MYTHBUSTERS

Myth busting education in a virtual world – changing demands and directions

The Panel

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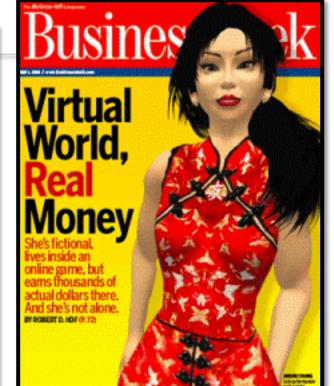Academic Support
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Some questions that may be answered

- Virtual worlds are not a platform in which one should do business.
- Virtual worlds offer no educational value.
- Anything you can do in a virtual world you can do somewhere else.
- Virtual worlds are too complicated for students.
- Virtual worlds take too long for academics, teachers and students to learn. *Second Life* is really expensive.
- Why not just use Skype instead of using a virtual world for conversations?
- *Second Life* is not scalable.
- You need to be a computer geek to be effective with using a virtual world.
- Virtual worlds won't survive; the 'hype' is over.
- *Second Life* is designed to be all things to all people; thus, it is not good for specialised activities such as teaching and learning.
- There are risks to students, as *Second Life* is all about sex, gambling and entertainment.
- There are too many distractions in *Second Life*.
- Young kids aren't allowed in *Second Life* then why use it with teachers when they can't use it for their own teaching?
- Students with disabilities cannot access virtual worlds.
- Virtual worlds contribute to the 'digital divide' by creating barriers to students from equity groups

Myth: Virtual worlds are not a platform to do business

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Virtual World, Real Money

She's fictional, lives inside an online game, but earns thousands of actual dollars there. And she's not alone.

BY ROBERT D. HOF (P. 72)

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Myth: Virtual worlds offer no educational value

Distinction

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Second Life Gr...

Grade compa... ...nded lessons in Second Life and those that did not (n=3236)

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SCU students in the sandbox

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Myth: Second Life is really expensive

There are two different account types in Second Life. A **premium account** costs $9.95 a month (or $22.50 quarterly or $72.00 annually). Premium accounts enjoy the full benefits of SL, including being able to buy/own land and receiving a weekly stipend. A L$1250 "signup bonus" is given on first login to premium accounts and the weekly stipend is L$500. Land ownership is based on a tier system: the amount you pay to hold that land depends on the amount of land you own and what tier you are in.

Sign Up Today!

Join Second Life and become part of the Internet's largest user-created, 3D virtual community.

- Connect with friends.
- Meet new people with voice and text chat.
- Explore thousands of unique 3D locations.
- Create and design your own look.

Membership is FREE!

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CONFIRMED

PLAUSIBLE

BUSTED

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Myth: You need to be a computer geek to be effective with using a virtual world

"… learned to work in a foreign setting with Sue's help and students showed they were even more capable of adapting to in-world learning."

Masters, Y., & Gregory, S. (in press) Second Life: A novice/expert teaching and learning tale. In *Education 2011 to 2021 - Global challenges and perspectives of blended and distance learning*.

Myth: You need to be a computer geek to be effective with using a virtual world

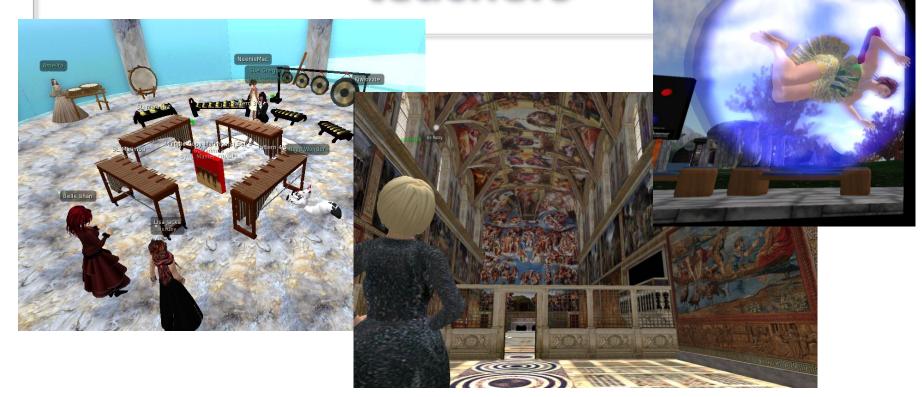# Myth: Virtual worlds won't survive - the 'hype' is over

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With thanks to:
Grant, Jamie, Kari, Adam, Tory

AWESOMENESS...

CONFIRMED