

# Building the Maricopa Learning eXchange (Using a Bit of Competition and Bribery)

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Maricopa Community Colleges

The Maricopa Learning eXchange (MLX) is an electronic warehouse of ideas, examples, and resources that support learning at the Maricopa Community Colleges. See how we tripled our collection with a friendly competition for software prizes. Learn how we are syndicating content with RSS and connecting to other collections.



Key

Enter the loading dock to create or modify MLX packages. You will need an account (Maricopa employees only, adjunct faculty are welcome too). To quickly set up your account, register with **the Dock Manager**.

Enter the loading dock:

Loading dock ID (Maricopa email address\*):

alan.levine@domail.maricopa.edu

Password:

\*\*\*\*\*

I forgot my password, please email it to me

Go!

## Tour of MLX Loading Dock

Anyone who works for Maricopa is invited to share their own packages by visiting the loading dock (a) where the Dock Supervisor instantly creates an account. Users may check and modify their inventory at anytime, which tells how often a package has been viewed.

- Only Maricopa employees are allowed in the dock area (adjunct faculty can create accounts, but their packages are not publicly visible until their employment status is verified).
- Inside the loading dock, users are greeted by the “supervisor” and have options for adding or modifying the inventory of packages in the MLX (b).
- When a package is created, the Loading Dock Supervisor prompts for the descriptive information about the item.
- Next, is the option to list other people who are credited on the package
- Another option is to add as many web links that are relevant to the project, whether they link to the project itself, related resources, etc. (c)
- Users can upload any sort of media file (up to 10 MB each for a document, image, presentation, sound, movie, etc.) they are willing to share with our package.

a



b



c



Key

## Feedback to Package Owners

People who create MLX packages receive feedback through several methods. Their own inventory (a) inside the Loading Dock, lists of all of their MLX packages, and details on the number of visitors and comments registered to each package.

When comments are submitted from the packing slip (b), the package owner is automatically notified by email with a link for them to return to the packing slip to see the comments. If the person posting the comment provides an email address, the package owner can communicate directly to him/her.

To discourage obsolete content, every year, the package owner will be automatically sent by email a summary of their MLX inventory and a reminder to them to remove any items no longer valid or make any necessary updates.

Enter the loading dock to create or modify MLX packages. You will need an account (Maricopa employees only, adjunct faculty are welcome too). To quickly set up your account, register with [the Dock Manager](#).

**Enter the loading dock:**  
 Loading dock ID (Maricopa email address\*):  
  
 Password:  
  
 I forget my password, please email it to me

a

trackback	Use Trackback to register with this package a web site where you have integrated the package contents or written about it. ( <a href="#">more information...</a> )	
	View <a href="#">TrackBack record</a> for this package. - 2 Trackback ping(s) registered	
	<a href="#">Add a TrackBack "ping"</a> for this package (share a link where you have used or written about this package)	

c

TrackBack URL for this entry:  
<http://jade.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/cgi-bin/tb.cgi/121>

[Peer Review of Research Methods](#)  
 » MERLOT  
 "Reviewed: Sep 6, 2002 by the MERLOT Teacher Education Review Panel"  
 Tracked: July 23, 2003 02:34 PM

[Teaching/Learning Activities: Conceptual Learning](#)  
 » Virtual Resource Site for Teaching with Technology  
 "The Research Methods Laboratory shows a brilliant adaptation of new media to convey a broad range of instruction in a very simple and accessible format. The combination of visual and interactive elements will enable any kind of learner to grasp the basics of scientific research quickly and easily."  
 Tracked: July 23, 2003 02:32 PM

[Is this your site? [Log in](#) to delete pings.]

d

Package comments

Here you can read or [add to](#) the comments regarding the package:  
**Creating Forms in MS Word**

On Fri Nov 22 2002 4:44pm  
 Somebody said...

\*Alan,  
 I appreciate the instructional document. I will be using it. Thanks!"

On Wed Jan 15 2003 7:42am  
 Josh said...

\*Alan,  
 I have learnt creating forms in Word from your package. Quite straightforward. Thanks."

Send us your comments regarding this package:

Your name: \*optional

Your email: \*optional

Your comment:

b

Finally, we have fully implemented Trackback which associates each MLX package with a unique identifier that can be used to connect the package to places on the web where it is used or described (c). The most typical way this is currently done is via weblog tools such as MovableType, so that weblogs may provide a descriptive context for an MLX package. However, the MLX features a

web form so that any web address can be sent to a package and through the packing slip, “Trackbacked” to this external reference (d).

