'Rapid Response' Video Series

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At the very beginning of social distancing in Australia, just before school closures in early March 2020, two academics in the field of educational technologies sought a way to quickly support teachers during their sudden shift to online education. This article provides an overview of the rapid rollout of a series of videos developed to build teacher confidence and introduce them to key concepts of online education. Based on 13,852 video views achieved in just 3 weeks, the project was considered worthwhile.

Literature Review

During the time of political indecision in Australia around whether and when to close schools, we perceived that media were purporting students' education would be irreversibly damaged if schools closed; the affordances of online learning was not being promoted to students, parents, or indeed teachers. What was important at this time in the media, politically, and also within education departments in Australia, was a concern for teacher capability to teach online. Three factors were driving this concern. Firstly, for many classroom teachers, their university pre-service training had not prepared them for online delivery (Maor, 2017). Secondly, remote schooling is different to online coursework or distance education and as such, is uncommon in mainstream schools. Thirdly, teaching digitally is more than simply knowing how to use technology or transferring materials to an online

platform (Palloff & Pratt, 2013), it requires different pedagogies and new ways of engaging and communicating with students (Jensen, Price, & Roxå, 2019; Philipsen, Tondeur, Pareja Roblin, Vanslambrouch, & Zhu, 2019; Rodrigues, Almeida, Figueiredo, & Lopes, 2019). Importantly, Yen, Lo, Lee, and Enriquez (2018) have contended that teaching digitally is not instinctive for many educators.

Schools in Australia were facing a situation whereby they might close Friday and begin delivering curriculum wholly online from Monday. As such, there was a need to quickly build teacher confidence and expose them to practical concepts related to teaching online and its differences from classroom teaching.

The first premise underpinning our response was to encourage teachers to be learning engineers (Bain, 2004) when using a range of tools, platforms, devices, and strategies for actively engaging their students with content and with each other. The second premise was to focus on practical support rather than deep theory due to time constraints. We perceived it important for teachers to understand the need for active engagement to complement content delivery (D'Agustino, 2012; Veletsianos & Navarrette, 2012). The solution we implemented was a series of help videos that provided teachers with practical advice and examples contextualised to the classroom. It was called the "Rapid Response" series.

Process

Thirty videos were designed and recorded rapidly. The complete process of conceptualisation, PowerPoint creation, recording, and uploading the first 15 videos took 36 hours, with each video being between 1 and 6 minutes. We took an authentic approach of recording minimal takes and allowing imperfections to remain in the published videos thereby modelling for teachers the effectiveness of bite-size, quickly-created content that is responsive to audience needs.

That first series gave practical tips drawing on learning design and online teaching theories. Topics were selected on the basis of our own first-hand experience and perceptions of what would be helpful for teachers in this current situation. This series was launched March 23rd through social media channels. A second series of 15 videos was released a week later. Topics for the second series were drawn directly from questions received from teachers who had engaged with the first series. Particularly, educators asked for illustrations of real-world practice. The list of all videos developed and released is shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Rapid response video series

SERIES 1 – Released 23 March	
With the sudden shift to online education for many teachers, we prepared this series to help teachers 'get started' during the transition. These videos were developed very quickly, and deeper topics continue to be created in response to feedback.	
Prepare your students to go online	Spice it up online
Key principles of online education	Real time live discussions
Issues for students learning online	Ice-breakers matter online
The four roles of an online teacher	Visual signposts
Basic do's and don'ts online	Worksheet alternatives
Making instructional videos	Basics of discussion forums
Be human!	Guide for parents
Six steps to designing your topic online	
SERIES 2 – Released 1 April	
This second series builds on the first. It provides examples of how teachers are shifting their teaching and subject areas, building student skills, and supporting engagement through pastoral care. This series showcases teachers talking about how they are designing for online schooling. Additionally, school leaders share how they are managing whole school change and supporting teachers during this shift to online.	
Whole school planning for online	Junior secondary lesson
Check-ins and pastoral care	Primary lesson
Daily schedule (primary)	Early years – tips
Senior secondary lesson	Early years – parent support
	Year 1 daily plan
For Trainers & Lecturers – Released 1 April	
These videos have been created especially for trainers and lecturers in response to questions they have been sending. All ideas presented are based on our experience of what is practical for the educator and what students respond well to.	
Explore your platform	Using Microsoft Teams
Teaching live online	Outside the box
Discussion forums	Student coffee shop

