

Screencast-o-matic



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The Technology

ScreenCast-o-matic can be accessed via the Internet at www.screencastomatic.com. It is a specific site utilizing the technology of screencasting. Screencasting emerged in the early 1990s, but was given the name “screencasting” in 2004. Shortly thereafter, ScreenCast-o-matic was released as a program to create and upload screencasts. A screencast captures what is happening on the computer screen, while recording audio that narrates the actions on the screen. During the recording, a yellow aura surrounds the mouse when clicked or moved to draw attention to a specific area on the screen, such as a button that needs to be clicked. When finished, the screencast is saved as a video file that be uploaded to a variety of websites or saved on a computer. In the world of screencasting, ScreenCast-o-matic is a website that it is simple to use. With one click on the ‘Start Recording’ button, you can outline the area on your computer screen that you want to capture, click the record icon, and begin creating a screencast.

The concept of screencasting is becoming more well-known as one-to-one computing and the flipped classroom finds greater implementation in education. One-to-one computing is when each student has his or her own computer device for use in the classroom. The flipped classroom is the idea that students are actively learning at home as well as at school through the use of technology. Utilizing screencasting is one way educators can reach and teach students at home. Many companies also use screencasting to teach how to use specific computer programs relevant to their field.

Screen Recorders

Since the emergence of screencasting, there have been a variety of programs that will create screencasts. One such program is called Aviscreen. It is for Windows only and does not record audio. Another program is called Camstudio, which is free software for Windows users and records the screen with audio. Jing is software that can be downloaded by Windows and Mac users. Screentoaster and Screenr are similar to ScreenCast-o-matic because they are free web-based screen recorders for Windows and Mac users. Screencasting programs are also located on the iPad, such as ScreenChomp or Educreations, as well as on the SMART Board software.

Cost

ScreenCast-o-matic has two options that include different features. The first option is the “Basic” version and it is free for Internet users. The second option is the “Pro” version, and it costs \$15 per year (as of the most recent copyright date of 2012). A classification of the different features of each version can be found in the chart below.

Features	Basic	Pro
Recording Time	15 minute maximum	No maximum time limit
Hosting (ability to upload the media files to the website)	Free hosting	Free hosting with HD encoding
Webcam	Computer screen with Webcam, or Webcam only	Computer screen with Webcam
Publishing	YouTube, MP4, AVI, FLY movie No password protection	YouTube, MP4, AVI, FLY movie, Vimeo*, Google Drive** Password protection to upload
Watermark (Screencast-o-matic's logo)	Watermark on screen when published	No watermark when published
Offline Browser	Must be online to access	Can start new recording or edit existing recording using an offline outside browser
Other Tools	None	Editing, scripts (type a script and use while recording), screen shot, draw while recording, zoom while recording

*Vimeo is a video-sharing website

**Google Drive is a web-based storage for computer files

How do you use Screencast-o-matic?

Included in this section is a list of hyperlinks one can access to receive more information on how to use Screencast-o-matic to create a screencast.

1. <http://www.screencast-o-matic.com/channels/cXhI3EVTh> and <http://www.screencast-o-matic.com/channels/c6l6Y7VIm>

Directly from Screencast-o-matic's website, these are links to videos on how to use all of the features Screencast-o-matic provides. From how to record a screencast to how to upload to Google docs, both of these websites provide tutorials and demos.

2. <http://www.slideshare.net/Videotranscriptionstar/online-video-recording-using-screencastomatic>

This is a slide share on the steps for creating a screencast using Screencast-o-matic. It provides a 6-step process with screen shots for each step to aid visual learners.

3. http://www.goucher.edu/Documents/Welch_Center/Alice's%20Uploads/11revScreencastomatic%20Recording%20Directions.pdf

The website links to a pdf file on “How to Record a Lecture Using Screencast-o-matic”. It is formatted in a two-column chart with directions in the left column, along with a screen shot of the direction in the right column.

How are educators using the technology?

Here are some examples of how teachers and students are using Screencast-o-matic to enhance the learning experience:

1. <http://www.tech4classrooms.com/using-screencasting-in-the-classroom.html>

This website provides over 20 ideas on how to incorporate screencasts into the classroom. The ideas include how both teachers and students can use screencasts throughout the learning process.

2. <http://www.livebinders.com/play/present?id=189314>

Livebinders.com includes information on how students specifically can use screencasts in the classroom. There is a tab on the website called “Screencast Examples”. It is a blog of examples for different topics. It provides examples on how to incorporate screen casting into student learning.

