POCKET AUTEURS: STUDENT UPTAKE OF AN INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION IN WIRELESS MOVIEMAKING

Daniel Wagner

Unitec Institute of Technology (NEW ZEALAND)
dwagner2@unitec.ac.nz

Abstract

In March 2012, students in New Zealand, England and France teamed-up (virtually) to create globisodes (globally-constructed movies shot on mobile phones). Employing Web 2 platforms to collaborate across both space and time, these international teams (each containing members from all three countries), created work exploring environmental sustainability. The international project was called Entertainment Lab for the Very Small Screen (ELVSS).

This paper explores the outcomes of this ongoing trans-national experiment - focusing on its successes, and on its opportunities for improvement - both practically and pedagogically – with particular emphasis on the students' experience.

Did the way the module was structured influence what the students got out of it? How were their working relationships affected by differences in cultural mores; in time zones; in communication styles; in the subjects the students were specialising/majoring in during their "regular" school hours? What types of insights did they achieve on this groundbreaking project? How do they imagine the international course should be run differently?

Finally, the paper will synthesise some of the suggestions made by the students for ELVSS-13, and, from those ideas, chart a direction forward.

Keywords: mobile moviemaking, mobisode, globisode, mLearning, international collaboration.

1   BACKGROUND

What follows is a report from the field, which chronicles the collaborative development of the ELVSS module and on the post-project reflections generated by the students.

The techniques for *visual* storytelling that have developed into the filmmaking process are commonly understood to be not only efficient (from a production standpoint) but also effective (from an audience standpoint), involving a shorthand which most all media consumers understand.

Whilst some of the traditional still retains its relevance in today's landscape, the sands are shifting beneath us. This shift began when the tools for acquiring, manipulating and delivering image and sound began to grow faster, better, cheaper and more ubiquitous, which enabled those who are traditionally the consumers of story content to become the creators as well. With the incorporation of the HD camera into the smart phone, the hardware employed for both creation and consumption have also converged into one tool. [1] We shoot and edit on the same device with which we watch. With this convergence has come a shift in the way we approach and interact with story. No longer pinned to place and time like we were in the pre-videotape broadcast TV days (and as we still are with theatrical features), we can now create and view content any time and any place. We integrate the stories into our lives. With this change comes a possible shift in the very structure of story itself. Research on viewing habits suggests that whilst an increasing number of people are getting used to viewing feature-length entertainment content on mobile devices, a larger proportion prefer to watch in shorter bursts - killing time while waiting, while in transit or even sneaking some TV time at work. [2] As people tend to consume mobile content in their "in-between" times, a move has been on to package stories into smaller units that accommodate this pattern.

These same devices have other applications that have emerged from an equally profound set of shifts. Web 2.0 phenomena, including social networks, have given rise to collaboration and sharing of information on a global scale. [3] We can now share pretty much anything any time with anybody. So what are we doing with these new powers? What is the nature of the discussions taking place?

These were some of the questions in my mind as I designed and ran a course called Entertainment Lab for the Very Small Screen (ELVSS). Students were lent wireless mobile devices (at Unitec, the students got 4th generation iPod touches to shoot and iPad 2's to edit) in order to create short movies that were designed for optimal viewing on the very same (types of) devices on which they were shot. Throughout the course, we explored the unique nature of shooting, of post-producing, of delivering and of viewing work in the mobile format.

In 2012, the ELVSS project was comprised of thirty-nine students from three countries: film & television students at Unitec Institute of Technology in Auckland, New Zealand; acoustics and sound students at Salford University in Manchester, UK; and graphic arts students at Université de Strasbourg in Strasbourg, France. Divided into four international teams (each of which consisted of students from all three countries), they used a variety of Web 2 tools to collaboratively determine the specific subject matter and the story of each team's film, the shots they would need to tell each story, and in which country each shot would be taken. In addition to shooting these international projects, the Salford students composed soundtracks and the Strasbourg students created the titles for each movie. The project was capped with feedback from the lecturers involved and by reflections from the students.

The concept behind ELVSS 12 evolved from courses I'd run over the past five years, each one building upon the previous. They all involved the use of smart phones in the construction of short movies, and each year's course grew increasingly more complex, and increasingly more collaborative, as smart phone capabilities became richer and more intuitive.

