

FROM BOOK PROPOSAL TO PUBLICATION: CONVEYING OUR STORIES OF TRANSFORMING LEARNING WITH ICT

Dr Glenn Finger
Faculty of Education, Griffith University

Dr Glenn Russell
Monash University

Associate Professor Romina Jamieson-Proctor
Faculty of Education, University of Southern Queensland

Associate Professor Neil Russell
Faculty of Education, Griffith University

ABSTRACT

A search of book publications revealed that few refer to Australian and New Zealand ICT initiatives in schools. Consequently, preservice teachers and practising teachers in Australian Universities and schools are largely restricted to the study of initiatives undertaken elsewhere. Apart from some presence in Journals and Conference Proceedings, there is a silence in terms of telling Australian ICT stories in book publications. This paper summarises the conceptualisation and distinctive features of the book Transforming Learning with ICT: Making IT Happen, published by Pearson Education Australia in 2007. This book enhances the presence of this region in the ICT literature, proposes a transformational story of learning with ICT, and provides case studies of teachers making it happen. Thus, this paper provides an account of the process of moving from the manuscript proposal through to publication, provides insights into preparing a manuscript information sheet which addressed markets, differentiates the proposed book from competing books, outlines the approach, coverage and organisation of the book, and the review process and feedback. Through outlining the stages in the production of a book for publication, this paper provides a guide for potential authors to convey further scholarly Australian stories of learning with ICT. It concludes with ideas on 'where to from here?' through discussion of the vision for an Australian book that might be published in several years time.

INTRODUCTION - FROM PROPOSAL TO PUBLICATION

The authors, in their roles as academics, had frequently asked representatives from various publishers about the most recent books related to ICT in education that they could use with teacher education students. Invariably, the books dealt with relevant themes often reflected in their titles, such as using computers as Mindtools (Jonassen, 2000), learning with tomorrow's technology (Maddux, LaMont Johnson, & Willis, 2001), the use of computers as tools for productivity and problem solving (Forcier & Descy, 2002), integrating technology (Newby, Stepich, Lehman, & Russell, 2000; Morrison & Lowther, 2002; Grabe & Grabe, 2004; Shelly, Cashman, Gunter, & Gunter, 2004; Roblyer, 2006). Other texts dealt more directly with the use of software, such as *Technology Tools for Teachers. A Microsoft Office Tutorial* (Mills & Roblyer, 2003) and *Using Technology in the Classroom* (Bitter, & Legacy, 2006). These books, while providing relevant and useful content, all held limitations for our Australian students as they had all been written and published in the United States. Our search of book publications revealed that few refer to Australian and New Zealand ICT initiatives in schools. Consequently, preservice teachers and

practising teachers in Australian Universities and schools are largely restricted to the study of initiatives undertaken elsewhere. Apart from some presence in Journals and Conference Proceedings, there is a silence in terms of telling Australian ICT stories in book publications. The question we often asked was – is anything going to be published which relates more closely to Australian and New Zealand educational contexts? The response from the representatives invariably suggested that our questions were being asked by other academics in other tertiary institutions who design and deliver teacher education courses in ICT. Inevitably, this led to the question – would you be interested in submitting a proposal for a book to meet this need?

This paper outlines our response to this challenge as we explored the possibilities for conceptualising a book which would appeal more directly to Australian and New Zealand educators as well as enhance the presence of this region in the international ICT literature. Importantly, the authors did not merely aim to replicate the work already available elsewhere and give it a local ‘flavour’, but sought to build upon ICT developments by theorising a transformational story and transforming learning with ICT which moved discourse beyond the current debate related simply to ICT integration. This paper provides an account of the process of moving from the proposal through to publication. Therefore, insights are provided into generating the idea, preparing a manuscript information sheet which addresses markets, differentiates the proposed book from competing books, outlines the approach, coverage and organisation of the book, and the review process and feedback. Subsequent to the signing of contracts, the task of preparing the manuscript and supplementary materials is required. As a guide to potential authors, this paper outlines the production stages.