3. <http://blogs.telestream.net/screenflow/2010/07/screencasts-and-education-by-paul-mcgovern/>

This is a hyperlink on screencasts and education. It is a blog on how one teacher uses screencasts in the classroom. Since it is a blog, we can continue to learn from other teachers who post comments on how they are using screencasts in their own classrooms.

4. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G6VbTx6Yeus>

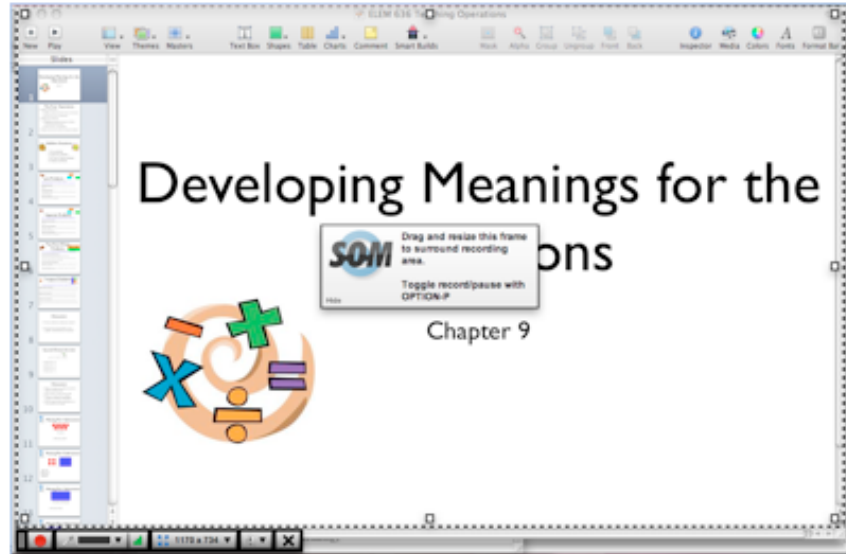
This YouTube video provides an example of how one teacher used Screencast-o-matic to reinforce a strategy taught in the classroom. She recorded herself solving a math story problem the way in which she wants her students to think about and solve similar problems.

Screencast-o-matic in Action

In order to understand how Screencast-o-matic works, let's take a look at how an educator may use screencasting to narrate a PowerPoint or Keynote presentation:

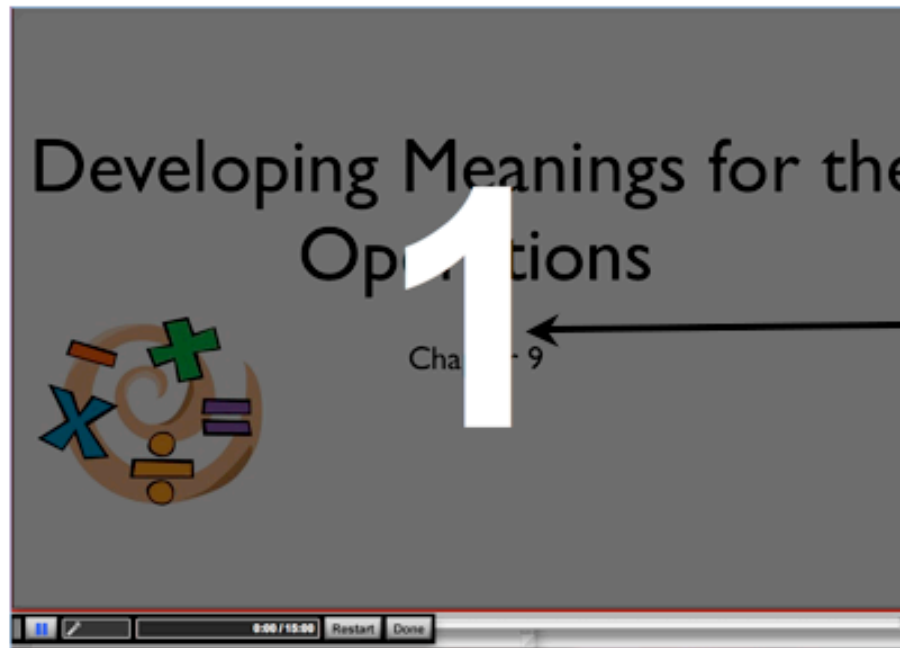
Before Recording

Recording Bar includes: record/pause button, microphone level, the size of the screen capture, webcam option, and a cancel button.



Instead of recording the entire screen, drag and resize the frame to only capture what is needed. The recorder only will see the rest of the screen.