The temporary website www.TeachingOnline.com.au was created to organise the videos which were housed on a university YouTube playlist[1]. A bespoke website enabled the purpose of the series' to be conveyed and biographical details of the creators lent credibility (See Figure 1 and 2).
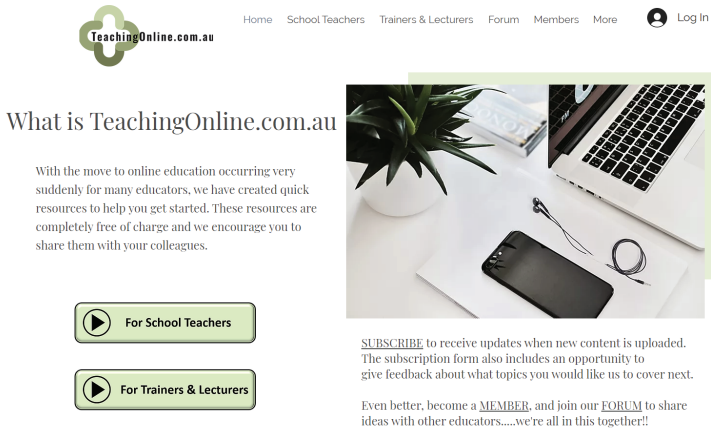
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[1] Permanent link to full video series
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLruumXJIT4qDOpP-VoX8AQEX2T9rjIJe8

Figure 1. Website landing page.


Figure 2. Creator biographies.

For each series, an 'introduction' video was provided to contextual the purpose of the content in that series (Figure 3). Furthermore, for every video a short written description was provided, who the presenter was, and the du-

ration of that video. This enabled the viewers to quickly select videos they perceived relevant to them.
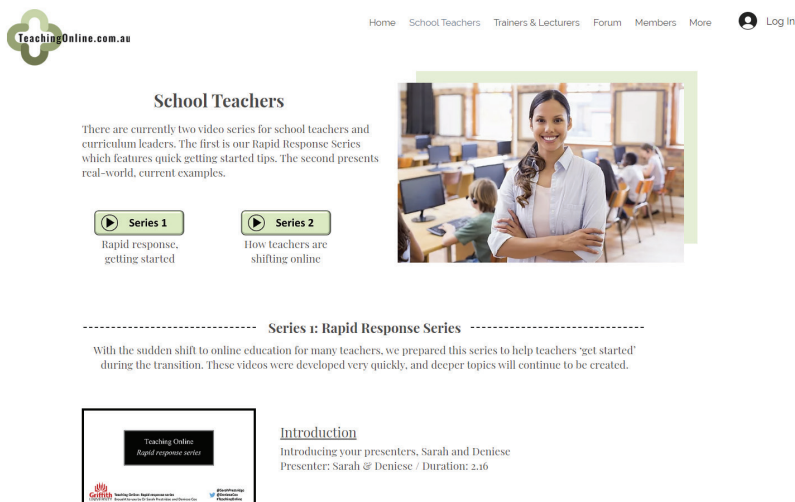
Figure 3. An introduction to each series was filmed to contextual the purpose of the content.

An additional design feature was that every PowerPoint developed to support the videos had consistently formatted first and last slides (Figure 4). The intention of this was to convey a sense of each resource being part of a larger series, thereby encouraging teachers to engage with additional content.
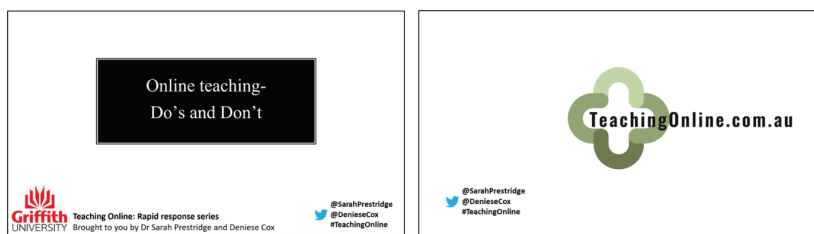
Figure 4. Consistently formatted first and last slides.

