Writing online

- Blogging
- Blog site
- Blogger

- Microblogging Twitter
- Twit (or Tweecher)
- Brief, text updates of only 140 characters

- Increasingly used for building a PLN
Online conversations

- People sharing
  - Insights,
  - beliefs,
  - ideas, and
  - emotions

- Responding to
  - an event
  - each other
Following a Twitter Stream

- Increase the likelihood that a message can be found and read
- Reading a hash tag is following a Twitter “stream”.
Twitter to share

- Posts may be viewed
  - Directly online
    http://twitter.com
  - Embedded on a website
  - visualisation tool (TweetDeck)

- And processed to
  - create amalgamated report (storify)
  - remixed with new content (or mashup)
  - create different visualisation (Wordle)

Broadcast and further distributed using Twitter, prompting others to try and do the same or to create a new derivative work.
Conference Twitter Hashtags

- e.g. #ACEC2010
- Not a single distributed conversation between users
- Are multiple monologues with some discontinuous, loosely joined dialogues between users
  (Ross et al. 2011, 2)
Retweeting

• Popular users
  – are often retweeted
  – are added to a shared specialist list
  – Can be followed (beginning of PLN)

• Popular posts can be
  – Reposted
  – Further distributed and shared
  – 'Retweeted'
Back channels

- Enable the
  - Sharing of notes
  - Asking questions
  - Engage in dialogue
  - Stimulate debate
- Invite and embrace the participation of members beyond the physical event.

- Not regulated by the mainstream event
- Increasingly an integral part of events
- Discussions may appear
  - prosaic
  - highly personal
  - challenging
• “Read and Regurgitate Syndrome”

• New users distracted as they try to immerse themselves in the technology whilst listening to a presentation.

• Mindless sharing and repetition without any deep analysis, reflection or review (McKeown 1999)
Personal Learning Network

Personal Learning Environment

- tools
- artifacts
- technological connections

@people
sharing spirit
inter-personal connections
knowledge
humour
ACEC 2010 Conference

- 6 to 9 April 2010
- Melbourne, Australia
- 800 delegates
- Over 7 days data
- 474 Twitter users
- 6034 messages
Educators use a PLN

- For professional support and encouragement
- To inspire to improve
- Learning by following others
- Reinforce self-perception as educators
- Invite dissenting voices, ideas and opinions
- To push new ideas
- As a creative spark
- Share a response
- A new idea amplifier
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>@User</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:03:30</td>
<td>03/04/10</td>
<td>@percha</td>
<td>Updating my presentation to include those who are coming to ACE2010. Thanks for all who are coming to ACE2010! I have a wedding tonight, will try to make it!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:25:18</td>
<td>03/04/10</td>
<td>@murcha</td>
<td>@murcha Great luck for ACE2010 this week - there's a buzz building already!</td>
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<td>RT @sandyplank: Have a say. Post your vote for the nominations in the ACCE Australian Educ Multimedia Awards <a href="http://bit.ly/dxw">http://bit.ly/dxw</a> ACE2010</td>
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Processing workflow

- Data collected from
  - Topsy Search Engine
  - HTML file of posts

Processing
- converted to a plain text file
- further processed to capture the date, time and message sender of message post
- imported into spreadsheet for analysis.
- validate and bench test the effectiveness of the search results from the Topsy engine.
Some users posted many,
Many users posted some

Figure 2: Messages posted per user at the ACEC2010 conference
Many users reshared messages

Table 1: Breakdown of the ACEC2010 twitter posts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>http://</th>
<th>@user</th>
<th>RT</th>
<th>#hashtag</th>
<th>Total posts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1086</td>
<td>3104</td>
<td>1201</td>
<td>830</td>
<td>6034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some very, very complex posts

Five different hash tags for five potentially different audiences:

- 08/04/10 15:33  @sandynay
  RT @katemreid: #acec2010 @pryorcommitment #Connect, #Collaborate & #Create All verbs because they about #action - things we can actually do!