GENERATING THE IDEA FOR THE BOOK – BEYOND ICT INTEGRATION: THE TRANSFORMATIONAL STORY

From a thorough review of the ICT literature, there is evidence of ICT use moving beyond integration to becoming an integral component of broader educational reforms changing not only *how* students learn but *what* they learn, and altering the organisation and structure of schooling itself (DETYA, 2000; Fluck, 2003; Nichol & Watson, 2003). Elsewhere, in developing a three layered framework “that would support, describe and promote good practice in the use of ICT in learning and teaching in schools” (Trinidad, Newhouse & Clarkson, 2006, p. 1) these authors in Western Australia conceptualised the stages of progress by teachers as inaction, investigation, application, integration, and transformation. In this way, integration is seen as movement toward transformation, as displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Stages of Teacher Development
(Source: Trinidad et al., 2006, p. 8)

	Description of Key Difference(s)
Inaction	At this stage there is a general lack of action and/or interest.
Investigation	At this stage the teacher has developed an interest in using ICT with students and is beginning to act on this interest.
Application	At this stage the teacher is regularly using ICT with students and knows how to do so competently and confidently.
Critical Use Border	
Integration	At this stage the use of ICT becomes critical to the support of the learning environment and the opportunity for students to achieve learning outcomes through the learning experiences provided.
Transformation	At this stage the teacher is able to take on leadership roles (formal and informal) in the use of ICT and be knowledgeably reflective on its integration by themselves and others.

The proposed title of the book encapsulates the transformational story as well as its focus on making it happen; i.e. *Transforming Learning with ICT: Making IT Happen*. The structure of the book has been designed to cohesively link the chapters together through a series of key questions. Those questions, together with an overview of the organisation of the book chapters are displayed in the following diagram.

