**The why and how of screencasts?**

When the ITGS project is complete, it is necessary to ensure that all of the features required to use the product are apparent to both the ITGS teacher and the moderator. The student is required to demonstrate in a screencast that the product is functional and demonstrate at least three advanced techniques that have been used in creating the product (criterion E). The screencast does not replace the screenshots required in the justification (criterion E).

**How can we assure that moderators actually experience the product submitted on CD-ROM/DVD as it was intended to be?**

In the case of multimedia products such as desktop published manuals, video, podcasts and websites, the products can be made available in a range of formats, do not require input and can also be made accessible via the Internet (not required). However, the moderator may not be aware of a particular feature or use of an advanced technique. The screencast will point this out.

However, other products cause significant problems because the application to access the product is not available on the moderator’s computer or requires a special installation. Examples include products created with expensive CAD software or require programming environments to be installed or Access databases (do not run on the Mac platform). Conversely, most moderators using PC hardware would not be able to run Filemaker Pro databases because they do not have the software available. The functionality and use of techniques must be demonstrated in a screencast.

**The screencast.** Not only does a screencast allow the student to talk the moderator through their product and how they created it, but allows the student to demonstrate their work using their own style. Students are quite proud of the Products that they created for clients. They get a great sense of satisfaction and achievement when they can present it to the moderator with a screencast.

Creating a screencast of the product also provides students with the practical experience required to understand topics in the ITGS Guide such as how effective tutorials can be created and delivered (Section 3.2).

The process for creating a screencast is quite straight forward. Directions for the student:

* Make a logical plan to follow for the screencast. What does the moderator need to see? What does the student want to show? Keep in mind that shorter and effective is better(several minutes).
* Find a quiet area with a computer with the screencast software installed and a good microphone . Rehearse the screencast. Find the pause command to stop and start the recording as necessary.
* Create the screencast. There will be mistakes. This is no problem. Just pause for about 4 seconds and repeat that segment again. The part with the mistake can be identified with the pause and edited out later.
* Editing the video is not required. However, it is often desirable if there have been unnessarily long pauses at the beginning or end or mistakes that have been captured.
* The screencast should be saved in a format that can be viewed using [VLC software](http://www.videolan.org/vlc/). (a free open-source program for both PC and Mac computers) and also in a common format such as QuickTime.

(The above tips are based on “[5 Steps to Creating Effective Screencasts](http://diythemes.com/thesis/how-to-create-screencasts/)” by Derek Halpern.)

Creating screencasts has become increasing simplified to the point that the software to create screencasts has been included in recent versions of operating systems (ie [How to record quick, easy screencast videos with Mac OSX](http://thenextweb.com/apple/2011/01/15/how-to-record-quick-easy-screencast-videos-with-mac-osx/)).

There are also free online software options and commercial products with educational pricing available ([TechSmith.com](http://www.techsmith.com/index.html)).

Downloads and online tutorials demonstrating screencasting with [Jing](http://www.techsmith.com/tutorial-jing.html) (free), [Camtasia Studio](http://www.techsmith.com/tutorial-camtasia.html) and [Camtasia Mac](http://www.techsmith.com/tutorial-camtasia-mac.html) are available on the [TechSmith](http://www.techsmith.com/index.html) website.

Comparisons of screencasting software are available:

* [Screencasting software: Comparison and features](http://dreamwebdesigns.com/screencasting-software-comparison-and-features/)
* [The 10 most useful ScreenCast Applications](http://www.the10most.com/entrepreneurs/10-useful-screencast-applications.html)
* [Mac Video Capture Software Review](http://video-capture-software-review.toptenreviews.com/mac-video-capture-software/)