Portfolios have long been a part of learning, teaching and professional practice; therefore, why use ePortfolios and do Web 2.0 tools have to offer?

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Abstract:
This paper will showcase what was, at the time, effective practice, whereby Foundation students at Dubai Men's College (DMC) developed a Career ePortfolio as part of an integrated Computer, Research Skills and Projects Course. Some students were able to use their ePortfolio to obtain summer jobs and work placement, and reflective practice was encouraged through discussion, use of rubrics, and peer feedback. However, the ePortfolios were not interactive or easily portable, and the final artefact was produced for assessment.

Several benefits beyond the 'static' ePortfolio utilised at DMC have been identified, in particular around those created with Web 2.0 social software. Key positive outcomes indicated in recent research studies include increased and improved reflective practice, enhancement in the quality of final artefact (partly facilitated by multimedia and mobility), a clear authentic purpose, and a greater sense of audience. The audience is often interactive thereby helping to shift the locus of power from the teacher as 'knower'.

Designed around experiences at DMC and the benefits mentioned, pre-pilot initiatives were undertaken at Unitec NZ in 2008, and a larger-scale pilot is planned for 2009. Underpinning these initiatives are a range of issues around assessment practices, Web 2.0 tools, professional development, and ethical considerations. This session will describe developments at Unitec NZ, as well as soliciting feedback, input and discussion from the audience around these and other associated aspects of ePortfolios.