For example, a Math department may post reviews of effective problem-solving strategies on their department’s web site. If one of the reviews is for an MLX package, the person responsible for the content of the department’s web site can register their department’s URL with the package. In this way, the package can provide a greater external context for later visitors to the packing slip.

In the near future we will add a package ratings tool to all MLX items.

## Connections With Other Programs

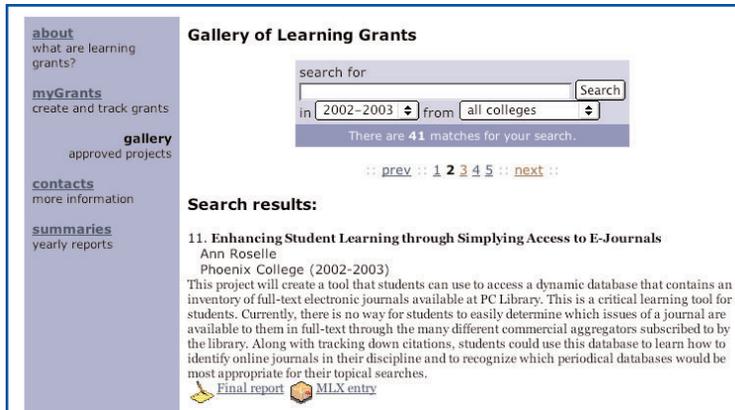


To expand the content within the MLX, we are working with other programs that have electronic reporting tools. For example, the Maricopa Learning Grants are an internal grants program that awards \$180,000 each year to Maricopa staff and faculty for projects that are designed to improve, advance, and enrich student learning (a).

The entire grant application, review, and reporting processes are done online. Grant recipients for 2002-2003 are required to submit their final reports via the Learning Grants web site, and the information recorded is automatically stored in the Learning Grants Gallery database and at the same time, sent to the MLX.

a

We have added links to MLX for several other of our programs (b), such as the modules developed for the Systemic Reform In Science (SyRIS), and the projects of the Maricopa Institute for Learning (MIL) fellows.



In addition we are working with a number of other Maricopa programs that might easily gain from having online reporting, and at the same time, expand the reach of their results by sharing via the MLX. We expect this year to add MLX reporting to programs for faculty sabbatical reports, internationalizing the curriculum projects, and the Creative Pathways staff development program.

In addition, we are encouraging college-based programs to consider using or including the MLX in their own reporting structure, such as faculty summer projects, mini-grants, or other college-supported development programs.



Key

b

## MLX Great Race! Competition and Bribery

The Great Package Race Prizes: Nov 2002-Feb 2003

maricopa learning eXchange

Random Packages These may have already been counted

1. Introduction to Netscape Navigator (version 4.x)  
This training manual presents instruction about the following components of Netscape Navigator: Navigator Window Components, Navigation Toolbar and Buttons, Location Toolbar and Buttons, Personal Toolbar, Floating Component Bar, Creating Bookmarks, Bookmarks Dialogue Box, Using Bookmarks, Menu Bar Functions, and Saving Internet Images

2. Visual Basic: Dialog Box tutorial  
Tutorial on how to use the msgbox() and inputbox() functions to create dialog boxes in Visual Basic.

3. Advanced PowerPoint 2000 Training Manual  
The Advanced PowerPoint Manual covers the more advanced feature of this electronic presentation software. Some feature that are covered in the manual are: 1. webpage and inner-document hyperlinks 2. inserting digital video 3. recording sound and narration 4. editing digital images and clip art 5. and much more!

First Prize  
25-copy license of Adobe Photoshop 7.0 awarded to Chandler-Gilbert Community College

Second Prize  
10-copy selection of Macromedia Flash

Third Prize  
10-copy selection of CorelDraw Graphics Suite

To stimulate contributions to the MLX, we held a competition (a) that tracked the new contributions between November 1, 2002 and March 1, 2003. Prizes of software (Adobe PhotoShop, Macromedia Flash, Corel Graphics Suite) were offered to the three colleges that submitted the most items. Because of the various sizes of the ten Maricopa colleges, the college scores were normalized by their total full time employee count. A dynamic generated “scoreboard” displays the latest results (b).

For that time period we were able to increase the size of the MLX by 350 new items.

MLX Great Race Scoreboard: Nov 2002-Feb 2003

The Great MLX Race Scoreboard (Nov 2002-Feb 2003)! Below are the final standings for the number of packages submitted per site between November 12, 2002 and February 28, 2003 (more about the “race”...).