ELVSS 11 had been my initial foray into using iPhones to shoot - and iPads to edit - short form mobisodes. In attempts to define a new cinematic language for the very small screen, we began by exploring parameters of the user experience, asking questions such as: Where, when and how do most people tend to watch mobile movies? For how long does the average viewer tend to stay with a piece before their attention – and vision - begin to flag? What types of shots work better than, and which do not work as well as, on a medium and a large screen? How does compression affect subtlety with both picture and with sound? What genres translate well from the large screen to the very small screen, and which do not?

This led us to begin exploring attributes of the "mobile aesthetic". [4] Contributing factors to the mobile aesthetic include the camera's size (i.e. you can easily put it places other cameras won't go); its optical behaviours [e.g. "CMOS wobble" (the jelly-like effect the entire image takes on when any camera with a CMOS sensor is moved a certain way); focus-searching; the way it handles light and contrast; the native colour gamut; unparalleled depth of field, including with the ability to come very close to a subject; etc.]; landscape vs. portrait (all other media natively capture and deliver in landscape; video in portrait format has come to signify having been shot on a mobile device); and the value (both symbolically and from a purely visual standpoint) in the fact that the creator can hold it in their hand whilst shooting – facing either forward towards the world or back towards themselves.

In ELVSS 11, my class of twenty-five students divided into five teams and set out to create their own mobisodes. Here was a special kind of challenge. These were students who were being trained throughout the rest of their degree - a Bachelor of Performing & Screen Arts - in the time-tested conventions of single-camera narrative filmmaking. They've learned to recognize and to execute proper technique in their specializations (Writing, Directing, Production, Camera, Sound & Editing), they've explored the elements of cinema from both the creator's and the audience's point of view, they've begun to dig deeply into their craft as filmmakers. Now with ELVSS, they're being challenged to confront this training and to develop a new model for visual storytelling. We spend much time in our regular classes and workshops considering cinematic language for the seventy-foot screen, now long established. But we now need a new cinematic language, for the seventy-millimetre screen. This is the challenge our students face in the ELVSS projects.

Whilst the student teams of ELVSS 11 approached their mobisodes with varying levels of depth, rigor and complexity, each team explored new territory (for them) in terms of their relationship with the camera. These new relationships were both operational (using the phone's small profile to attain unique camera placements and shooting angles) and attitudinal (such as challenging when and where it was appropriate to shoot).

The course provided new insights for these future large- and medium-screen filmmakers. And one of the assessment events in ELVSS 11 was a vlogged reflective component, where I was able to collect their impressions of the course. On the assessment brief, they were asked to:

- Explore how their understanding of the creation and delivery of storytelling through visual media has transformed as a result of having partaken in the ELVSS project;

- Reflect on the experiences working with their team, and evaluate their individual contributions to it;

- Examining the class project, their team's efforts and their participation in the entire endeavour, speculate on how they might like to see it transpire differently – If they had it all to do over again. [This criteria was for me as much as it was for them, for it allowed me to access direct student feedback on the very design of this brand new course.]

Much of their feedback had to do with feeling either that the course was too structured, and thus more limiting than they would have liked, or that it was not structured enough. The latter group of students had trouble all through the one-semester course as they struggled to find the initiative to build their own story in this new framework. They were uncomfortable with the exploratory, student-centred nature of the course's approach, and expressed concern that there was not enough clarity in the pathway; they wanted to be told up front what to do and what all the steps were going to be. There was also a sense in one or two reflections that the course was too much about itself, and that it might have had more impact on and relevance to them if it somehow had had a broader scope. Conversely, those who reported feeling too limited said that the aesthetic parameters given them were too specific and hampered their creativity. They wanted a more open brief that enabled them to fly freer and higher with these new tools. Nevertheless, all agreed that it was a valuable experience for them and an exciting ride to have taken.

I resolved, therefore, to change the course in the following ways:

- I would up the stakes and increase the "significance" of the ELVSS project by seeking out collaborators for the students in different localities, hopefully in different countries.

- I would provide the students with an overarching theme that they would then be required to address more specifically in the stories they created.

