ABSTRACT

ANALYSIS OF STUDENT USAGE OF A COURSE WEBSITE

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The study investigated the usefulness of a teacher-maintained website in the traditional classroom. The goal of the study was to determine how and why students use a class website that offers them access to classroom materials via the Internet. The study took place in a sophomore life science class in a semi-rural high school with an equal mixture of males and females.

Data was collected over three individual school years, with three different groups of students. Objective data collected included daily, monthly and yearly website usage statistics. Subjective data, including reasons for accessing the websites, frequency of use, and related
information was collected by survey. The data was analyzed in aggregate and by year in search of longer-term trends.

The results show that students will use a class website to access course information outside of school. Website hits averaged 326 times per month, 69% of the students considered themselves regular users, 34% of the students are using the site 1-2 times a week, and 78% of students are accessing the site at least 1-2 times a month. Students will use it to make up missed work, finish class work, print lost assignments and look ahead and prepare for future assignments. They will perceive it to be a valuable resource for improving their grades and correlation analysis suggests that regular users are more likely to receive a better grade in the course.

The information from the study will be relevant to teachers, administrators and parents looking for ways to positively affect student learning using computers.