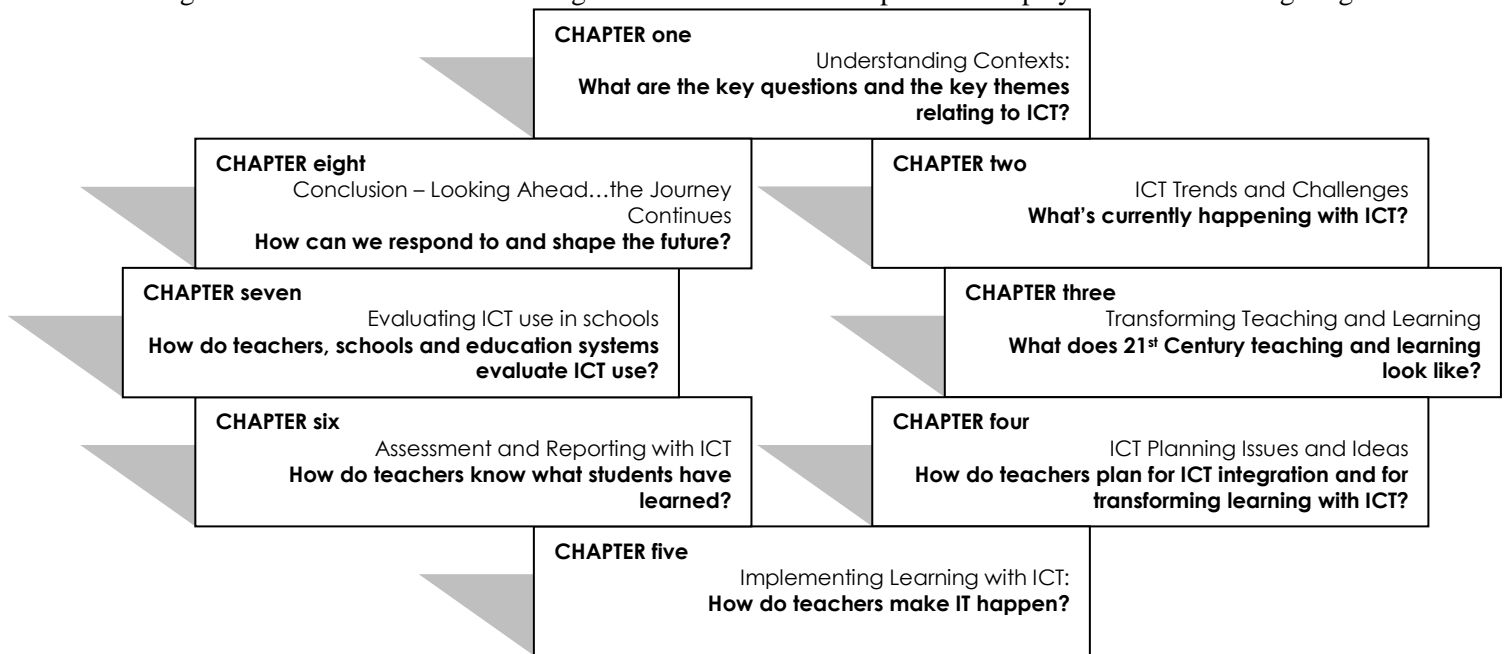


Figure 1: Overview of the Organisation of the Book

PREPARING A MANUSCRIPT INFORMATION SHEET

Having established a relationship with Pearson Education Australia, the authors were provided with a Manuscript Information Sheet to complete as the next phase in progressing the book proposal. The Manuscript Information Sheet required an extensive set of detail to be provided, including the proposed title and subtitle, proposed list of contents, markets, and reasons for the approach, coverage and organization of the book. The primary audience is for preservice teacher education students studying teaching and learning using ICT. Additional target groups referred to as Professional Reference Markets were identified as practising teachers for their continuing professional development in ICT use with students, ICT Coordinators within schools, school administrators for developing ICT strategic planning. The major strengths for differentiating this proposed book from others included:

- Australian context and relevance while situated within the International literature;
- Strategic planning for ICT use – advice for ‘making IT happen at classroom, school and systems level;
- Aligning professional development and performance measurement;
- ICT and pedagogy – advice for ‘making IT happen’ with students; and
- Transforming teaching and learning using ICT.

THE REVIEW, FEEDBACK AND IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

Following the review of the Manuscript Information Sheet by the publishers, the authors were informed that the publishers supported the concept for the book. Consequently, the authors were asked to provide a draft of one of the chapters of the proposed book. Together with the proposal, that draft chapter was forwarded to 22 reviewers for their feedback to inform the further development of the book. As well as providing feedback, the information gained from reviewers provided insights into the textbooks being prescribed by academics throughout Australia for ICT courses in teacher education and the perceived

strengths and weaknesses of those books. Fourteen of the reviewers did not have a prescribed text. Two reviewers use *Integrating Technology in the Classroom* (Shelly, Cashman, Gunter & Gunter, 2004), and two reviewers use *Integrating Educational Technology into Teaching* (Roblyer, 2003; Roblyer, 2004; Roblyer, 2006). No other text was identified by more than one reviewer. When questioned about the strength and weaknesses of those books, the most frequently cited criticism was that none or few texts available referred to Australian contexts. This was evident in the following responses from reviewers in relation to being questioned about which books they considered comparable to the proposed book:

“I do not think there is an Australian text book that one would compare with this one.”

“I think this book fills a unique niche in the market. There is little in the way of Australian books on ICT in school education...and certainly none which takes this approach and focus.”

As displayed in Table 2, there was mixed reaction to whether or not the proposed text would be suitable for the course being delivered.

Table 2: Is the approach and coverage of the proposed text suitable for your course?

Response	Number of Responses (N=22)	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	13	59.1%
No	9	40.9%

The design of the chapters included the provision of recurring features throughout the book. The initial Manuscript Information Sheet included proposals for case studies, research questions, key themes, pedagogical thoughts and reflections, conclusions and references. As displayed in Table 3, the perceived usefulness of those features by the reviewers provided strong support. For example, one reviewer indicated that “The reflective approach using case studies, research questions, and conversations is very attractive”.