During Recording



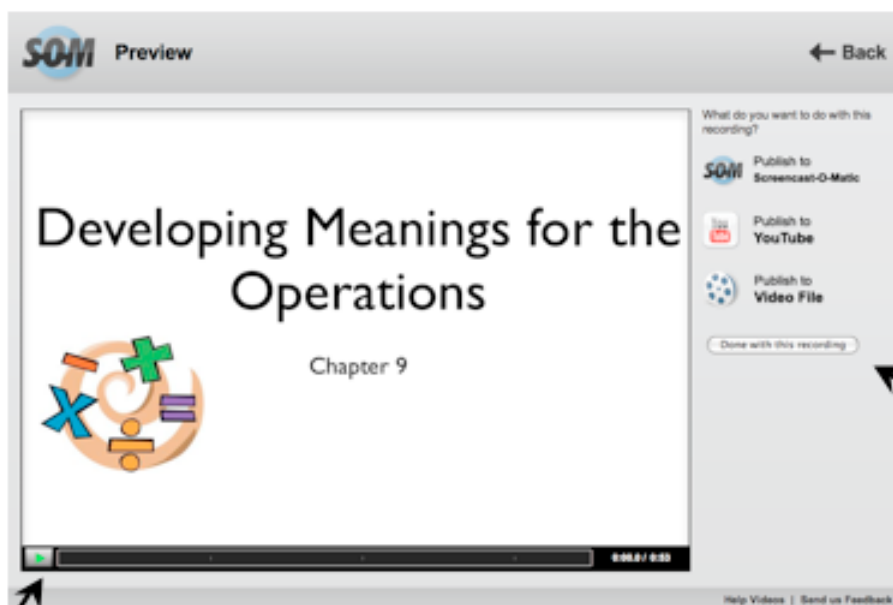
Countdown 3, 2, 1 until recording begins.

Pause

Recording time out of 15 minutes (for free users)

Restart the recording or Done with the recording

**After
Recording**



Go back to
continue
recording

Upload and
publish to the
website,
YouTube, or as a
video file

Done with the
recording after
published or
begin a new
screencast

Replay the
screencast

Solution to Curricular Issues

Education is an ever-changing field. Strategies, curriculums, technologies, and methodologies are constantly being researched and deemed “best practice”. Staying current on this research is one of the most challenging aspects of being an educator. In regards to integrating technology and curriculum, screencasting is one strategy educators can apply to solve some major curricular issues in the classroom. Educators can use this particular screencasting technology, Screencast-o-matic, to present content, to reinforce learning, and to assess learning.

Screencasting is a way to present new information to students in an engaging way. Embedding technology and screencasts into lessons grabs students’ attention, and therefore increases student engagement and learning outcomes. Educators are using the website to narrate PowerPoint or Smart Board presentations, tell digital stories, describe how to solve math problems, and teach how to use a specific program on a computer. Utilizing screencasts in these ways supports an educator’s goal to reach and teach students. Screencast-o-matic a program educators can use to produce those screencasts that is easy to manipulate and creates a screencast in just a few steps.

Not only can screencasts be used to introduce new content, but they can also be used to facilitate and guide learning. Educators can differentiate the content by creating multiple screencasts on the same topic. To reach learners of different abilities, a teacher can facilitate learning by recording different screencasts that meet the needs of the students. Since students learn at different rates, screencasts can assist teachers in addressing struggling learners while

challenging others. Posting screencasts to websites such as YouTube, Wikis, or Edmodo, allows students to comment with suggestions, critiques, or questions.

Screencasts can also assess students' learning. The teacher can use a screencast to explain a culminating activity that will be used as an assessment, or students can create a screencast. The student-created screencast could be used to assess the learning of a particular unit of study. Teachers can also provide feedback on assessments using screencasts.

National Educational Technology Standards (NETS)

NETS for Teachers	Screencast-o-matic Alignment
<p>Standard 2: Design and Develop Digital-Age Learning Experiences and Assessments Teachers design, develop, and evaluate authentic learning experiences and assessment incorporating contemporary tools and resources to maximize content learning in context and to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes identified in the NETS for students.</p>	<p>Using Screencast-o-matic, educators can design and develop screencasts of: introductions to lessons, instructions for projects, differentiated lessons, and more. Screencast-o-matic can also be used to evaluate students' learning by assessing student-created screencasts.</p>
<p>Standard 3: Model Digital-Age Work and Learning Teachers exhibit knowledge, skills, and work processes representative of an innovative professional in a global and digital society. c. Teachers communicate relevant information and ideas effectively to students, parents, and peers using a variety of digital age media and formats.</p>	<p>Screencasting is an innovative way to present, guide, and assess learning in the classroom. Educators who utilize Screencast-o-matic are representing themselves as "innovative professionals". Teachers use screencasting to communicate information to students at school and at home by posting the screencasts on a website. Teachers communicate with parents by creating screencasts of "homework helpers" (for example, explaining how to solve a specific math problem), so parents can assist their child on homework. Teachers can communicate with colleagues by using screencasts to present professional development or to explain how to access information on school databases.</p>

