producing tools, these elements were added to the final workflow.

After assembling the elements, we created the final product in a program named “Podcast Producer”. The program featured a “cascade-style” workflow builder, which clearly laid out the blueprint for each workflow. From the name of the workflow, to the graphic elements, to its compression type, the program aggregated all the elements to one streamlined workflow. This workflow was expected to save hundreds of hours in post-editing and exporting the final videos.

In the end, we developed two workflows for the Reynolds Journalism Institute and the University of Mizzou. Each is able to brand content that future users of iTunes U upload to the site. Now, any user can publish their work using the workflow of their choice, no matter their choice of operating system or file. The workflow is fully capable to managing content that will work coherently with the standards of iTunes U, store the content for downloading, and produce multiple files that will play the content on numerous devices including Computers, iPods, iPhones, and other mobile devices.

**Testing 1, 2, 3,**

**Communication with RJI**

In the beginning of November, we tested the RJI workflow for Brian Steffens and the RJI communications staff. They seemed to like our graphics and design. The team drilled us with questions about using their content. They wanted to maintain control over branding and the organization of the content. The staff helped answer some of our questions and recommended what videos we should post.

**Testing with Faculty of MU Viticulture and Enology**

The faculty from MU Viticulture & Enology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Michael Leonardelli</th>
<th>Tammy Jones</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ICCVE Enology Extension Associate</td>
<td>Colleague</td>
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**The Purpose**

- Have the users take their own ready-made content and upload it to the flash server using our testing name and login. The users were given a “Quick Start
Guide” which contained step by step instruction for uploading content to the server and adding workflows for both PC’s and Mac’s. The users were aware that the content would not actually be published on iTunes U at the end of the session.

- Measure the amount of time it took between different operating systems, using the software application Podcast Composer, and using the online application Podcast Composer as well.

**Goals Before Testing**

- Upload content to workflows on Mac and PC
- Test the amount of time taken over the entire process from logging on to clicking “Publish”
- Gain Feedback from Faculty after the test concluded.

**Observations**

- The process was very fluid. The expected time of completion was 10 minutes.
- Testers completed upload just over that mark at an average of 14 minutes.

**Feedback**

- Both uploads from Mac and PC used similar interface - made for continuity between them.
- Process is simple and guide complements process.
- Need to test between different Web Browsers
- Add expectations and FAQ to Quick Start Guide

**Setbacks**

Our biggest setback this semester was not having the password to log in to the Mizzou iTunes U page. We did not ask for the information until November because we thought it would be easily accessible. Since we still do not have the information, the page was never launched.

Once we realized the log in was going to be a problem, we refocused our efforts on setting up instructions for Dr. Spain’s new hire.

**Leaving a Legacy Created a marketing plan:**

- Schedule regular additions
  - RJI content
  - Other departments will have own schedule
• Open it up to clubs and campus orgs
  ○ Provide them with access and tech support
    ■ Guides (see below)
    ■ Full-time faculty member

• Allow j-students (with some sort of permission/filter) to add content like:
  ○ iLife movies
  ○ Student Organization promos/educational pieces
  ○ Class projects & presentations

By opening out iTunesU up to the student body we can better demonstrate the breadth of knowledge, research, involvement, etc. on campus. This fits with Dr. Spain’s idea of using this as a Mizzou promotional tool. wide variety of content and creating a larger audience.

Before we can truly begin to grab the attention of other colleges and faculty on campus, we must first convince them the idea of iTunes U is as simplistic as it is exciting. In turn, we plan on releasing a “Quick Start Guide” to prospective iTunes U users. The guide will explain why iTunes U is important, how they can benefit and of course, how easy it is to upload content from anywhere, any source, and any operating system. This guide was also used while conducting our focus group with the staff and faculty at MU Viticulture and Enology.

Example “Quick Start Guide” for faculty and staff:

iTunes U Guide for MU Faculty and Staff

What is iTunes U?
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What do I have to offer?
Your expertise. You are already creating content in the classroom and in your research. Unique lectures and presentations are easy to film and ready to share. Basically, do what you are already doing, just add a camera.
Why should I add content?
Share your knowledge. Your expertise can be shown to students and faculty studying the same subject. It will increase the reach of your research and your skills. Together, we can show the world the progress happening at the University of Missouri.

How can I add content?
Using a Mac
1. Open “Podcast Capture” in your applications, if application is not available, follow the “Using a PC” instructions.
2. Add the server name: rji-xserve-1.rji.missouri. and your faculty login and password.
3. Capture your content or upload a file and click “Publish”.
4. After adding a title and description choose “Mizzou Workflow” from the top pull down menu
5. Click publish and you’re done! Your content will be delivered to iTunes within 24 hours.

Using a PC
1. Open a web browser and type the URL: http://rji-xserve-1.rji.missouri.edu/
2. Click Podcast Capture and type in your faculty login and password
3. On the next screen you can choose to upload content you’ve already created by clicking “File” or if you have a webcam active you can capture content instantly
4. Click publish.
5. After adding a title and description choose “Mizzou Workflow” from the top pull down menu
6. Click publish and you’re done! Your content will be delivered to iTunes within 24 hours.

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Our Goal for Continuing iTunes U:

iTunes U will continue to be easy and appealing. Its administration will add QUALITY content CONSISTENTLY to Mizzou's iTunes U page.

Initial Tasks:
- Promote newly-launched Mizzou iTunes U page on campus
- Present to MU faculty and staff about how and what to upload
- Track analytics of Mizzou’s page
- Continue to work with the new web communication employees who will
implement our ideas that we have researched, developed, and presented this semester.

**On-Going Tasks:**
- Promote Mizzou’s page on a larger scale
- Create a calendar for adding content
- Monitor addition of content

**Eventually:**
- Open uploading to student groups and organizations
- Use iTunes U page to promote the University (recruiting, research, etc.)
- Create workflows for specific departments

**What we learned**
Over the course of the semester we got a taste for Motion, iTunes U, developing a podcast and implementing a strategy for the University community. Through researching other schools, we saw both successful and poorly designed iTunes U pages. We worked within the bureaucracy of the University to find content, approval and the log in. In meetings we developed contacts on campus and learned about how the University wants their brand to be perceived. With the elements, research, and testing we have presented, iTunes U at the University of Mizzou will have a success launch under the direction of its new advisor and hire by Vice Provost Dr. Spain.