Table 3: The perceived usefulness of the following features in the chapters

Chapter Features	Not Useful (%)	Useful (%)	Very Useful (%)
Case study	4.5	27.3	68.2
References	4.5	40.9	54.5
Pedagogical thoughts and reflections	0	47.6	52.4
Key themes	4.8	47.6	47.6
Conclusion	4.5	54.5	40.9
In conversation	9.5	52.4	38.1
Research question	18.2	45.5	36.4

After careful analysis of the reviewers’ suggestions, modifications were negotiated with the publishers to strengthen the features of the chapters. In particular, when asked to comment on features that they would like to see, one reviewer suggested that “To ‘Make IT Happen’ the book should be reshaped to provide a practical perspective of ICTs and how they can be used in education...” The challenge for the authors was dealing with tension between ensuring that the book was accessible and practical for the intended audience while at the same time ensuring that this was a scholarly work and in reconciling the challenge of portraying that teaching and learning using ICT should both inform and be informed by research.

Consequently, each chapter provides access to both research and practical ideas for teaching and learning with ICT. Each chapter includes the following features – *Objectives of the Chapter*, *Introduction*, *Review and Research Questions*, *Case Studies* with associated research probes, *Making IT Happen* which requires the reader to formulate a response appropriate for her/his situational context, *Conclusion*, *In Conversation*, and *References*. Recommended websites referred to as *fyi Web Destinations for further research* are also provided at the end of each chapter. Key features of the chapters are summarized in the following section.

A case study – a story of making IT happen...

Case studies present stories from teachers who are *making IT happen*. Each case study provides the reader with *research probes* with a consistent question reflecting the theme of this book – What are aspects of transformational uses of ICT in this case study? The case studies link with the *Review and research questions* – e.g. How might this story inform and be informed by research? Examples of Case Studies include:

- Dream a better world – film festival
- Teachers with Laptops in New Zealand: Impacts on Teachers and their Practice
- Cultural Dance in Australia and New Zealand
- Intel ® Teach to the Future
- eLearning and Developing an Online Learning Solution
- Designing a Digital Yearbook CreationDeveloping Enriching Numeracy Learning Experiences through the *epals* Program
- Games: a gateway to Developing a Community of Learners
- KidiPads to Enhance Collaborative Work
- Whole School Adoption of Interactive Whiteboards (IWBs)
- Drugs.com - Learning about drugs, a virtual reality
- GENerating E-Learning Systems in Schools (The GENESIS Project)
- From Digital Storytelling to ePortfolio development: mobile devices supporting learners
- Learning with ICT: Measuring ICT Use in the Curriculum
- Using games and simulation to teach Artificial Intelligence
- Connecting communities of learners and leaders with web based technology called CENTRA.
- Using The Learning Activity Management System (LAMS)

Review and research questions

These questions relate to the research and ideas presented, as well as prompting the reader to formulate and articulate defensible arguments in relation to their own use of ICT. The review and research questions prompt the reader to engage with and reflect upon comprehensive understandings from the ICT research.

In conversation

In conversations capture interesting insights from a variety of educators who have successfully utilised ICT in their various roles. The information provided by these people interconnects with the *Review and research questions*, the *Case Studies*, the *making IT happen*, and the *fyi Web Destinations for further research* to assist the reader to make the theory-practice links.

fyi Web Destinations for further research

We included *fyi Web Destinations for further research* to enable the reader to explore in greater depth the material we introduce, summarise, synthesise and analyse through the use of the Internet. The *fyi Web*

Destinations for further research provides access to important research material and transformational stories of teaching and learning with ICT.

Making IT Happen

Near the conclusion of each chapter, there are opportunities for *making IT happen* whereby readers are encouraged to reflect on the pedagogical implications of the research and ideas presented throughout the chapter for their situated practice. *Making IT happen* is designed to assist the translation from policy to practice, from ideas and intention to implementation, and from researching the potential to realising the potential!

