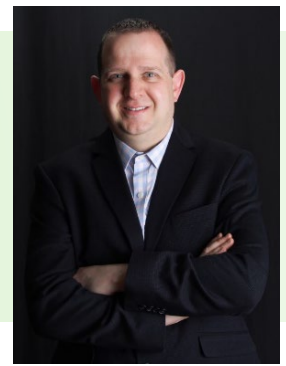




The Use of Twitter and Voxer for Professional Learning

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Twitter and Voxer are two Social Media platforms that can be used to connect educators from around the world. These platforms can be used to grow your learning as an educator, learner from other educators, and gain new ideas to bring into your classroom.

In today's fast-paced digital age, educators have the ability to connect and grow with one another in many different ways. The ability to connect with like-minded educators across the world anytime, anywhere and any day can make an educator feel as if they are not isolated to their classrooms or school buildings. Ways in which educators can connect are through the vast number of Social Media tools that are out there that include: Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and Voxer. Two of the tools that I find extremely useful to learn from and grow professionally are Twitter and Voxer. Both of these tools allow educators from around the globe to learn and connect. Educators might be able to participate in a Twitter chat set for a designated time during the week or connect on Voxer to a group of PLN members to ask a question or participate in a book discussion.

To use these tools, an educator only needs to have a basic understanding of how to use an app or navigate a website. Participating in a Twitter chat or Voxer conversation allows you to share or learn about best practices for your students. You will get as much from the conversation as the time you devote to being part of the conversation. Personally, I spend at least an hour every Saturday morning co-moderating #Satchat and have learned a tremendous amount about how to be a school leader and other topics that relate to the education field. Being a teacher in the chat I feel I can contribute the teacher's viewpoint to the conversations on #Satchat. For those who do not know #Satchat is for current and future administrators, but the chat is open to anyone who wants to participate.

Other Twitter chats that I participate in when I find the time are, #edtechchat, #4thchat, and #Read2Lead chat. The only issue with all the Twitter chats and ways to connect as an educator is that you need to be able to find a healthy balance between participating in the conversations, work as an educator and family. The balance is hard to find, as you might feel yourself wanting to join in every chat all the time. However, that can become overwhelming and make you feel like you want to implement everything everyone is talking about in the conversations. The goal should be to listen and see what everyone is doing and maybe find one or two ideas that would be feasible to implement in your classroom.

Voxer is a great way to connect with colleagues in different districts or across the world. Many different education Voxer groups take place, as well. You can find simple grade-level groups, topic groups, or even book discussion groups. Two of the ways I love to use Voxer are by using it to participate in book discussions and connect with fellow Emerging Leaders. Online media allows you to learn from your home if you are unable to attend a conference. You can implement educators' suggestions that you gained from social media in your school or school district.

Take, for example, #Read2Lead Voxer group book discussions. I have been a part of this group for a number of years and we have read many different books. The group consists of educators from around the country and includes both teachers and administrators. Usually, the #Read2Lead book discussion focuses on one book. Questions are selected in advance and the discussions can be done in several sessions. Sometimes there even have been authors who are a part of the conversation as well. You can effectively conduct a book conversation with a group of educators in a school or district by using the same method of having a weekly or daily question, a guide for the chapters to be read by and the ability to respond to the discussion when it is convenient for the participant. Educators can earn professional development hours from their districts for participating in the conversations.

Voxer and Twitter both are game-changers for educators to learn and grow as a professional. It might take some time to find the perfect Twitter Chat or Voxer Group to be a part of, but it will change the way you, as an educator, view professional development. Make sure you check out these great resources on how to find Twitter Chats and Voxer group:

[140 Twitter Tips for Educators: Get Connected, Grow Your Professional Learning Network and Reinvigorate Your Career](#)

[Official Twitter Chat Schedule](#)

[Cybraryman Chats](#)

[Cybraryman Voxer](#)

Billy Krakower has worked with elementary students for thirteen years in Northern New Jersey, and is a 2014 ASCD Emerging Leader. He has co-authored several books and presented at the state and national levels on a variety of topics on technology in education.