Five different users to an expanded PLN

- 08/04/10 16:29  @lordfolland
  #ACEC2010 a place for expanding my PLN to include @ackygirl, @bronst, @katemreid, @jessmcculloch and @mountainmoss

Four different hyperlinks to resources being discussed in a session

- 09/04/10 11:31  @mentormadness
Users overcame the space limitation

- To connect, share and collaborate with other participants.
  - Link shortening tools
  - Codified language
    - RT, MT, HT, OT via
    - LOL, ROTFL etc
    - :-) :-o :-(

Time profile

Profile of when users posted a message

Number of posts

Time of the day

00:00 01:00 02:00 03:00 04:00 05:00 06:00 07:00 08:00 09:00 10:00 11:00 12:00 13:00 14:00 15:00 16:00 17:00 18:00 19:00 20:00 21:00 22:00 23:00
Time and Space dimension

Posting peaks
- directly before the event
- 9 am keynote
- late into the evening

Messages posted
- Most (96%) during event
- (3%) before less (1%) later

- Twitter used with a wider community to
  - reflect on daily posts
  - organise social events
  - share resources

- Keynote Gary Stager generated considerable public discussion and debate about ideas he raised.
Friends we haven't met yet

05/04/10 19:51  @teachernz
@jennyluca watch/read what others tweet, help someone, answer/ask a question, share your students' work, lurk, learn & engage #ACEC2010

04/04/10 23:33  @pryorcommitment
Hoping to meet some people from other states at #ACEC2010 Don't know many NSW people. Would be good to meet as well as share tweets :-)  

05/04/10 15:48  @jjash
@sandynay looking forward to meeting up with all my PLN at acec2010 :) CU at cocktails?

06/04/10 09:06  @Steve_Collis
Funny - the whole value of #ACEC2010 for me is meeting my Twitter friends face to face (very special), and making new friends.
Users shared Twitter artefacts

- Word clouds, trend maps
- Perhaps a desire for a 'big-picture' view
- to help look for patterns and themes
- to better understand what happened
- to synthesise new understandings
Theme 1: A PLN improves the conference engagement for some participants

- To reflect upon what was happening.
- Fluid discussion
- Further debate and delibration invited
- Keynote speakers joining the Twitter stream to clarify points and answer questions
- Source new PLN members

- 09/04/10 13:00 @ahiskens
  For those at Alan November's 5pm workshop on Wed - food for thought on the copyright discussion from @billt - http://bit.ly/ccU4mf #acec2010

- 09/04/10 21:07 @lindawollan
  Still thinking about Gary Stager's keynote. Challenging.... did anyone find any positives?? #acec2010

- 08/04/10 17:32 @smartinez
  @mountainmoss it's going to take a while to get through all the emails and follow people back... but i will! #acec2010
Theme 2: A PLN affords communication with other participants which might not otherwise occur

- Participants outside the conference venue shared
  - what was happening in real time
  - notes using broadcasting tools
  - resources
- Participants in physically different rooms following and responding to twitter posts

- 09/04/10 09:01  @sujokat
  This link works for ustream of gary stager at #ACEC2010
  http://www.ustream.tv/channel/technology-in-education-show by @stevecollis

- 09/04/10 10:53  @suehatwilkes
  #acec2010 SueH from Canada invites U2 meet Ian Jukes online 04/13 @ 5:30 pm PDT. Goto http://tinyurl.com/ykddjky for Elluminate link & pswd
Theme 3: A PLN is a powerful way to share professional and intellectual resources.

- Participants used Twitter to
  - promote their conference notes
  - share personal reflections
- Attract new members from conference Twitter stream
- Expand their PLN
- From ideas raised at the conference, evidence of
  - Reporting
  - analysis
  - deep reflection

- 07/04/10 08:28  @dakinane @staceykelly #ACEC2010 thanks for the follow. Will be posting to my blog throughout the conference http://dakinane.com/blog

- 09/04/10 06:58  @ashleyproud Do I dare plug my blog1 more time? http://oneofthosepeople.edublogs.org/ Should I be brave and put #acec2010 on it? :) #last_shameless_plug
Further Research

- Examine this data and the artefacts shared
- Identify what tangible changes in practice might result from participation in a conference and PLN
Summary

An online conference PLN can be the site of personally meaningful communications.
Summary

Learning and engaging with like-minded peers at a conference event using social media tools is a powerful way for educators to build a personal learning network and take direct charge of their professional lives.
'Only 16 percent of teachers surveyed agree that there is a climate of cooperative effort among staff members in their schools.' (Wei, Darling-Hammond, and Adamson 2010, 20)
For organisations today

'Agility, context, and a strong network are becoming the survival traits where assets, control, and power used to rule'

(Ito 2011)
“my smart phone says I'm in Norway...”