VIABILITY OF THE BOOK

In relation to the viability of the book, the publishers included two key questions. As displayed in Tables 4 and 5 respectively, 90.5% of the reviewers supported the publication of the book, and 54.5% of respondents indicated that they would consider prescribing this book for a course.

Table 4: Would you like to see the book published?

Response	Number of Responses (N=21)	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	19	90.5%
No	2	9.5%

Table 5: Would you consider prescribing this book for your course?

Response	Number of Responses (N=22)	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	12	54.5%
No	10	45.5%

PREPARING THE MANUSCRIPT

Following the review, Pearson Education Australia agreed to proceed with the book. The book contract between Pearson Education Australia and the authors, dated 16 May 2005, included an agreement to complete the manuscript “containing about 100 000 words or their equivalent, in complete final form ready for production by 15 January 2006”. This length equated to approximately 250 printed book pages. Additional supplementary materials to accompany the book were due on 15 July 2006. Our key advice before preparing a manuscript is to ensure that a great deal of communication, planning and early preparation has occurred prior to the commencement of the contractual writing. In particular, the authors had established the organisation of the book, and developed formats for each chapter, and importantly, had been strategic in planning to have some time and space available for drafting the chapter/s she/he was primarily responsible for. Despite that forward planning, all authors still found that there were demands on their weekends, holidays and many evenings reading, researching and writing.

PRODUCTION STAGES

The reader is referred to the *Guide for Authors* (Pearson Education Australia, 2004) which articulates the role of the Project Editor and the Copy Editor and the Production Process. The communication between the Project Editor and the authors was critical in ensuring that this proceeded as planned. The Production Process is displayed in Figure 2 below.