- I would still require them to employ Web 2.0 platforms for collaboration, for journaling, as a class time back channel and for resource sharing.

The first step in re-crafting ELVSS for 2012 was to bring in collaborative partners, so I looked to those lecturers who had been such valuable contributors to ELVSS11. Helen Keegan - Senior Lecturer in Interactive Media at Salford University in Manchester, UK – has been leading her students down the mobile movie path for the past four years, in her course, entitled Social Technologies.

Laurent Antonczak, Lecturer and Postgraduate Discipline Leader (Graphic Design and New Media) at Auckland University of Technology, is an avid proponent of the advancement of mobile movies. Laurent leads a research group that focuses on development of mobile phone. He is a co-founding member of Mobile Innovation Network Aotearoa (MINA), a leading mobile information and resource group.

Soléne Trousse is a Lecturer in Motion Graphics Design at the Université de Strasbourg (Unistra) in Strasbourg France.

Also providing invaluable insight and support to the planning conversations prior to, and during, ELVSS 12, were our two Doctors of mobile movieology.

Dr. Max Schleser, whose PhD is in Mobile Media. Is a Senior Lecturer at Massey University in Wellington, where he is the Subject Director of Digital Media. Max is a filmmaker, who explores mobile devices as creative and educational tools. Max is the other co-founding member (along with Laurent) of MINA. Dr. Thomas Cochrane is an academic advisor at Auckland University of Technology, His PHD thesis was titled: "Mobilizing Learning: Transforming pedagogy with mobile web 2.0".

So the core planning team who convened every week or two in a Google+ Hangout, consisted of myself, Helen, Laurent, Max, Thom and, later, Solène. Much of the planning process around ELVSS 12 presaged the actual process in which the students engaged. The six of us shared many of our planning ideas and considerations in an ever-unfolding Google Doc. Our regular Hangouts were a challenge to coordinate because of the 12-hour time zone difference – combined with the hectic schedule of six different lecturers, but the excitement of planning the module saw us through. We also built a Wordpress blog [http://elvss2012.wordpress.com/], which would serve as a guide to students in navigating the often-confusing palette of communication tools.

2   TIMEFRAMES

In addition to the time zone hurdles, the other time-related challenge we faced in the early planning days was the alignment of course delivery schedules across the three schools. The course I was allocated occurred in New Zealand's Semester 1, which began in early March. Because the end of the teaching year in the Northern Hemisphere occurs in early June, the ELVSS module needed to wrap up in the UK in early May (to leave time for exams and marking). Since we had a short two-month window in which to make this collaboration happen, we realized we needed to be as prepared as possible to enable the students to plug-in to already-existing systems, whilst still leaving room for them to have a sense of ownership of their projects. This involved building a solid structure within which the students could build their projects with as much freedom – and speed - as possible.

3   COURSE/MODULE DESIGN COORDINATION

Another challenge which popped up quickly in our tri-national planning sessions was the alignment of our course plans so that the learning outcomes set by all three institutions' courses were served, as well as the needs of the ELVSS project itself. Additionally, we needed to coordinate assessments in such a way as to ensure that each cohort was assessed in a way that was appropriate to both their broader coursework and to the project.

4   INVOLVEMENT SCHEME

The next series of discussions related to the structure and content of the projects we would be asking our students to create. In attempts to find how students from each nation could contribute to the whole, we narrowed our choices down to three possibilities:

- Possibility #1 – All work on **ONE STORY:** Each team - composed of members from all four countries – would be responsible for a different section of the same story.
- Possibility #2 – **4 stories - one from each country**, all developing the same rough story brief, but each in their own way. Each country a self-contained unit, making separate stories, which connect in some loose way.
- or Possibility #3 – **4 internationally-collaborative stories** (developed by teams, each comprised of students from all 3 countries)

We decided that Possibility #3 was the most workable option. Four internationally collaborative mobile movies, all different stories, but all with a clear connection. As this was a global project, we decided that this connection should be an over-arching theme that affects the entire globe. We chose Environmental Sustainability. This, we realised, would add a socially responsible dimension to our mobile moviemaking. It would give rise for deeper thought in this area on the part of our students. It would add new gravitas to our project: now students across the world from one another would be collaborating around a truly international issue. We, and many like us, have spent the last few years exploring the *creative* possibilities of mobile moviemaking; it's now time to turn our attention to the opportunities these tools provide for *making a difference* in the world.

