



Interactive Digital Whiteboard

Purpose

An interactive digital whiteboard (IDW) is similar to a standard whiteboard except that it can capture what is written on it for later distribution. It also enables you to interact directly with applications and presentations on the board rather than through the mouse and keyboard.

Description

There are a number of different types of digital whiteboard, however most work on the principle of a touch screen; using your finger or a special pen you can:

- click on buttons
- drag items around the screen
- annotate the screen with drawings and text
- add drawings and text to 'flipchart pages' for printing and storing for later use

Typically the board is connected to a computer through a cable (there are also wireless versions), with the computer in turn connected to a data projector. The image on the computer screen is projected on to the digital whiteboard and can be interacted with by touch (a simple calibration procedure is used to associate positions on the projected image with physical locations on the digital whiteboard).

Ways of using this tool

In its simplest form, the IDW can be used as an electronic flipchart. You can use the supplied pens to write on the board, and save the 'flipcharts' for later recall or distribution or printing.

'Flipcharts' can also be prepared in advance and away from the IDW using a standard computer. For example, text and diagrams can be created to include on flipcharts for further annotation during the lecture or tutorial. It is also possible for animations and movies to be included and these too can be annotated.

The interactive nature of the boards allows innovative exercises to be developed that involve students, for example dragging-and-dropping text and diagrams around the board.

IDWs are also ideal for demonstrating the use of software applications; the application screen is displayed large in front of the students and rather than having to follow a small mouse pointer, students can easily see how the demonstrator interacts with the software.

Learn More

OUCS has IDWs fitted in all of its lecture rooms and is willing to demonstrate their use and run familiarisation sessions for lecturers and other potential users.

The IDWs used in OUCS are Smart Boards from Smart Technologies. Smart Technologies make available a large number of resources for use with their Smart Boards, although the focus is on primary and secondary education.

Access

The software associated with IDWs is generally available for both the Windows and the Mac platforms.

Information about Smart Boards is available at:

<http://www.mysmartspaces.co.uk/products>

Other suppliers include:

Promethean

<http://www.prometheanworld.com/server.php?show=nav.2014>

This document is part of a larger set aimed at introducing the reader to a wide range of technologies. Please visit this web page for more information:

<http://www.oucs.ox.ac.uk/ltg/>

Your primary support for IT issues comes from your department or college. If you would like advice on using electronic whiteboards in learning and teaching at Oxford please contact OUCS.

Tools for Teaching