<http://www.iste.org/standards/nets-for-teachers/nets-for-teachers-2008.aspx>

NETS for Students	Screencast-o-matic Alignment
<p>Standard 2: Communication and Collaboration Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others. b. Communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats or complete a project.</p>	<p>Students work collaboratively in small groups to create a screencast on a unit of study. The students can create a PowerPoint or Smart Board presentation, and then narrate the presentation using Screencast-o-matic. This addresses using a variety of media and using the media to communicate ideas.</p>
<p>Standard 6: Technology Operations and Concepts Students demonstrate a sound understanding of technology concepts, systems, and operations. a. Understand and use technology systems b. Select and use applications effectively and productively</p>	<p>Through student-use of Screencast-o-matic, students will become more familiar with the concept of screencasting and how it can be used to communicate information. Students will be able to use the specific technology, Screencast-o-matic, effectively and productively.</p>

<http://www.iste.org/standards/nets-for-students>

Environmental Factors

When an educator is deciding whether or not to use Screencast-o-matic, there are several environmental factors to consider. The screencast is created by accessing the website, so one would need a computer or tablet with an internet connection. Screencast-o-matic is compatible with Windows, Mac, and Linux operating systems. In order to start the recording, the computer needs to have a Java applet installed. If the computer does not have one, it can be downloaded for free by going to the following website: <http://www.java.com/getjava/>. Since a screencast is capturing what is on the computer screen, the user will need to have something prepared to narrate. The user will also need a microphone, which can be built-in to the computer or a plug-in microphone.

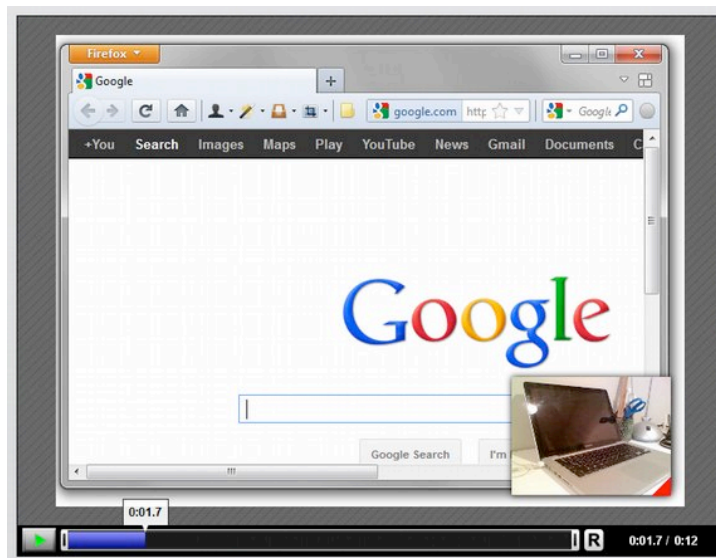
Benefits and Drawbacks

Benefits

There are many reasons why educators should use Screencast-o-matic to create screencasts:

- It is free to Internet users for the basic features.

- The website is user-friendly and simple to create a screencast.
- It requires little to no training for new users.
- The website includes screencasts that demonstrate how to use the features of Screencast-o-matic and includes screencasts on solutions to troubleshooting.
- Screencast-o-matic captures any program or website that is on the computer screen.
- Users can record video from a webcam that is included in the screencast (see below)
- The user can select a specific area of the screen to be recorded, thus focusing the learner's attention to the part of the screen necessary for the screencast.
- The website has the ability to publish the screencast in a variety of ways.
- Educators can present lessons in an engaging way to students, use as a form of assessment, or provide feedback via a screencast.



A screencast can include a webcam in the corner.

Drawbacks

While there are many benefits to using Screencast-o-matic, there are also drawbacks to using the website for creating screencasts:

- Users cannot edit the screencast on the website or record more than 15 minutes without purchasing the Pro edition for \$15 per year.
- A Java applet is needed in order to run properly.
- The screencasts produced from Screencast-o-matic are not interactive for students. There are no features to include interactive quizzes, polls, or other interactive features.

While there are drawbacks to using Screencast-o-matic, there are many benefits to the program. Screencast-o-matic can assist educators in transforming the field of education by reaching and teaching students.