**New Media Consortium Names 10 Top ‘Metatrends’ Shaping Educational Technology**

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A group of education leaders gathered last week to discuss the most important technology innovations of the last decade, and their findings suggest the classroom of the future will be open, mobile, and flexible enough to reach individual students—while free online tools will challenge the authority of traditional institutions.

The retreat celebrated the 10th anniversary of the New Media Consortium’s Horizon Project, whose annual report provides a road map of the education-technology landscape. One hundred experts from higher education, K-12, and museum education identified 28 “metatrends” that will influence education in the future. The 10 most important, according to a New Media Consortium [announcement](http://www.nmc.org/news/download-communique-horizon-project%20retreat) about the retreat, include global adoption of mobile devices, the rise of cloud computing, and transparency movements that call into question traditional notions of content ownership concerning digital materials.

Larry Johnson, the consortium’s chief executive, said the meeting was important because it brought together groups from three different education sectors that don’t often collaborate. He said the retreat intended to “drive a conversation around how to think about the future.”

Of the top 10 trends the group flagged, Mr. Johnson said one of the most interesting conversations to emerge was about open data and open-educational resources. As the group discussed these issues, he said, the participants began to think about transparency “as a value” rather than a buzzword.

Later this year, the consortium will build on its retreat by publishing videos of the event, hosting a series of social-media conversations, and writing a more extensive report on its findings.

**UPDATE:** Here are the top 10 trends from the report:

*1. The world of work is increasingly global and increasingly collaborative. As more and more companies move to the global marketplace, it is common for work teams to span continents and time zones. Not only are teams geographically diverse, they are also culturally diverse.*

*2. People expect to work, learn, socialize, and play whenever and wherever they want to. Increasingly, people own more than one device, using a computer, smartphone, tablet, and ereader. People now expect a seamless experience across all their devices.*

*3. The Internet is becoming a global mobile network — and already is at its edges. Mobithinking reports there are now more than 6 billion active cell phone accounts. 1.2 billion have mobile broadband as well, and 85% of new devices can access the mobile web.*

*4. The technologies we use are increasingly cloud-based and delivered over utility networks, facilitating the rapid growth of online videos and rich media. Our current expectation is that the network has almost infinite capacity and is nearly free of cost. One hour of video footage is uploaded every second to YouTube; over 250 million photos are sent to Facebook every day.*

*5. Openness — concepts like open content, open data, and open resources, along with notions of transparency and easy access to data and information — is moving from a trend to a value for much of the world. As authoritative sources lose their importance, there is need for more curation and other forms of validation to generate meaning in information and media.*

*6. Legal notions of ownership and privacy lag behind the practices common in society. In an age where so much of our information, records, and digital content are in the cloud, and often clouds in other legal jurisdictions, the very concept of ownership is blurry.*

*7. Real challenges of access, efficiency, and scale are redefining what we mean by quality and success. Access to learning in any form is a challenge in too many parts of the world, and efficiency in learning systems and institutions is increasingly an expectation of governments — but the need for solutions that scale often trumps them both. Innovations in these areas are increasingly coming from unexpected parts of the world, including India, China, and central Africa.*

*8. The Internet is constantly challenging us to rethink learning and education, while refining our notion of literacy. Institutions must consider the unique value that each adds to a world in which information is everywhere. In such a world, sense-making and the ability to assess the credibility of information and media are paramount.*

*9. There is a rise in informal learning as individual needs are redefining schools, universities, and training. Traditional authority is increasingly being challenged, not only politically and socially, but also in academia — and worldwide. As a result, credibility, validity, and control are all notions that are no longer givens when so much learning takes place outside school systems.*

*10. Business models across the education ecosystem are changing. Libraries are deeply reimagining their missions; colleges and universities are struggling to reduce costs across the board. The educational ecosystem is shifting, and nowhere more so than in the world of publishing, where efforts to reimagine the book are having profound success, with implications that will touch every aspect of the learning enterprise.*

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