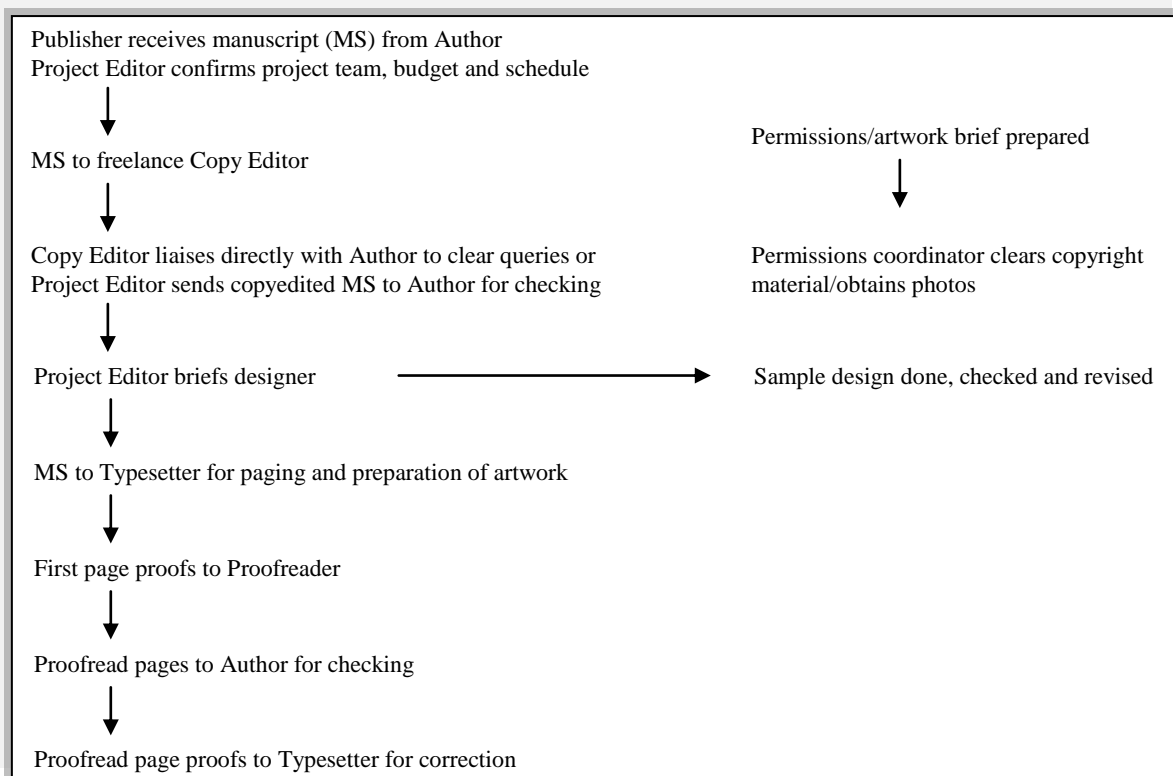


Figure 2: The Production Process (Source: Pearson Education Australia, 2004, p. 20)

DEVELOPMENT OF SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

The book contract included the provision of supplementary materials including an Instructor's Manual, Content for a Companion Website, Content for Personal Response System, and any other materials to complement the book. The review process asked the reviewers to indicate any other supplementary materials which they would like included with the text. Responses suggested an accompanying website, a list of websites related to the chapter, tests including an accompanying online website where the responses to the reflections/questions could be shared. Examples of reviewers' comments reflect this:

"Wondering whether the writers have considered a web-based element. Quality online learning spaces and information sources to support learning with ICTs deserve prominence"

"Up to date website with links to new developments in the area."

To some extent, these comments also informed the inclusion of *fyi Web Destinations for further research* at the conclusion of each chapter. The agreed supplementary materials developed are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6: Supplementary Materials

Supplementary Materials	Design Details
Instructor's Manual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the chapter • Guidance answers for research probes • Guidance answers for <i>Review and Research Questions</i> • Other possibilities – teaching tips, lecture outlines
Website See http://www.pearsoned.com.au/finger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter Objectives • Self-Test (approximately 10-15 multiple choice questions) • Portfolio Activities • Collaborative activities around fyi Web Destinations
PowerPoint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint for each chapter – approximately 10 slides per chapter • PowerPoint to use template employing design elements of the book's cover design • Lecturer version to be on password protected instructor's section • Student version to be in pdf for economic printing of multiple slides to a page, and provision also for accessibility for students with disability
Student Response System Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions designed for using student response system for use with TurningPoint2006

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

The book – *Transforming Learning with ICT: Making IT Happen* – became available in November 2006, and has an official publication date of 2007. Since the book's conceptualisation and publication, significant changes continue to occur. Consequently, it's worthwhile provocatively asking – if we were to write the book now, what new areas would we include? – if the book was to go to a second edition, what are the revisions which need to be made?

Two major areas have emerged. Firstly, we would need to give more attention to the use of virtual learning environments (VLEs) in schools. Variations of environments provided in a number of universities such as Blackboard have become increasingly becoming available in schools. The material related to eLearning could be expanded and updated. These environments which enable eLearning allow teachers to provide learning materials on the school's intranet, and parents and students are able to access or even upload materials from school, home or elsewhere.

Secondly, the spread of social networking sites, such as MySpace, Facebook and YouTube has been accelerating. The implications is that the ways that teachers and students might use social networking can transform teaching and learning. We argue that these profound changes are needing to be explored by teacher training institutions and by providers of professional development. A second edition of the book would need to take into account the different skills and possibilities for social networking and the contingent reconceptualisations of changes in the nature of ICT use in education

CONCLUSION

This paper has provided insights into the challenges of moving through the process from book proposal to publication. Importantly, at this Australian Council for Computers in Education Conference, we suggest that an essential driving force underpinning our resilience to meet the challenges involved has been to provide a means for building upon the substantial ICT integration discourse to stories of transforming learning and teaching with ICT. It attempts to also move beyond the rhetoric reflected in many policy and curriculum documents by encouraging people to *make IT happen*. The book explicitly aims to provide a tangible means for sharing our work in our region of the world and, by doing this, also contribute to enhancing the visibility of the teaching and learning with ICT in Australia and New Zealand to international audiences.

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