

From: "[Claire Billington](mailto:claire@techimpact.org)" <claire@techimpact.org>
 To: "[4-H Changemakers](mailto:ChangeMakers@techimpact.org)" <ChangeMakers@techimpact.org>
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Hello, Changemakers!

Welcome to the first Changemakers technology newsletter, put together by the Tech Impact team. Here you'll find answers to some of the questions we're getting and other things we think you might find useful!

In this issue:

1. Digital Literacy Curriculums
2. Building a Website
3. Online Communities

Digital Literacy Curriculums

Lots of folks want to build their community by teaching digital literacy skills. Luckily, there are great resources online to help you choose what to teach. If you're interested in pursuing digital literacy for your community, you should think about the following:

1. Who needs the skills, and why?
2. How will these learners learn best?
3. What specific curriculum suits these skills and these learners?

We can help you think this through. Email Jennifer (jdepasquale@fourhcouncil.edu) to schedule a consultation with the Tech Impact team. To get you started here are some sample curriculums:

For folks who have never used a computer in a classroom environment before, here's a new user tutorial: <http://tech.tln.lib.mi.us/tutor/intro3.htm>.

For teens teaching seniors basic social computer skills, here are some detailed lesson plans: <http://www.netliteracy.org/senior-connects/lesson-plans/>.

For self-guided, career-oriented tutorials the Goodwill Community Foundation has put together this amazing resource: <https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/subjects/i-want-to/>.

Remember that teaching how to use a computer is much harder than pointing people to a website. Teaching requires empathy, planning, and expertise. Don't end up like this:



If you want some ideas on the language and approach needed to teach computer skills, check out this playlist: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAE6B03CA849AD332>.

Building a Website

Not surprisingly, we've gotten a lot of questions about how to build a website. If you really want to create something totally from scratch and aren't phased by words like "HTML", "CSS", "JavaScript", or "Version Control" then you might want to check out this surprisingly easy guide: <https://www.cs.hmc.edu/twiki/bin/view/CS5Spring2018/ExtraCreditSummerStaff17>.

For the rest of you, things don't have to be so hard. The easiest way to build a website is to pick a Content Management System (CMS) and let it do the hard work for you. You just pick a theme, and then use a platform like Google Docs to create your webpages.

The hardest step can be picking the right CMS. **Again, we're here to help. Just email Jennifer (jdepasquale@fourhcouncil.edu) to schedule a consult with us.** If you're the kind of person who wants to do it yourself, try one of these two approaches:

1. Use an online website builder. We like Wix, Weebly, and Squarespace. Wix and Weebly are the easiest to use. Squarespace is the prettiest. None of them are all that flexible or support interactive communities.

2. "Build" your website on one of the three big open source CMSs: WordPress, Joomla, or Drupal. To figure out which one is right for you check out this article: <https://www.8theme.com/blog/wordpress-vs-joomla-vs-drupal-which-one-is-better/> .

a. *If you go this route keep in mind that you need to HOST the website somewhere too. These options don't include hosting. Email Jennifer (jdepasquale@fourhcouncil.edu) to set up a time to talk with us!*

Online Communities

We've heard a lot about people wanting to create online spaces for people to collaborate. Alas, it's not that easy. Anyone remember Myspace? Creating an online community is hard because people don't easily change their habits. Unless there is a clear benefit for them to go to a new place they won't do it. Making them login or learn a new system makes it even harder.

If you're considering an online community first think about why people would want to go there. Then, try to figure out the lowest friction platform for them to use. This usually means creating your community on a tool they're already using. That could be Facebook, WhatsApp, or even Snapchat. Only sometimes do you need a custom website to bring people together online.

Again, we're here to help you pick the right platform for your online community.

Just email Jennifer (jdepasquale@fourhcouncil.edu) to set up a meeting with us.

Thanks for reading and stay tuned for next month!

-Claire and Sam at Tech Impact

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