Web 2.0 Interactive Technologies: *Virtual Worlds: Second Life & twinity*[BETA]

Description

A *3D virtual world* is a *three-dimensional, digital representation of an environment* that graphically represents a fantasy or reality-based community that is populated by *avatars*, which are controlled by the users or members of the virtual world. An ***avatar*** is a *digital persona* created by the user. One can create an avatar that resembles one's real life self, or create an alternate identity.

The look of a 3D virtual world has depth, perceptive visual space and often seems to conform to real world based rules such as gravity, locomotion or movement through space. Members can rent or purchase virtual real estate, design personal 3D-worlds and meet friends from across the globe. In a 3D virtual world, members create their virtual selves (avatars), visit real virtual cities, attend classes, go shopping or sightseeing as they navigate through the virtual world. *SecondLife* (© Linden Research, Inc.) and *twinity*[BETA] are examples of online 3D virtual worlds.

General Strengths & Weaknesses

"*I have looked at 2nd Life as a possible place for a virtual classroom for virtual visit to the Neuropsychiatry Clinic or our residency. The drawback is that you need a 2nd Life devotee to spend hours and hours and hours setting up the island and then you have to commit to going in to monitor it if you want it to be interactive.*"

Virtual Sistine Chapel in *Second Life*
Vassar College

Generally, virtual world technology involves a significant time commitment, as well as extensive skills training in order to build realistic content.

Peer Resource

Sheldon Benjamin

UMMS Information Services Support

UMMS IS does not currently support or maintain virtual world technology. UMMS users with application installation privileges on a office or personal computer, can download and install required applications via the particular virtual world web site.

For more information:

Visit the *Second Life* website
Second Life *Community FAQ*
Download the Second Life *QuickStart Guide* (.pdf)
Visit the *twinity* website
View a *short video about building a "world" in Second Life* by Williams College students (c.2008)