5   DEVICES / STORAGE

Our attention then turned to the practicalities. The students in the three countries would surely have different devices which shoot different frame sizes, aspect ratios, file types and resolutions. We addressed this by opening a common Dropbox account. The students would all convert their movies to a QuickTime-friendly format and upload them to Dropbox, filed by team. All students would have access to this account (via a shared p/w), and could freely look at the rushes of the other teams. What's more, we were enthusiastic about the idea of them sharing footage with one another. We left it to each student team to decide whether they were going to shoot their films in Landscape or in Portrait mode.

6 COLLABORATION TOOLS

Next, we formulated the collaboration structure. We would use Google Spreadsheets as a roster of the participants' contact details, team allocation and G-Docs address. This way, it could be updated constantly with all participants (each with full access) always up to date.

The students, in their international teams, would use Google Docs as their central collaboration document. G-Docs allows for a continual discussion in one document. This discussion can either take place synchronously - when more than one participant is online simultaneously - or asynchronously (the more likely occurrence), catching people's thoughts as the thoughts occur to them, regardless of whether anyone else is online or not. At the end of the project, what's left is a chronologically layered record of each project's evolution. G-Docs was a significant conversation tool for us lecturers developing the project, and now we planned it to serve the same function with the students. (What actually ended up happening was a bit different. See below for the outcome.)

We also used twitter (hashtag: #elvss12) as another, more instant, communication/collaboration tool. This took on added dimension when we used it as an in-class back channel. In class sessions, we always had two projectors displaying side-by-side images up on our big white wall: One image was either our Moodle course (which was our roadmap, constantly being added to each class) or a relevant website or video that was currently under discussion. The other projected image was always our twitter feed (courtesy of twitterfall.com), cascading down the screen with each new tweet. Some students, whilst sitting in class, would be researching, with their iPads, the topic under discussion and tweeting relevant shortened links to our hashtag. These tweets would instantly show up, projected behind the lecturer. Also In addition to sharing research links, students would, in this way, be able to provide instant feedback on what was being discussed. Other students in the class could, and would, tweet either questions, embellishing statements or just simply mini-reports about what was being said. Not only did the other international participants in the project know immediately what was going on in our classroom, they could tweet-back responses. This is one way in which twitter extended the boundaries of the class beyond the walls of the room, out into the world at large. The other way that twitter expanded the class boundaries was that students and lecturers would tweet links and other resources related to ELVSS at any time from any place. This, in a way, freed the class from a singular time and space, opening up the thinking, learning, and co-teaching process (students teaching other students, students teaching lecturers, etc.) to occur whenever the inspiration struck. Now the learning was integrated into everyday life, and the students were able to share ownership of the teaching, as well.

Our synchronous tool of choice was Google+ Hangouts. This also translated nicely as a tool for the students to meet periodically (although a couple of students did not have webcams or even mics). The students appreciated the ability for a number of computers to participate in a conversation.

7 BLOGS

A significant component to the ELVSS project was the students' chronicling of the process. So, as in 2011, each team was required to keep a Wordpress blog, journaling the pathway of their films' creation. In ELVSS 12, the students divided themselves not only into teams, but also into countries. So there were two blogs for each team, a UK version and an NZ version. Both addressed issues and events around the creation of their team piece "Message in a Bottle", but did so from their own local perspective. Additionally, each team's blog conformed to the course and assessment criteria that were stipulated by each lecturer (Daniel Wagner in NZ and Helen Keegan in the UK).

The French team did not have a blog of their own for two reasons: 1) the duration of their engagement with the project was less than a month's time, and 2) their involvement was, in the end, not attached to any coursework, but purely extra-curricular. Their ELVSS participation, donated solely out of their interest in the concept, was lodged between the end of their semester's coursework (all of which had wrapped up by the time they stepped into ELVSS) and their exam weeks.

