

“I’M GOING TO DISNEY WORLD!”

by Lawrence Bruce

We’ve all seen the video clip that occurs after nearly every Super Bowl. Some correspondent or broadcaster asks an MVP of the winning team, “Now that you’ve won the Super Bowl, what are you gonna do now?” And in a seemingly staged reply, as if in return for reimbursement from the institution, the athlete responds with, “I’m going to Disney World!” At that moment, that athlete is at the top of his mountain, proclaiming to the world below that this achievement must be marked with an event as grand as a visit to Disney.

Without really delving too deep into an event as simple as that harmless occurrence that occupies a mere seven seconds of network coverage, I’d like to liken that to what the completion of this Master’s program has been like for me.

Let me spend a moment to discuss what went into getting to the Super Bowl (a metaphor). Every athlete will attest to the fact that superiority does not come overnight; it requires hours of scheduled training, practice, experience, a finely tuned set of skills and talents, as well as countless hours of mental preparation and timely, sometimes unrequited teachable moments offered by a coach or trainer. Yes, the goal of reaching the Super Bowl is a lifestyle. Such has been the pursuit of this degree. I believe I can speak for my cohorts (can I say “teammates”) by stating that this has been an arduous journey. But, I guess that is what makes it such an achievement.

That is also what creates the return on investment so great and rewarding. And here we are on the cusp of cashing out and shoving off what has become a familiar landfall into the uncharted ocean that is educational technology.

I guess this could be referred to as a turning point in our careers. At this point we can look back on what education was for us before and truly believe it will never be the same; we will never approach instruction or think about education without incorporating these elements.

So what conjecture can be made with regard to that vast ocean? Well, let’s think about Disney for a second. I’ve never been there (“but the brochure seems nice” says Sheryl Crow), however, I hear that it is a majestic and glorious place for children of all ages. I believe that this Master’s Degree has allowed me to achieve and succeed in a way I haven’t experienced before. It logically follows that my career as an educator is directed to reach similar heights.

Unfortunately, there’s a bit of a hang-up. Recall the vast ocean referred to earlier. The metaphor assumes there is a great unknown in the future of educational technology. Nothing could be truer. With every new year, hundreds of tech tools arise from numerous producers, all staking their claim as an education essential. Who better to assume the task of making administrators aware of such tools and to help with their acquisition and training of staff toward their successful implementation into our classrooms? This requires that I never stop learning and building essential skills to promote the increased use of

relevant technology in our classrooms. Reading blogs by edtech leaders, attending seminars and conferences such as the Discovery Educator Network and Michigan Association of Computer Users in Learning (MACUL) in order to keep informed of the issues surrounding educational technology to keep colleagues apprised of needs and solutions.

As a district leader in educational technology, I find myself in a peculiarly satisfying position. I can continue teaching as I always have aspired to do. In addition I am able to assist my school and fellow teachers achieve great things by having fun playing with new and cutting edge tech tools. My job becomes a magical place where inspired learning takes place for students and their teachers; where students become teachers and teachers become students; where classrooms are transformed into multimedia experiences allowing students to escape the classroom and interact with the world they may otherwise never see.

From here on, you can find me in Disney World.