While most videos were developed particularly for K-12 teachers, in response to demand a series for trainers and lecturers was also included (Figure 5).

Figure 5. A separate series for trainers and lecturers was provided.

A community forum was promoted for teachers to discuss the videos, provide feedback, and share their own resources or experiences with remote schooling. The teaching community forum was made available to all view-ers who chose to subscribe at no cost to the website. That forum was split into sectors (Figure 6).

Figure 6. A teaching community forum presented by sector.

Teachers were offered the opportunity to provide feedback and/or subscribe to the website to receive updates (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Subscription and feedback form.

Results

It was not feasible to measure the nature of what impact these resources may have had on practice or confidence. Instead, we drew on website and YouTube analytics to identify site traffic and the number of views per video, and we developed qualitative themes from the unsolicited feedback forms and emails received from viewers.

One month after initial release, the Rapid Response series of videos had 13,852 views. Views per video ranged from 289 to 1,309, with an average of 640. Within the first series, the most frequently viewed videos were *'Do's and don'ts of online education'* and *'Worksheet alternatives'*. The most frequently viewed videos in the second series were *'Senior secondary lesson online'* and *'How I use Microsoft Teams"*.

When the videos were launched, website traffic came from, in order, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. However, within a week, 77% of traffic to

the website was by direct entry of the URL. There were 3,366 unique visitors to the site in its first 3 weeks.

Overall, teachers responded positively to the resources. For example, one teacher wrote

> *Thank you so much for this online resource. I am finding your tips invaluable and are giving me confidence and a more positive mindset about moving to the online space. I can see great potential in using this to provide quality education for our students through a challenging time. It also allows us to continue to be connected which is what matters most. What a wonderful resource this is!!'*

Notably, rather than engaging in the publicised forum, teachers sought direct 1:1 advice from us.

Implications

The intent of our response was to help teachers who may lack time to seek out resources. Based on ad-hoc teacher feedback, we perceived four success contributors. These were (1) Timing; (2) Bite-sized content; (3) Practical rather than theoretical content with first-hand experiences shared; and (4) Easy-to-access content.

The timing of the videos was considered important to support teachers during the pending and actual closure of schools. Some teachers commented on feeling supported by the timeliness of the resources and appreciating that the resources had been created especially for them in this unprecedented moment in time. Key concepts were introduced in short, digestible videos. Some teachers identified that the clear descriptions for each video helped them select just-in-time topics of relevance. Other teachers reported valuing practical content and the sharing of real experiences. As one teacher said, "*who's got time for theory just now*". We perceived that using videos as the medium to relate concepts to teachers was efficient for us and for them, although written materials may also have been effective.

Future Research

Three opportunities for future research have been identified. First, there is an opportunity to investigate whether teachers actively continue to build their knowledge of remote teaching once schooling returns wholly to classrooms.

The second opportunity relates to teaching communities. An intentional feature of the website was a forum to support building an online community, grounded in a Community of Practice (CoP) (see Wenger, 1998 and the many adaptations of that model). The forum was created for sharing and building on ideas. As Wegner (2009) points out, communities of people learn to how to do things better through regular interaction and sharing of ideas. However, activity in our forum mirrored a Listserv, a more liner question/answer engagement directed at the creators rather than the community. This offers opportunities for research about how a CoP could be stimulated after the wave of remote schooling settles and teachers have time to be more critically thoughtful. A CoP requires facilitation and effort to build support systems that enable the community to be self-managing (see the formative works of Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989; Wilson & Ryder, 1996) but this is where greater impact on change to teacher practice can be achieved (Prestridge, Tondeur, & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2019; Tallvid, 2016).

That observation aligns with the third research opportunity which is to identify if remote schooling experiences trigger new awareness of the affordances technologies can bring to learning. It will be informative to observe the nature and purpose of technology-supported teaching strategies introduced to classrooms post-pandemic.

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