Great prizes were awarded! In first place was Chandler-Gilbert with a total of 130 packages (0.5019 packages per employee) earning the prize of 25 copies of Adobe PhotoShop. Second was South Mountain with 76 packages (0.4108 packages per employee) winning a 10 copy selection of Macromedia Flash. And in third place was GateWay, with 63 packages (0.2451 packages per employee) winning 10 copies of CorelDraw Graphics Suite.

See results from Nov 2002-Feb 2003

Standing	College	MLX Packages (p) note <sup>1</sup>	Employees (e) note <sup>2</sup>	Packages per Employee (p/e)
1	Chandler-Gilbert	130	259	0.5019
2	South Mountain	76	185	0.4108
3	GateWay	63	257	0.2451
4	Estrella Mountain	18	167	0.1078
5	District Office	16	397	0.0403
6	Paradise Valley	9	234	0.0385
7	Phoenix College	12	411	0.0292
8	Mesa	18	640	0.0281

Because of this success, we decided to make the “MLX Great Race” an ongoing affair, awarding prizes and resetting the counter every six months. The current race is run for MLX items added between March 1 and August 31, 2003.

In addition, we have added software prizes for individual contributions, thanks to generous donations from Macromedia and AgilityPresenter. Individual scores are based not only on the number of packages contributed, but weightings based on the comments, visitor counts, and trackback records on all the packages.



Key

## Syndicating MLX Content

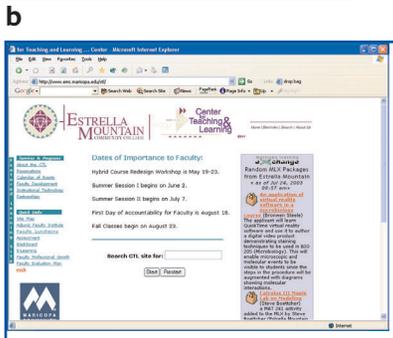
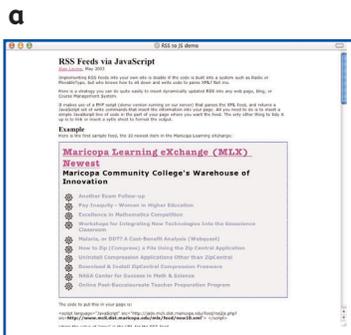
Since February 2003, we have developed a number of innovative and unique features to allow “syndication” of MLX content at other web sites. The initial concept was to create a way for our individual colleges to be able to include on their own web sites a dynamic updated “window” into that college’s contributions to the MLX.

This led to development of publishing college based “feeds” using RSS (Really Simple Syndication), an XML construct (a). The MLX has been recognized as one of the first learning object collections to provide RSS feeds for content.

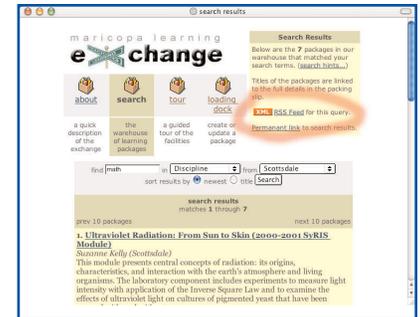
Because many web site developers lack the tools or expertise to incorporate the XML content of RSS feeds, we developed a simple method that utilizes a single line of JavaScript that provides the same functionality (b). This code passes the web address of an XML feed to a script on our server that returns a series of JavaScript commands to output the data. Use of CSS allows colleges to customize the output to match their site, and to date, at least three of our colleges now how their own feeds inserted into web sites for their faculty development centers (c). The college have options to display the 3 newest items form their college or 3 randomly chosen items. The feeds are automatically updated every hour.

Other syndication options developed include RSS feeds based on the academic discipline fields, so anyone can subscribe to the newest MLS items in “Biology” or “Humanities”. And we have added a feature to the MLX search tools so that any custom search result can be saved as a dynamic RSS feed (d).

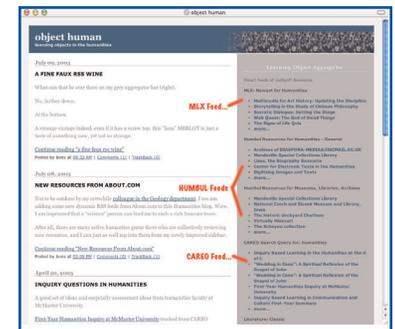
Parallel efforts at CAREO and other sites now make it possible for individual faculty or departments to assemble dynamic collections of resources from multiple learning object collections, and hopefully soon, MERLOT will add to the mix (e).



c



d



e



Key