8 REFLECTIONS & OBSERVATIONS

The reflections the students submitted this year were broad ranging and demonstrated a deeper level of critical thinking, on a Year 3 level, than did the 2011 students' reflections on a Year 2 level. The questions they were asked to reflect on were similar to those posed in ELVSS 11 (see above), but with a bit more rigour, as they were now a year further down the track in their studies, as well as in their

understanding of collaborative practice in general and of movie making in particular. This feedback provided valuable reflection on the mobile moviemaking process in general, whilst also generating useful input into our planning for next year's ELVSS iteration.

9 INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

One feeling expressed by those NZ students who had also been involved in ELVSS 11 (as Year 2's) was that they missed the degree of local collaboration that took place before the international element was added. Whilst they found tremendous value in the global collaboration, and would not want to give it up, they would like to see a more even balance of the two elements. This could take the form, they suggested, of a bit more time and attention back to time spent together in discussions as a class "getting together, conversing, agreeing on ideas."

Relatedly, it was pointed out that "international collaboration can bring a comprehensive cultural exchange through mobile movie making". It was acknowledged that the students overlooked the background of local influences, such as Maori culture and stories around the rich New Zealand geography. "…When we add this kind of information into the video, not only we will know the local culture of each country, audiences around the world will also know more about the local culture. I think it is a good way to deliver the message of local culture to audiences around the world."

The students grumpily related that the 12-hour time difference might have added an extra week onto the whole project. To call a Hangout with team members halfway across the planet, one would need to first contact them (via email or the FB page). Then they'd need to wait up to 12 hours for the other team to read it (which isn't until they get home from school, if they're not able to check email from school) and either accept the date or to propose another time. Then another interval of up to 12 hours would transpire before the response could be picked up and actioned. All this before an actual meeting can take place. Very labour intensive.

Many of the English-speaking students – in both New Zealand and in the UK – find it difficult to communicate fluidly with some of the French students. This was not solely due to language, but also due to differences in cultural/linguistic assumptions. This rift also was evident between NZ and UK. Separated by a common language, they found that differences in wording and phrasing often led to some rather comic misunderstandings.

10 STUDENTS' REACTIONS TO COLLABORATIVE PLATFORMS

There was considerable commentary on the choice and uses of the collaborative tools.

Google Docs was embraced to a point by the students, but not to the extent that we'd hoped or expected. As mentioned earlier, the intention was for the students to conduct the bulk of their collaboration on G-Docs. They were meant to narrow down from the general (such as such as type and scope of story) to the specific (storyline, shot list, which images are shot in which country, etc.). Whilst most students appreciated the central editability afforded by the platform, and its capability for both synchronous and asynchronous conversations (which we, the lecturers, utilised heartily during the course-planning stage), a few found this fact destabilising. They would step away from their document, returning to find it different than before. Even though they knew to check the revision history to see what changes had been made, these people felt confused by this mutability. In the end, the students defaulted to their old pal Facebook as the collaboration platform of choice. They found Facebook's push notifications preferable to having to check their G-Docs for changes or additions. But as we, their lecturers required their collaborative process to be transparent, Facebook proved problematic, as not every lecturer has a Facebook account. Exporting conversations out of Facebook was also an issue. In the end, the students copied and pasted their Facebook conversations into their blogs, which turned into a labour-intensive affair. Despite these kinks, G-Docs did not prove successful as the principal collaboration platform of ELVSS 12, and Facebook won. Among the second-tier learning objectives we'd hoped the course would achieve was to broaden the students' collaborative horizons and enable them to discover different tools for different purposes For ELVSS 13, we need to re-look at collaborative avenues that are transparent and accessible to all.

G+ Hangouts was popular for its intuitively laid-out browser-based interface and for providing free face-to-face communication for up to ten participants across the planet – for free (Skype charges for enabling more than two computers on one call). The downside of that platform, according to the students, was the inconsistent quality of the calls, as well as the sheer complexity of organising them

across time zones. They all found this challenge quite formidable. (This latter consideration, of course, would hold true for any teleconferencing platform.) Of all the collaborative tools, the videoconferencing platform was the most daunting for some. These people revealed that having a Hangout with your best friends is very different than having a Hangout with a team of people you don't actually know. It took a bit more time for these students to get used to this modality, described by one as "in your face".

