

# Web-based Data Collection: FORMing a better solution

Jesse Wisnouse  
Session 3- 1:45 to 2:30  
Room 329

Download this presentation at  
<http://jessewisnouse.com/micca09/>

## Meet the presenter

- Middle school science teacher for Frederick Co. (MD) for four years (2002 - 2006)
- Technology coordinator and technology education teacher for one year (2006 - 2007)
- Technology Resource Teacher (2007 - present)
  - Assists teachers and students working with new instructional hardware and software
  - Researches, reviews, compares and recommends emerging technologies

## Technology Coordinator Position- Background information

- Taught two 90-minute blocks per day
- Had three hours of time to devote to technical issues in building, including my teacher prep time
- New school had > 430 networked computers, including 210 wireless laptops
- Teachers coming from different schools had different methods of reporting issues
- A formal process was needed to document the workload

## Methods initially used to report issues

- Communicating issues in person (in class, hallway)
- Phone call / voice mail (2 classrooms and an office)
- Email (text description)
- Handwritten note in my mailbox, on my desk

*With multiple ways for the staff to submit information, I had trouble determining the chronological order of requests and keeping track of the tasks I performed. It was a very inefficient process that required change.*

## Methods that were considered to improve communication:

- Word/Excel sign-up list on shared network drive
- Word/Excel form filled out and emailed as attachment
- Access database created with front-end interface
- Web-based form on staff Intranet

## Possible processes- pros and cons\*

Issue	Sign-up list on shared drive	Form filled out and sent as an attachment	Access DB with front-end interface	Web-based form on Intranet
Time needed to set up or implement	Easiest to implement immediately	Very easy to implement immediately	Very time consuming	Easy to set up
Location of data	Public- see others' issues	Private- cannot see others' issues	Private- cannot see others' issues	Private- cannot see others' issues
End user level of difficulty	Easy	Most time consuming	Easy	Easy
Amount of data storage	Smallest amount	Largest amount	Small amount	Small amount
Other pros:	Easy to back up data	Issues entered correctly	Unlimited report options	Issues entered correctly
Other cons:	Can delete other s' input	Open each one separately	Most complex to create	Who "owns" this data?

\*For person with average technical competencies

## And the winner was...

- **Web-based submission forms**
  - 60 minutes to create
  - 45 minutes to create a short user tutorial with screen shots
  - 15 minutes to send an email describing the process and rationale for submitting the information this way
- **What is a web-based submission form?**
  - A web page that allows users to enter information across a network (LAN or WAN)
  - Data entered is processed "behind the scenes"
    - Can be emailed to an end user
    - Can be kept in a database stored on a web server
    - Can be downloaded and saved as a spreadsheet
  - Used to protect end user email addresses (spammers, persistent emailers, "personal" messages)

7

## Implementation Issues Encountered

- Support from school administration
- Staff buy-in
  - Took time for everyone to submit requests online
  - Change can be difficult at first for some people
- Issues when server went down
  - How and where to submit work requests
  - Mad calls: "The form isn't available... Nooooooo!"
- Asynchronous communication
  - Some responses vague, too general or misleading
  - Some responses seem unfriendly in writing- let it go...

8

## Examples of web-based submission forms

- [Bloglines](#)
- [BestBuy](#)
- [Wikispaces](#)
- [High School Student Behavior Form](#)
- [My work log](#)
- [Students submitting work in a course](#)

9

## How are forms used in school systems?

- Processing new students
- Processing grades
- Submitting online applications
- Signing up for in-county MSDE courses
- Entering mileage reports
- Coding timesheets for substitutes
- Submitting web page questions/comments to the webmaster
- Does your school use a tech support submission form?

10

## "Free" online form generators

- [Wufoo](#)
  - Provide free but limited web-based submission forms
  - [Terms of service](#)
- [Zoho](#)
  - Provide free but limited online database applications
  - [Terms of service and privacy policy](#)
- [Google Documents](#) (Forms)
  - Free submission forms, easy to share, less features
  - [Terms of service](#)

11

## Next steps: We'll walk through Zoho Creator & Google Forms

- Setting up an account
- Creating a form
- Allowing others to access the form
- Collecting data from the form

12