The students generally liked the use of Wordpress as a blogging platform for its relative ease of use, given the customisability it offers. They appreciated the value of having a vehicle for thoughtful reflection and process journaling. They did report that it was not the best for instant communication – but we used other platforms for this purpose.

Dropbox was generally acknowledged by the students for the ability to upload most all types of material from anywhere in the world to it, as well as enabling all ELVSS participants to download any footage that had been uploaded by any other participant (they all had the password). The downsides they mentioned are the costs involved in securing any appreciable amount of storage space (our school purchased a 100GB plan for the ELVSS project) and also relatively slow upload/download speeds. Still, it remains the odds-on favourite for storage and access.

In their summative reviews of collaborative platforms, the final one the students looked at was good old tried-and-true email. The consensus was that email is the most basic and reliable form of online communication and is often the first thing that people check, but is obviously not good for live interaction. It has its place as a static, web 1 sort of notification system. But interactive communication has evolved in such a way that email is a good choice for convening a gathering that will take place on a more live platform.

11 ASSORTED OBSERVATIONS

Many of the students found that the ELVSS module forced them to confront their training in the more traditional media arts. Flying in the face of their prior learning stirred up some interesting revelations about the very nature of mobile moviemaking.

> "Mobile movie inherently gives the creator more freedom than conventional filmmaking, closer to the auteur theory; you're holding the camera and at the same time you are already directing, you are as the director; even kind of more [like a] POV shot."

On a holistic level, several students were quite moved that the (filmmaking) skills they've been acquiring over the past 2-1/2 years need not be limited to traditional funding, production and distribution channels, but can actually travel much lighter. These aspiring filmmakers realised they can apply their storytelling craft to acquisition on a mobile phone, post production on a wireless device and delivery online. A few found this quite freeing.

> "I don't have to imagine that I will organise a big crew to film one day, it is just happening right now"

Along with this smaller scale creation process comes the need to paint with smaller strokes.

Because people tend watch mobile movies in their "in between times", the films themselves are best viewed when they're shorter.

> "In my mind, mobile movie-making becomes simpler than conventional film in story structure. It is just like a trunk. But the conventional film has quite a lot of branches."

> Another analogy was a bit less lyrical:

> "Watching during in-between times (in 5-min slices, waiting for bus, etc) is kind of like fast food."

Due to the viewing screen being so much smaller, shots are more easily read when made more simply than if creating for a theatrical (or even a television) screen.

> "When thinking about filming for a mobile audience, need to think differently about how close you get, what you put in the frame. Like the difference between writing an essay and a post card. You really have to truncate (essentialise) what you're trying to say."

Because of compression (a necessary beast of online video), movement of camera and subject is most clearly viewed when it is smoother than if produced for larger formats. This technical/aesthetic guideline for simplicity of movement is also brought back into the production process itself.

> "I found the camera movements become simpler and more flexible with iPod touch. In conventional filmmaking, filmmakers normally do a movement shot with dolly and Jib, the process is complex. But with the iPod touch, I can do the same shots just by holding the camera, because the weight of the camera, I still can get a relatively stable image. So I feel mobile devices can easily achieve movement shots"

Mobile moviemaking was not only liberating in its smaller scale and ease of distribution, it also empowered students to bring their cinematic storytelling skills out into the broader community.

> "Through the project, I realize that although the small mobile devices cannot achieve the quality of conventional film, it provides an opportunity to me to achieve my dream of filmmaking with a very low budget, and has built a bridge between me and people who also love filmmaking around the world."

12 LESSONS LEARNED AND WHERE TO NEXT

As this internationally coordinated effort was a first-time venture for all involved, some of the choices we made might be made differently next year, with the benefit of hindsight. Here is some student feedback on ways we might improve the project for ELVSS 13:

- Bring on more universities both domestic and international.
- Spend more attention addressing local (indigenous) cultures in each locality
- Make a TV style series. Possibly more of a series consisting of webisodes.
- Make further use of functionality such as live streaming
- Further use of different (and emerging) platforms such as Android and Windows Phone 7.
- Maybe try a different time in the year's schedule – this is due to other university related commitments for all students participating in the project, for example the French didn't get to shoot any film due to their hectic exam schedules.
- Make one global blog for each team instead of New Zealand and the UK each having a separate one. Or one global platform for blogs, text, rushes and other data.
- Make teams smaller (e.g. 6 total members from all three countries) – sometimes there can be too many conflicting ideas. Smaller groups are easier to manage and to facilitate.
- Delegate job roles (from tutor) assign responsibilities (rather than a free-for-all).
- Editing the video on mobile devices. [This one was from a UK student; NZ students were lent iPads for editing.]
- Weekly hangouts with tutors (if time permits) and team to address problems and solutions.
- Avoid project overlapping university holidays – this hindered our focus slightly
- Experimentation with add-on accessories for phones and dedicated video recording apps.

Many of these ideas corroborate notions we lecturers shared in our periodic review Hangouts during the course of the module. ELVSS 13 will most likely involve more tertiary institutions, both in NZ and in other countries; possibilities being discussed are Germany, Malaysia and the US. We will adjust the design of the formative collaborative structures – both for the lecturers constructing/aligning the module and for the students organising their ideas and planning their movies. Some ways the latter will be in evidence will be:

- The choice, scope and uses of Web 2 collaborative platforms;
- The institution of closer lecturer monitoring and student self-monitoring systems to ensure that all students contribute (not hide behind others, as occurred in small measure during ELVSS 12).
  - o This could take the form of regularly scheduled check-in Hangouts. Rather than letting the students struggle to organise their Hangouts, a session up-front [centred around a G-Doc] which pre-set all the Hangout dates would save lots of time in back-and-forth communication between students in vastly different time zones.

- Crew role allocations that relate more directly to the specialisations that each participating programme teach (e.g.: ideas fleshed-out collaboratively, but scripts/shot lists by Unitec students; graphic design from Strasbourg, soundtrack/foley/music from Salford, etc.);

- More centralised online journaling (perhaps compiled through Storify);

- More attention to alignment of technical parameters (to avoid the time spent reframing in post, transcoding, etc.)

- Greater multi-national exploration of the Mobile Aesthetic. (Ozuah)

  o Contrasting from NZ's ELVSS 11, where the Mobile Aesthetic was one of the main guiding principles, the newly huge scope of ELVSS 12 caused us to spend more energy and attention on just ensuring that all the students hit all the marks by the deadlines imposed by the necessarily short window of synchronous classes.

- Smaller international teams (perhaps two per country per team) which can only be effected by capping course enrolments across the entire module.

These adjustments, along with other considered tweaks to tighten the structure of ELVSS, are purely intended to maximise the student experience by saving time on administrative issues, thus leaving more time for exploration, collaboration, and innovation. As an andragogic learning experience [5], ELVSS 12 was an exciting first step. We must be careful not to over-structure its next iteration, as space must be left for the students to putter a bit, to find their own voice within this emerging idiom, to become (and to stay) excited by the wealth of possibilities that collaborative mobile moviemaking offers, and to have enough of a sense of ownership over their own learning journey and shared stewardship of the overall project to feel empowered by their new skills and knowledge.

REFERENCES

[1]   Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence Culture: where old and new media collide.* New York: New York University Press.

[2]   Winslow, G. (2012, 13-July). *Survey: Mobile DTV Could Change TV Viewing Habits.* Retrieved 2012, 23-October from Broadcasting & Cable:
http://www.broadcastingcable.com/article/487122-
Survey_Mobile_DTV_Could_Change_TV_Viewing_Habits.php

[3]   Puikkonen, A., Häkkilä, J., Ballagas, R., & Mäntyjärv, J. (2009). Practices in Creating Videos with Mobile Phones. *Proceedings of the 11th International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction with Mobile Devices and Services.* ACM New York, NY, USA.

[4]   Schleser, M. B. (2009). Aesthetics of Mobile Media Art. *Journal of Media Practice - special issue (2009) A Decade of Media Practice: Changes, Challenges and Choices , 10* (2 & 3).

[5]   Ozuah, P. O. (2005). First, There Was Pedagogy And Then Came Andragogy. Retrieved 2012 19-October from The Einstein Journal of Biology and Medicine:
http://ojs.library.einstein.yu.edu/index.php/EJBM/article/viewFile/106/102